

Project Proposal Application

To be completed by the lead proposed supervisor,
with input from the non-HE Partner Organisation(s).



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY AND APPLICANT DETAILS		
Proposed Project Title:	LGBTQIA+ Culture in the North East: Mapping the Archives, Exploring their Potential	
Project Summary: <i>(Maximum 100 words)</i>	The North East has a rich and underexplored LGBTQIA+ cultural history. This project builds on existing partnerships between Newcastle University (NU), Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM), and other regional cultural organisations to map LGBTQIA+ presences in TWAM and other archives; address gaps in the archival representation of LGBTQIA+ cultural activity; share this learning with marginalised communities; and highlight untapped potential for research and engagement. This interdisciplinary archival, desk- and practice-based project will contribute new insights and critical reflections to research that aims to enhance understanding of, and improve practice relating to, queer content in and engagement with archives.	
Host University:	Newcastle University	
Name of Non-HE Partner Organisation(s): <i>(Add more lines if needed)</i>		
1. Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums		
2.		
Contact(s) at Non-HE Partner Organisation(s): <i>(Add more lines if needed)</i>		
Name:	Lizzy Baker	Email: lizzy.baker@twmuseums.org.uk
Name:		Email:
Primary AHRC Subject Area: <i>Select one subject area from the list here. Please do <u>not</u> add or amend subjects, as there will not be a corresponding Subject Area Review Panel to assess your nomination.</i>	English Language and Literature	
Does the project include a Creative Practice component?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Do you consider the project to be interdisciplinary?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If you consider the project to be interdisciplinary, please state why: <i>(Maximum 100 words. Please note that your application will be assessed by the relevant primary AHRC subject area review panel. However, in this space you should indicate which other subject areas your proposal covers and how your methodology is genuinely interdisciplinary.)</i>		

This project's methodology is rooted in queer studies, an inherently interdisciplinary field which brings together approaches from across the humanities, including literature and art history, to explore LGBTQIA+ lives and cultures. Importantly, in queer studies, LGBTQIA+ experience is not purely the object of study; queerness is also understood as a methodology, a mode of seeing differently and of reading against the grain. As such, an interdisciplinary queer methodology will ensure that this project is not exploitative or extractive of the LGBTQ+ communities which are at its heart. It also reflects the diverse cultural production of LGBTQIA+ communities in the region.

SECTION 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL AND CASE FOR SUPPORT

Please provide full details of the proposal and make your case for support below:

(Maximum 750 words)

Research context

An archival turn in literary studies, art history, and queer studies has enabled methodological advances and facilitated new conversations between archivists and academics. It is transforming knowledge of LGBTQIA+ lives in the past, with initiatives like Lavender Menace Queer Books Archive in Edinburgh emphasising the importance of community-led archiving to ensure that records of queer lives are preserved in ethical ways and made accessible. Cook and Oram's groundbreaking *Queer Beyond London* (2022) emphasised the precarity of LGBTQIA+ archives outside that city, and the pressing need for grassroots community-led archive projects across the UK.

The North East has a rich and underexplored LGBTQIA+ cultural history, intersecting with its long history of experimental art, theatre, and performance, including HIV/AIDS-related cultural activity. TWAM have been working with partners including Curious Arts to explore and develop LGBTQIA+ histories within their collections, including workshops for young LGBTQIA+ people and a theatre commission. Key to mapping the queer landscape of the region, they are playing a central role in the emergent North East LGBTQIA+ Heritage Network (Chedgoy and Lennon are speaking at the inaugural event in October). Within NU's School of English, Northern Bridge-funded projects investigating NE archives (including those of Bloodaxe, Northern Stage, Live, Open Clasp) have identified gaps in the representation of LGBTQIA+ cultural activity, highlighting untapped potential for research and engagement which this project seeks to realise.

Research questions

- What untold stories of LGBTQIA+ lives can be uncovered from the TWAM archives?
- How can those stories be animated for and shared with both the LGBTQIA+ community in the region and wider communities?
- How could sharing queer stories from the TWAM archives support the development of spaces and methodologies enabling marginalised communities to generate their own community-led archives?
- How could a TWAM-based project facilitate exploration of LGBTQIA+ potential in other regional archives?

Addressing these research questions will enable the doctoral researcher to contribute new insights and critical reflections to regional and national developments in research and practice relating to queer content in and engagement with archives. By sharing their work in progress in appropriate fora, they will be supported to contribute to and learn from ongoing conversations in this lively and timely area of activity.

Research methods and timeline

Core methods:

- Desk-based research at the intersection of critical scholarship in literature and art history, archive studies (from both practitioner and academic perspectives), and interdisciplinary queer studies. The researcher will become familiar with, and develop their own critical stance on, relevant methodological and theoretical debates, with a particular focus on issues such as community-led archiving, anarchiving, and the relations between materiality and textuality in the archive.
- Investigation of the TWAM archives to identify and analyse LGBTQIA+ relevant material.
- Practice-based explorations, via placements and networking with appropriate regional organisations (including other archives), of how best to engage diverse communities with the material and insights surfaced by this research.

The supervisory team will support the candidate to maintain a dynamic relationship between these methods. Consideration of how best to facilitate fruitful intellectual conversations about method, practice and theory between archivists and archive-oriented scholars in literary and queer studies will be integral to the research process, with reference to both fundamental research and engagement activities. The candidate's clearly articulated reflections on these issues as they relate to the specific context of LGBTQIA+ culture will be a crucial aspect of the research process.

Year 1 (2025-26)

- Foundational research training (including ethical training)
- Desk-based research
- Placement 1: begin mapping collections

- Synthesis of and critical reflection on desk- and placement-based research

Year 2 (2026-27)

- Further research training
- Desk-based research
- Placement 2: continue mapping collections; draft interactive resource guide to LGBTQIA+ material in TWAM
- Synthesis of and critical reflection on desk- and placement-based research

Year 3-3.5 (2027-29)

- Desk-based research concludes
- Placement 3: facilitate engagement events; revise resource guide in the light of them
- Final synthesis of and critical reflection on desk- and placement-based research, feeding into completion of thesis

The process of drafting, revising and editing the thesis will be integrated with the research throughout.

This project will train a highly skilled researcher with academic expertise encompassing cultural history and literary, archival and queer studies, as well as exceptional experience and expertise in engaging wider – particularly marginalised – communities with academic and archival research. It will generate engagement activity and a valuable output in a priority area for TWAM (i.e. the resource guide), as well as a doctoral thesis that will make a distinctive contribution to knowledge, including methodological developments, in a dynamic and socially relevant area of study.

Provide details of any resources and facilities, including equipment, fieldwork, training, etc., that will be required to complete the project successfully. NBC has limited Research Training Support Grant funding, which may affect the feasibility of high-cost projects. Please note where you might also secure additional funding, (e.g. partner organisations; department or school). Include estimated costs:

(Maximum 200 words)

The HaSS Researcher Education and Development Programme will enable core skills development, complemented by participation in Northern Bridge training events. Opportunities for sharing research in progress provided by the latter will be key for this timely project, which we anticipate will provoke interest from both academics and heritage practitioners.

Chedzoy and Anderson have extensive experience of working with queer archives, LGBTQIA+ communities and marginalised histories. Both are well placed to advise the researcher on research ethics and best practice in this sensitive context.

Bespoke training in archival research methods will be provided by colleagues at TWA, who have extensive experience with NB CDAs and placements. This will enable the candidate to develop an understanding of the practical and theoretical delivery of a busy local authority archive service.

Given the public-facing aspects of the project, and the potential for research in this area to meet with hostile responses, engagement and communication training will be key. As well as benefiting from the high-quality training provided by the Engagement and Place team at NU, the candidate will be supported to take advantage of wider opportunities such as participating in the Queer Heritage and Collections Network's annual national symposium, which Lennon co-organises.

Outline the arrangements for communication between the non-HE partner organisation and the academic host institution in regard to project management and monitoring academic progress:

(Maximum 200 words)

The supervisory team's involvement in the new North East LGBTQIA+ Heritage Network provides a robust and supportive context for communication and project management, with benefits for the candidate in facilitating engagement with relevant people and initiatives in the region. Monthly supervisions, conducted in person or online as appropriate, with input from both partners will underpin communication, and ensure the candidate receives consistent feedback and support. These will be supported by participation in SELLL's robust academic review processes, including annual meetings with a team of two reviewers, which will provide structured opportunities for the student to benefit from the School's breadth and depth of expertise in archive-based research.

Given the multi-faceted nature of this project, careful project planning will be crucial: milestones will be set and progress against them reviewed in ways that harmonise the needs and priorities of all participants in the project.

As well as maintaining up-to-date records on NU Reflect and PGR CoP, we will record and reflect on progress via a Teams site to circumvent the exclusion of external supervisors from those platforms; this has proven effective with Chedzoy's current CDA student. The supervisory team will maintain regular email contact with each other and the candidate.

What benefits will there be for the candidate and the non-HE partner organisation as a result of your collaboration?

(Maximum 200 words)

The candidate will benefit from:

- a project design that provides a unique opportunity to undertake original research in a collaborative context.
- opportunities to devise, test and reflect on innovative methodologies in dialogue with academics and archivists.
- the experience of learning to adapt to different institutional contexts.
- the opportunity to apply practically the findings of their research, testing these for effectiveness in real-world settings.
- project management experience, especially with regard to managing the expectations of diverse stakeholders.
- the development of a wide range of transferable skills in research and community engagement.
- dedicated time to undertake in-depth research based upon current critical thinking.

Benefits for TWA:

- the project will be capacity building for the Archives as they continue to consider how best to work with previously 'hidden histories' and widen public awareness of the stories of people not previously well represented in heritage spaces.
- the mapping work will add important information to the knowledge of the service and allow for a better and more accurate conversation about collections development.
- the project will provide a better understanding of the context and research potential of the archival collections already held and those in community ownership supporting future partnerships and research initiatives.

State what financial (if any) or in-kind contribution the non-HE partner organisation will be making over the duration of the award:

*(Maximum 200 words. A financial contribution is **not** a requirement. However, the AHRC expect that **non-HE partners based overseas** will make a financial contribution to the costs of the student's return travel and accommodation when visiting.)*

The Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) will provide the student with a suitable workspace and IT access during their research, as well as access to the archives' collections (and training in how to use the collection). The student will also receive direct supervision from the Archives Lead (Lizzy Baker) and guidance from an archivist mentor and the wider archival team.

There will be support for the candidate to work with the wider TWAM programming and curatorial teams to programme public events as required by the final year of the project plan, and at other times if emergent priorities or opportunities make this desirable.

The TWAM Communications team will also provide staff time for any marketing or publicity required including blogs and other media.

This multi-faceted support is comparable in extent, quality and notional in-kind value to the support provided to the Northern Bridge CDA researchers already working on projects in which TWAM is a partner.

Describe the nature of the collaborative arrangement and the activities the candidate will be undertaking with the non-HE partner organisation:

(Maximum 200 words)

Placement periods scheduled across the course of the thesis will enable the doctoral researcher to acquire key professional skills and understanding by working within the archives team at TWAM. This will support them in conducting a detailed and thorough analysis of the TWAM archive collections, as well as providing opportunities to collaborate with archivists, curators and wider heritage professionals to improve their understanding of relevant debates and best practice in the sector.

A primary objective will be conducting a mapping exercise to explore TWAM holdings relevant to the LGBTQIA+ histories of the region and identify those held elsewhere locally, potentially in other institutions to which TWAM can facilitate access. The project will also explore community-held collections, thereby helping TWAM both work towards a practical understanding of the extent and

nature of such collections, and explore the challenges and possibilities of a community-led and owned collecting approach.

These activities will enable the student to develop skills in archival practice and theory and understand the inherent challenges involved in institutional and community shared collections work. This knowledge will facilitate their thesis while supporting TWAM's plans to widen access to collections and research into community co-ownership and ethical stewardship models.

SECTION 3: SUPERVISION AND EXTERNAL ADVISORS	
Primary (or Co-) Supervisor:	Professor Kate Chedgzoy
School or Department:	School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics (SELLL)
Email Address:	Kate.chedgzoy@ncl.ac.uk
Secondary (or Co-) Supervisor:	Dr Fiona Anderson
School or Department:	School of Arts and Cultures (SACS)
Email Address:	Fiona.Anderson@newcastle.ac.uk
Advisor based at the Non-HE Partner Organisation:	Lizzy Baker
Organisation/Institution:	Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums
Email Address:	lizzy.baker@twmuseums.org.uk
Advisor based at the Non-HE Partner Organisation:	
Organisation/Institution:	
Email Address:	
Additional Internal or External Advisors:	
Name:	Rachael Lennon
Organisation/Institution:	Newcastle University; Chair of Queer Heritage and Collections Network and Trustee of Beamish Museum
Email Address:	Rachael.Lennon@ncl.ac.uk
Explain how the expertise of the supervisory team and external advisor(s) will allow them to support the proposed project and the selected candidate:	
<i>(Maximum 500 words)</i>	
<p>Professor Kate Chedgzoy is a scholar of literature and culture whose research places queer and feminist methods and approaches in dialogue with archive-based scholarship. This application grows out of her work with Open Clasp theatre company to research their archive and explore its potential for engagement with diverse communities in the North East (core to the work of current CDA researcher Lucy Doig, and two other NB-funded students Chedgzoy co-supervises); and a new Catherine Cookson Foundation-funded project that uses local archives and community archiving methods to map lesbian performance cultures in Newcastle. This is being developed in partnership with regional LGBTQIA+ arts agency Curious Arts, who also collaborate with Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums. She has supervised numerous PhDs to completion, nine of which used archival methods; her extensive experience as an internal and external examiner of PhD theses gives her considerable insight into what makes a successful doctoral project.</p> <p>Dr Fiona Anderson is Senior Lecturer in Art History. Her research explores queer art and art history from the 1970s to the present, focusing on HIV/AIDS and how ephemeral queer cultures might be archived or preserved through art and writing. She is committed to queer and feminist methodological approaches to art history. Relevant current projects include work with the photographer Sunil Gupta on his queer archival practice and a history of HIV/AIDS cultural activity in the North East. Anderson was UK lead for Cruising .</p>	

[the Seventies: Unearthing Pre-HIV/AIDS Queer Sexual Cultures](#) (2016-2019), a 3-year European research project, which explored innovative means of recovering and preserving queer cultures of the 1970s through creative practice. She has supervised 5 PhDs to completion and is currently lead supervisor for 3 NB-funded students. She has experience as an external PhD examiner.

Lizzy Baker is the Archives Lead at Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums. After a history degree, Baker qualified as an Archivist at the University of Aberystwyth and has worked in local authority archives for 20 years in both the North East and Yorkshire. At Tyne & Wear Archives she is responsible for the delivery of the Archive service including collections development and management, in person and remote access to the archives, and working on community and academic projects. Baker has extensive experience of delivering training and research support to both academic and non-academic researchers. She is a Peer Reviewer for the Archives Accreditation scheme and sits on The National Archives Public Records Places of Deposit Reference Group and the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group Executive Committee.

Rachael Lennon's role at NU as Strategic Cultural Partnerships Manager will bring professional and strategic insight to the project. However she participates in it primarily as an external advisor in her capacity as founder and chair of the national Queer Heritage and Collections Network, and as Trustee at Beamish Museum where she steers queer-inclusive work. She brings extensive experience curating exhibitions, publications, events and activities exploring LGBTQ heritage to the team, which will support the researcher in bringing their work into wider relevant contexts.

SECTION 4: RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Please provide details about the research environment the selected candidate will be joining and its suitability:

(Maximum 500 words)

Working across the School of English Literature, Language, and Linguistics (SELLL) and the School of Arts and Cultures (SACS) will provide a generative and genuinely interdisciplinary context for this project. SELLL has strong links with organisations in the culture and heritage sectors, and many of the collaborative relationships developed with them include archival elements encompassing research and engagement, e.g. with Northern Stage, Live Theatre and Open Clasp; publisher Bloodaxe Books; and the Wordsworth Trust. Its research environment for PGRs is well resourced. A dedicated and skilled member of the PS team oversees PGR business. The Postgraduate Suite offers work space and IT facilities and enables the School's PGRs to self-organise as a community, including reading groups and social events.

Across SACS there is expertise in researching queer studies, archival strategies and theories, and museology and collections, all highly relevant to this project. The Media Culture Heritage (MCH) research seminar series will provide a supportive context for the researcher to share their work with staff and PGRs working in heritage, museum studies, and queer studies. SACS plays a leading role in the NU Centre for Heritage, which brings together researchers from across the University working on heritage and preservation, with a focus on impactful research and an emphasis on community and identity. SACS also has strong links with Curious Arts.

More broadly at NU, the Robinson Library is well resourced and responsive. Its Literary Archivist, Rachael Hawkes, collaborates with SELLL colleagues on archive-related research, trains students in relevant skills, and will be an important ally and resource for this project.

Rainbow@ncl, the University's network for LGBTQIA+ colleagues and allies, will provide a nurturing academic and social context, as will the Postgraduate Research Community, a NUSU Society founded as a result of an action research project led by Chedgzoj, which aims to enable doctoral success by supporting a healthy work-life balance. Through its Engagement and Place strategy, Newcastle University fosters a supportive environment for collaborative working to mutual benefit with partners beyond the university, and Lennon is key to this team: this will provide the student with opportunities to access training and events focused on developing skills and building relationships to enhance engagement and impact. Lennon's strong regional connections and shaping role in national networks in the queer heritage space provides a unique opportunity for the candidate to connect with a dynamic culture of practice-oriented research.

In the consortium as a whole, the presence of colleagues with pertinent research expertise and students working on related issues across a range of disciplines means that the wider research environment is an excellent fit for this project. Northumbria University,

for instance, hosts the North Modern and Contemporary Network which provides a vibrant research context for work on the cultural life of the region. We will introduce the candidate to CDA researchers at Northumbria and Durham currently working with TWA and to other doctoral candidates engaging in placements there and encourage them to form an informal peer support group.