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**AHRC – PEC Host Organisation - Expression of Interest**

**This Expression of Interest (EoI) is for Research Organisations and Independent Research Organisations who are interested in hosting the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre and its core team following its move from Nesta at the end of May 2023.**

Applicants must complete and submit the Expression of Interest form at this [link](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AHRCPECHostOrganisationExpressionofInterest) by 16:00 (UK time) on **12th September 2022**. All sections of the form must be completed for the EoI to be eligible.

**Overview**

AHRC intend to continue funding for the [Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre](https://www.pec.ac.uk) (PEC) and its core team led by Hasan Bakhshi from 1st June 2023. A two-stage approach will be taken to ensure a smooth transition to the next phase of the PEC:

* Stage 1: Applications for and the subsequent appointment of a new host organisation for the PEC and core team
* Stage 2: Development of a proposal for funding between the PEC Director and new host outlining delivery and implementation of the vision and objectives for the next phase of the PEC

Over the past four years, the PEC has established itself as a UK centre of excellence on research and evidence for informing Creative Industries policy. The next phase of the PEC will build on this success, growing the evidence base by addressing industry and government identified priorities, and advancing research into the longer-term challenges and opportunities facing the sector. It will do this in three primary ways: by producing its own new research; acting as a platform for policy-relevant research produced by others, and engaging policymakers through embedding researchers in policymakers’ planning and design cycles.

If successful in carrying out these activities, the PEC will continue to bring about changes in public policy that recognise the most important needs, challenges and opportunities for the UK’s Creative Industries, thereby contributing to their renewed economic success.This is an opportunity for a new institution to host this flagship AHRC investment and support the PEC Director and core team in developing the PEC through its second phase of funding.

**Vision and Objectives for the PEC**

Fundamentally, the next phase of the PEC will still aim to deliver on its original objectives. However, learning from the past four years of the PEC’s operation and the new, and constantly shifting, context in which the PEC is operating means that AHRC and the PEC’s core team are taking this opportunity to refine the structure, operation and thematic focus of the PEC. With input from its key stakeholders, the PEC produced a Plan for AHRC outlining proposed changes to the current PEC which will maximise its impact and deliver on its continued ambition to be a UK centre of excellence on research and evidence for informing Creative Industries policy. Part of this will involve an aim to re-focus the PEC’s thematic priorities to match where the PEC can add most value while aligning them with the plans of industry bodies such as the Creative Industries Council and the developing Creative Industries Sector Vision being led by DCMS. It is also aimed to enable the PEC to complement the work of UKRI and wider investments in the creative industries, both in terms of forging relationships with existing investments and supporting the evidence for future investments. The anticipated thematic priorities are currently envisaged to be:

* Creative workforce issues and education
* R&D, design and innovation, including clusters
* Internationalisation
* Arts, culture and heritage

The focus on these thematic priorities is partly informed by which areas are covered by existing UK centres of excellence, but will not rule out other topics, such as regulation, intellectual property, public service broadcasting, access to finance and business models, from continuing to be researched in individual PEC-funded projects. Given their importance to the sector across multiple themes, there will also be a continued research focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and environmental sustainability which will cut across all of the PEC’s thematic priorities. It is envisaged that these individual PEC-funded projects will be sourced from a diverse and inclusive PEC network of UK researchers.

To serve its continued ambition, the PEC also intends to revise and refine its strategic and operational design principles for the next phase of funding, learning from the successes and challenges of its first phase:

*Strategic Design Principles*

* Optimise its design for research excellence and policy influence that meets external stakeholder expectations
* Enable the PEC to maintain its distinct identity while ensuring it is fully integrated into the R&D infrastructure for policy, industry, and research communities across the UK’s Creative Industries
* Deepen its translational activities between DCMS, BEIS and HMT, and between these Government Departments and UKRI / AHRC, including existing and proposed new UKRI investments in the creative industries
* Meet regional and national policy needs
* Allow the PEC to build on its international work and networks
* Allow the PEC to continue to build and develop novel knowledge co-creation processes and forums (e.g. [Industry Champions](https://www.pec.ac.uk/people/industry-champions); [International Council](https://www.pec.ac.uk/people/the-international-council)), and new knowledge products (e.g. [Policy and Insights Briefings](https://pec.ac.uk/policy-briefings)).
* Agree governance arrangements that continue to bring together policymakers, industry and academia – necessary to ensure the PEC has continued access to key stakeholders

*Operational Design Principles*

* A smaller number of partners (a PEC with less moving institutional parts and less fragmentation)
* A better resourced core team including its Policy Unit
* A strong strategic fit between the PEC’s core team and the PEC’s host institution
* A significant budget dedicated to commissioning individual academics, teams of academics, and research consultancies, with agile yet robust procurement processes
* A focus on refining and deepening the PEC’s key strategic partnerships, allowing for expanded models of co-commissioning and new dissemination partnerships
* Fewer fractional posts in delivery partner roles

**What is required of the new host?**

Whilst these principles and objectives for the continued investment in the PEC have already been developed, the selected host would be expected to work with the current PEC Director and core PEC team to develop the detail of how to deliver these, drawing on the strengths of the selected host organisation and in response to the commission from AHRC. Prospective hosts should be aware that commensurate with its strategic importance the PEC will be expected to leverage substantial financial resources over the life of the grant.

The bid developed by the PEC Director and new host will include a wider set of partner organisations (as indicated in the organogram at Fig.01 below), but the host RO/IRO will be responsible for hosting the PEC core team and submitting the formal application to AHRC.

**Benefits and Impact**

A further major aim for the next phase of the PEC will be to ensure that the impact of its work is enhanced, and that clear benefits are being accrued from its activities. Existing benefit statements for the PEC are as follows and these map across to its current objectives:

* Benefit 1: Creating new connections and richer knowledge exchange between industry, academics and policymakers. Demonstrably producing, and effectively communicating more timely and policy-relevant research
* Benefit 2: Developing research, datasets, resources, and insights that shape and improve the overall quality of the UK evidence base
* Benefit 3: Becoming recognised nationally and internationally as the pre-eminent source for authoritative, independent evidence on Creative Industries policy issues
* Benefit 4: Building and implementing a truly inclusive research centre reaching the widest range of key Creative Industries’ stakeholders
* Benefit 5: The PEC uses its policy recommendations to demonstrably affect Creative Industries policy change in the UK in years 2, 3, 4, and 5 of its funded life

Additionally, an evaluation of the current phase of the PEC, as part of the wider Creative Industries Clusters Programme, is currently underway and its impact is being assessed through six themes:

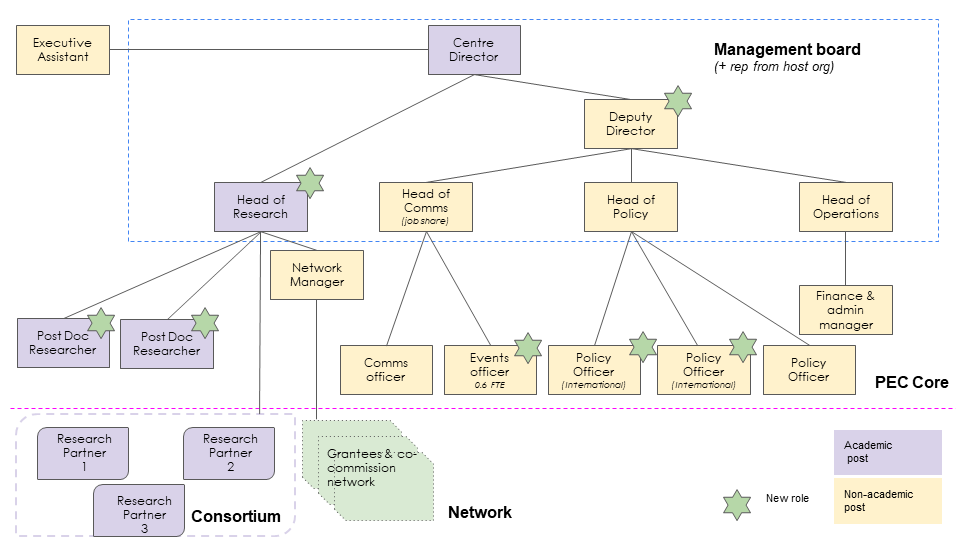
* Establishing a research agenda that represents policy priorities and evidence gaps
* Producing diverse research outputs that are timely, relevant and accessible and lead to new partnerships
* Disseminating research findings amongst policymakers, industry and international stakeholders
* Informed UK policymakers, industry and the academic research community
* Recognition of the PEC as the ‘go to’ entity for evidence on the Creative Industries
* Recognition of the Creative Industries

Whilst progress has been made in all these areas in the first phase of the PEC, it is expected that the next phase of the PEC will be an opportunity to ensure that these, and other benefits from this investment, will be enhanced and that the renewed vision and objectives for the PEC will lend themselves to impact being at the heart of what the PEC delivers for policymakers, industry and researchers. The new host will be expected to work with the current PEC Director to consider how best to meet that ambition.

**Core PEC Team**

As set out above, the expectation is that the new host organisation would both act as the host of the PEC and incorporate the core team. This includes the current PEC Director. The organogram (**Fig. 01**) below sets out the evolving core team structure, which includes both roles that already exist within the PEC as well as proposed new roles under the revised PEC structure. The model and infrastructural support for incorporating the core team should be set out by prospective hosts in their EoI (see ‘Eligibility and Assessment’ below).

**Fig.01** Organogram:



**Funding**

**Stage 1:** As set out above, this EoI call is intended to find a new host for the PEC and therefore **no funding is directly available at this point.**

**Stage 2:** Once this EoI call has been completed and a new host selected, the host selected through this process will be uniquely invited to submit a bid alongside the current PEC Director, Hasan Bakhshi, for continued funding of the PEC. That bid will then include other partner organisations (as indicated in the organogram), but the host RO/IRO will be responsible for hosting the PEC core team and submitting the formal application to AHRC.

The commission to the successful host and current PEC Director in Stage 2 will be for funding for activities that enable the PEC to meet the vision and objectives for its next phase. The full economic cost of activities will be up to £11,000,000 and AHRC will fund 80% of the full economic cost. Awards will be made to the new host RO or IRO for the hosting of the PEC in its next phase for a 5-year period (June 2023 to May 2028). Full details of the funding requirements and conditions will be set out in the commission to the selected host following this selection process. However, prospective hosts should be aware that commensurate with its strategic importance the PEC will be expected to leverage substantial financial resources over the life of the grant.

**Eligibility and Assessment**

We invite applications from [eligible ROs or IROs](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/who-can-apply-for-funding/#contents-list) to host the PEC in its next phase. The host RO/ IRO must be able to demonstrate deep knowledge of the Creative Industries and of the associated policy landscape as well as a strong and credible track record of excellence in research on the Creative Industries. Through the EoI they should provide evidence of significant current engagement with the Creative Industries and government across the UK and a commitment to the impact and benefits that will be derived from this next phase of the PEC.

Based on the need for alignment with the established vision and PEC core team, the following assessment criteriahave been set for selection of an appropriate host for the PEC:

1. *A clear strategy for maintaining continuity with the current PEC and plans for incorporating the Director and the PEC core team*
   * Given this is a continuation of an existing investment, it is critical that the new host RO/IRO should have clear plans for how they will incorporate the Director and PEC core team and ensure continuity in the transition from the current grant and host (Nesta) to the new grant and host.
2. *The clarity and strength of the commitment from the institution to support the development of the PEC, including potential leverage contributions* 
   * Potential hosts should set out their commitment to hosting the PEC and rationale for doing so. Whilst fuller details of leverage commitments will be required at the point the selected host and current PI submit a bid to the AHRC, indications of the potential leverage contributions from the host institution should be set out at this stage.
3. *Current and planned infrastructure within the institution which would lend itself to hosting and supporting the ambitions of the PEC, including its core policy engagement function*
   * Prospective hosts should outline what current infrastructure exists within their institution which would lend itself to hosting an investment of this kind and/ or what new infrastructure it would plan to put in place to support the investment. This should also take into account that one of the PEC’s main functions is engagement with policymakers. Prospective hosts should be clear about how they intend to support this function and maintain the current PEC core team’s ability to engage actively with policymakers.
4. *Clear alignment between the aims of the PEC, and its focus on the Creative Industries, with the institution’s wider research and industry engagement strategies*
   * Prospective hosts should outline how their current and developing institutional strategies align with both the AHRC’s Vision and the aims of the PEC and ensure that it would be a well-supported, visible and high-profile investment within their institutional setting.
5. *The visibility and standing of the institution with regards to Creative Industries research and innovation, policy engagement and wider knowledge exchange*
   * Prospective hosts should outline the strengths within the institution which exist with regards to Creative Industries research and innovation activities, policy engagement and wider knowledge exchange and impact activities.

Prospective hosts will be assessed on these five criteria by a specially constituted AHRC assessment panel. The panel will be comprised of representatives from the PEC Advisory Board, AHRC advisory groups and other external experts. The current PEC Director will attend the panel in an advisory capacity given the need for a strong alignment with their vision for the PEC and that of the new host. The final decision for selecting the new host for the PEC will rest with AHRC Executive.

At that point, in Stage 2, the selected host and current PEC Director will be invited to submit a bid to the AHRC for continued funding of the PEC from June 2023. The PEC award will be for five years with anticipated total funding available of £11,000,000 (100% FEC; AHRC will fund 80% of the full economic cost).

**Proposed Timeline for commissioning:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Date** | **Milestone** |
| Stage 1 | w/c 23 May 2022 | EoI call launches |
| 12 Sept | EoI call closes |
| w/c 17 Oct | Assessment panel |
| 31 Oct | Host selection decision |
| Stage 2 | w/c 31 Oct | Commission new host and PEC PI to submit funding bid to AHRC for the next phase of the PEC |
| 16 Jan 2023 | Closing date for funding bid |
| w/c 13 Feb | Assessment Panel Meeting for funding bid |
| 27 Feb | Funding Decision |
|  | 01 June 2023 | PEC 2.0 Grant active |

**Host Organisation Additional Information:**

Please see the additional **FAQ List** below to assist with your questions. We also strongly recommend that you arrange to speak to AHRC and the Director of the PEC prior to making your application. To do this, please contact [creative@ahrc.ukri.org](mailto:creative@ahrc.ukri.org) in the first instance.

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**Expression of Interest Form**

**(*please note that responses are to be submitted in the online EoI form via this***[*link*](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AHRCPECHostOrganisationExpressionofInterest)***as stated above. However, for information the required sections of the online form are copied below*)**

1.1. **Host Organisation Details** *\*Required*

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| *Please provide Name; Institute/Organisation/Company of Host Organisation. Please indicate a*  *lead applicant and contact email* |
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1.2. **Summary of strategy for maintaining continuity with the current PEC and plans for incorporating the current Director and the PEC core team (Max. 500 Words)** *\*Required*

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| Given this is a continuation of an existing investment,it is critical that the new host RO/IRO should have clear plans for how they will incorporate the PEC core team and ensure continuity in the transition from the current grant and host (Nesta) to the new grant and host. *Please give clear plans for how you will incorporate the current Director and the PEC core team and ensure continuity in the transition from the current grant and host to the new grant and host.* |
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1.3. **Summary of strength of commitment from the institution to support the development of the PEC, including potential leverage contributions** **(Max. 500 Words)** *\*Required*

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| Potential hosts should set out their commitment to hosting the PEC and rationale for doing so. Whilst fuller details of leverage commitments will be required at the point the selected host and current PI submit a bid to the AHRC, indications of the potential leverage contributions from the host institution should be set out at this stage. *Please outline your commitment to hosting the PEC and rationale for doing so, indicating the potential leverage contributions.* |
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1.4. **Summary of current and planned infrastructure within the institution which would lend itself to hosting and supporting the ambitions of the PEC, including its policy engagement function (Max. 500 Words)** *\*Required*

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| Prospective hosts should outline what current infrastructure exists within their institution which would lend itself to hosting an investment of this kind and/ or what new infrastructure it would plan to put in place to support the investment. This should also take into account that one of the PEC’s main functions is engagement with policymakers. Prospective hosts should be clear about how they intend to support this function and maintain the current PEC core team’s ability to engage actively with policymakers. *Please outline how your current infrastructure would lend itself to hosting an investment of this kind and/ or what new infrastructure it would plan to put in place to support the investment, considering that one of the PEC’s main functions is engagement with policymakers. Be clear about how you intend to support this function and maintain the current PEC team’s ability to engage actively with policymakers.* |
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1.5. **Summary of your alignment between the aims of the PEC, and its focus on the Creative Industries, with the institution’s wider research and industry engagement strategies (Max. 500 Words)** *\*Required*

|  |
| --- |
| Prospective hosts should outline how their current and developing institutional strategies align with both the AHRC Vision and the aims of the PEC and ensure that it would be a well-supported, visible and high-profile investment within their institutional setting. *Please provide details of how your current and developing institutional strategies align with the aims of the PEC and ensure that it would be a well-supported, visible and high-profile investment within their institutional setting.* |
|  |

1.6. **Summary of the visibility and standing of your institution with regards to both Creative Industries research and innovation, policy engagement and wider knowledge exchange (Max. 500 Words)** *\*Required*

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| --- |
| Prospective hosts should outline the strengths within the institution which exist with regards to Creative Industries research and innovation activities, policy engagement and wider knowledge exchange and impact activities. *Please outline the strengths within the institution which exist with regards to the Creative Industries research and innovation activities, policy engagement and wider knowledge exchange and impact activities.* |
|  |

**Submitting the Expression of Interest**

Applicants must complete the Expression of Interest form via this [link](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AHRCPECHostOrganisationExpressionofInterest) **by 16:00 (UK time)** **21st July 2022.**

In advance of completing and submitting your Expression of Interest, it is strongly recommended that you contact [creative@ahrc.ukri.org](mailto:creative@ahrc.ukri.org) to arrange a discussion with AHRC and the current Director of the PEC about your application.

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**PEC Host Selection Expression of Interest FAQs**

1. *Why is the PEC and its core team moving from Nesta?*
   * AHRC has decided to continue funding for the PEC which has established itself as a UK centre of excellence on research and evidence for Creative Industries policy. Nesta – the innovation foundation- has been a proud host of the PEC since 2018, but has recently embarked on a new strategy that sees them focus their energy and resources on three innovation ‘missions’, relating to the early years, health and sustainability. This strategic shift means that Nesta has decided not to continue as the host of the PEC after 31 May 2023.
2. *Is the AHRC is expecting major changes to the PEC in its next phase of funding?*
   * Fundamentally, the next phase of the PEC will still aim to deliver on its original objectives. However, learning from the past four years of the PEC’s operation and the new, and constantly shifting, context in which the PEC is operating means that AHRC and the PEC’s core team are taking this opportunity to refine the structure, operation and thematic focus of the PEC. The new host will therefore be expected to support the continued ambition of the PEC, and help the Director implement the refined structures and operations. Critically this will also focus on how the PEC will enhance its impact and the benefits that will accrue from its activities.
3. *What will be the balance within the PEC between policy work and academic research?*
   * The PEC will continue to balance the two, building on its success to date by growing the evidence base to inform policy development for the Creative Industries, both by addressing issues that are identified as priorities by industry and government, and by advancing research into the longer-term challenges and opportunities facing the sector.
4. *How does the PEC intend to act as a “platform for policy-relevant research produced by others”?*
   * As demonstrated over its first phase, the PEC has a critical role in being a visible, ‘go-to’ place for the latest evidence and information about the sector. For example, the PEC has reviewed the evidence in areas like [skills](https://pec.ac.uk/discussion-papers/creative-skills-monitor), [creative clusters](https://pec.ac.uk/discussion-papers/evolution-and-trends-of-creative-cluster-research) and [international trade](https://pec.ac.uk/research-reports/12-facts-about-the-uks-international-trade-in-creative-goods-and-services) and has played a critical role in the early stages of the pandemic in [highlighting relevant surveys and collecting and analysing data on the impact of Covid-19 on the sector](https://pec.ac.uk/news/how-the-pec-has-responded-to-covid-19). The PEC will also have budget to fund external research and partner with other organisations to co-commission research which it will then ensure is made available and visible through the PEC’s communications and policy functions.
5. *To what extent will the host organisation be able to shape the PEC’s vision and strategy?*
   * The vision and strategy for the PEC has been developed through discussions between the PEC Director and core team, AHRC and the PEC’s wider management and advisory structures. Whilst it is therefore well progressed, we are looking for the new host organisation to work with the Director to implement that vision and strategy, drawing on its own strengths and structures.
6. *What does the AHRC envisage will be the main benefit for the organisation that is selected to host the PEC?*
   * Over the first phase of its funding the PEC has established a strong reputation as a centre of excellence on research and evidence for Creative Industries policy. This is an opportunity for a new institution to host this flagship AHRC investment and will have a key role working with the PEC Director and core team to develop the PEC through its second phase of funding.
7. *How are the AHRC and the PEC refining the PEC’s structure and operation?*
   * The EoI document provides information on the planned refinement of the PEC’s structure and operation, both in terms of strategic and operational design principles and the structure of the core team. Whilst the direction of travel for the PEC has been developed through the sustainability planning and evaluation processes that have already taken place, we would expect the host institution to play a key role in implementing the vision drawing on their particular strengths and context. We would strongly recommend that prospective bidders set up a meeting with the current PEC Director and AHRC in order to discuss more detail of the planned structure and operation of the PEC in its next phase.
8. *What are the main features of the Sustainability Plan and can prospective bidders see a copy?*
   * The main outcomes of the Sustainability Plan are set out in the EoI document in terms of the structure and future vision for the PEC. The Sustainability Plan was produced for AHRC as the PEC’s funder. However, we would strongly recommend that prospective bidders set up a meeting with the current PEC Director and AHRC in order to discuss more detail of the sustainability planning process and its outcomes. More detail will be made available in terms of the Sustainability Plan and other documentation to the selected host once Stage 1 has concluded and when formally commissioned to bid to AHRC for funding for the next phase of the PEC.
9. *Why are the Creative Industries Council and the DCMS singled out for mention in the Call? Who will be the other key stakeholders for the PEC and how do they differ from the list of key stakeholders for the PEC in its current first phase of work?*
   * Given its remit, the Creative Industries Council and DCMS are key stakeholders for the PEC as they have been over the first phase of its operation, and the PEC has worked closely with them both to understand the priorities for policy-relevant research and to ensure that research and evidence is made available to policymakers and industry stakeholders. The PEC will also continue to have a role working with DCMS in shaping and helping to implement the Sector Vision. However, as has been the case throughout its first phase, the PEC engages with a very broad base of stakeholders, policymakers, industry representatives and researchers in order to fulfil its role. In its next phase the PEC is looking to build on networks such as its Industry Champions and International Council to ensure it is drawing on the expertise of a diverse range of stakeholders.
10. *Why has the PEC chosen to focus on the four thematic areas identified on page 1 in its next phase? Is there scope for the host organisation to revise these?*
    * The PEC’s sustainability planning process looked in part at the themes which remained a high priority for the sector, where it would add most value and offer a distinct contribution alongside other existing centres of expertise. Whilst this direction of travel has been developed, it is expected that the host institution will help work through with the PEC Director how best to refine the PEC model to address these themes. It will also have a role in working with the PEC Director to refine the mechanisms for supporting the PEC’s wider commissioned and other research activities which will stretch beyond these four central themes. As set out in the call document, the focus on thematic priorities will not prevent other topics, such as regulation, intellectual property, public service broadcasting and business models, from continuing to be researched in individual PEC-funded projects.
11. *What is the distinctiveness of the PEC’s role in the R&D infrastructure for the creative industries?*
    * The PEC has established itself as a unique type of investment for the creative industries, balancing robust academic research with agile, reactive policy and industry priorities. A key feature is how it embeds researchers in policymakers’ planning and design cycles. Through carving out this role in the research infrastructure, it has become a centre of excellence for policy-facing research and evidence for the creative industries.
12. *The call makes several references to the UK’s creative industries. Is there no expectation of an international dimension?*
    * The PEC’s next phase is expected to build substantially on the work of its established International Council which has made excellent connections with creative industries policy and research in many parts of the world. The details of how this element of the PEC’s work can be expanded will be for the PEC Director and selected host to develop.
13. *What is the AHRC’s long-term vision for the PEC?*
    * The AHRC is continuing funding for the PEC in order to ensure there is a sustained and stable investment for the sector over this critical period. With the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, the creative industries increasingly signalled as a key economic sector in the UK, and a new Sector Vision due to be delivered soon, it is vital that policymakers and industry are able to draw on the latest research and evidence about the sector, and highlight emerging priorities for research. The PEC will also importantly have a role in working alongside AHRC and UKRI to support wider investments and ambitions for the creative industries, providing evidence on how, and in what areas, those might develop. The PEC is therefore a critical infrastructure for the creative industries and this next phase of funding is intended to ensure that the infrastructure remains in place and can build on the work that has been done over its first phase.
14. *What is the AHRC’s long-term expectation for the funding of the PEC?*
    * The AHRC is committing to five years further funding for the PEC. No commitment beyond this period has yet been made. However, one of the objectives for the Centre over the next phase will be to consider options for its longer-term sustainability.
15. *Does the AHRC have a preference for the host organisation to be based in London and, if so, how can this be consistent with the AHRC’s UK-wide remit?*
    * No, there is no expectation that the new host institution will be based in London and AHRC welcomes prospective bidders from across the UK who are able to make a strong case for how they meet the criteria set out in the call document. However, prospective bidders will need to consider the critical role of the PEC’s core team in engaging policymakers, including those based in Westminster, through the work of its policy and comms team, and address how they plan to enable that continued engagement.
16. *Will the Government’s ‘levelling up’ agenda prejudice the chances of a Research Organisation/Independent Research Organisation based in London or the South of England being selected?*
    * No, whilst the AHRC welcomes prospective bidders from across the UK, the final decision will be based on the quality of the bid and strength of responses across all the criteria set out in the call document.
17. *Will partners in the current PEC consortium be able to bid, and if so would they not have a natural advantage over other bidders?*
    * Yes, any eligible RO or IRO can apply. Decisions will be made by the independent panel on the basis of the strength of responses across the criteria set out in the call document.
18. *The PEC currently has a large number of consortium partners. How many partners are the AHRC and the PEC’s Director expecting in the PEC going ahead?*
    * This is yet to be finally determined and will be for the PEC Director to work with the new host organisation to establish once the new host has been selected. However, as stated in the EoI, one of the design principles identified in the sustainability planning process has been to reduce the number of consortium partners and find other ways of bringing in diverse expertise into the PEC.
19. *How does the AHRC expect the £11m (at 100% FEC) budget will be split between resourcing the PEC’s core team, the partners and commissioning research?*
    * Further guidance around eligible costs will be included in the commission from the AHRC to the new host and PEC Director once the new host has been selected. It will then be for the PEC Director and host to determine the split of costs in response to that commission.
20. *The call says that there will be fewer fractional posts in the PEC in the next phase of its work. How many co-investigators are anticipated?*
    * This is yet to be determined and will be for the PEC Director and new host organisation to establish.
21. *How does the proposed PEC core team organogram differ from what is currently in the core team?*
    * This represents a shift in terms of structure but also proposes the introduction of key new roles which will bolster the core PEC team and enable the refined strategic and operational approach planned for the second stage. This includes Head of Research and Deputy Director roles, as well as enhanced communications and policy functions (including international).
22. *The EoI states that bidders are expected to leverage “substantial financial resources over the life of the grant”. Can you give more details?*
    * In its first phase the PEC was expected to leverage substantial additional resources, whether from consortium partners or other means, over the course of the grant. It is expected that similar leverage will be achieved over the course of its next phase. This could include direct funding for additional posts within the PEC core team and beyond from the host or consortium partners, and co-funding from research partnerships established by the PEC. More details on the nature and scale of expected leverage will be set out in the commission from the AHRC to the new host and PEC Director once the new host has been selected.
23. *Can the required leverage be in kind or must it be a cash commitment?*
    * It is expected that the leverage will likely be both cash and in-kind contributions.
24. *What happens if the bidding organisation has a different view on strategic direction to the PEC’s current Director? Can it propose its own Director?*
    * No, the AHRC has decided to continue funding for the current Director and core PEC team and is looking for a new institution to host them and help meet the PEC’s ambitions over its next phase. The selected host will have a key role however to work with the PEC Director on shaping the final funding bid to the AHRC in the light of their institutional strengths.
25. *Will the identities of the members of the selection panel be made available?*
    * No, it is not standard practice for AHRC to release the names of the assessment panel. However, as indicated in the EoI they will be representatives from key AHRC advisory groups as well as other external members in order to ensure a balance and depth of expertise in the area of the PEC’s work.
26. *Can you give more details concerning the process by which the selected host organisation would submit a bid for continued funding? Does selection to be host organisation guarantee future funding for the PEC from the AHRC?*
    * Once selected, the new host and PEC Director will be invited to submit a formal funding bid for the next phase of the PEC. The AHRC will prepare a call specification setting out more details of what is expected of that bid. This bid will be quality assured through an assessment panel process and therefore funding is not guaranteed at the stage of being selected as a host. AHRC will make the final funding decision based on the recommendation from the assessment panel. The timescales for the stages following selection of the new host are set out in the call document. Please note that these are provisional and may be subject to change.

***(FAQs continued; below added on 05 July 2022)***

1. *Is there an assumption that members of the PEC’s core team who are being incorporated into the newly hosted PEC (incl Centre Director, Head of Policy, Head of Communications and Head of Operations) will become employees of the new host institution?*

*If so, what consideration has been given to whether this would be done under TUPE transfer, and what employment rights and obligations and posts this would apply to?*

* There is an assumption that all members of the PEC’s core team will be employed as staff on the payroll of the new host organisation, whether they are existing members who choose to transfer from Nesta or new appointments. The expectation is that this will happen by the start of June 2023, to ensure continuity. The maximum grant from the AHRC has been set to be large enough to cover the employment costs of individuals in the core team, though bidding organisations may, if they choose, wish to propose funding one or more of the roles as part of their leverage commitment to the PEC.
* In terms of TUPE, we would involve the HR team of the preferred host in the PEC’s ongoing discussions with Nesta’s HR team, to map out a route which ensures the continuity of the PEC. Please note that different members of the current PEC team are employed on different types of contract - permanent and fixed term, and of varying duration - and that the implications of this would have to be taken into consideration.

1. *Will a new host be expected to physically host the entire PEC core team (including those incorporated from the current host) on its premises? How many people would PEC wish to house in the new host - how many desks? Does there have to be an office in London?*

* Nesta currently operates a hybrid working policy, and the hope is that this mode would continue at the new host. As such, there is an expectation that it would be possible for the entire PEC core team of around 16 individuals to work from the new host’s premises as required, potentially on a designated day each week, but not necessarily every day. The predominant location of the PEC’s core team, and particularly the policy and comms teams, would need to enable meetings and discussions at Westminster to be attended. If the host does not have offices in London they will need to demonstrate in their bids how they intend to facilitate such contact.

1. *What level of flexibility will there be for the new host institution to manage the PEC within its existing management structure?*

*For example, can it be managed as part of the new host’s Policy Unit?*

* As the Call document explains, a key criterion for assessing EoIs is that a host organisation must have a clear strategy for maintaining continuity with the current PEC, and plans for incorporating the Director and PEC core team. As such, bidders will need to set out a clear proposal as to how the PEC’s Director and core team will fit into their organisation’s management structures, such that the PEC has the autonomy to perform its distinctive role, at the same time as exploiting synergies with the host and its strategies for creative industries, policy and industry engagement, and making a significant contribution to the life and culture of the organisation.
* (See also FAQs 24 and 26).

1. *We appreciate that further guidance around eligible costs will be included in the commission from the AHRC to the new host institution. Can AHRC give any further indication of the expectations for spending the maximum £11m (100% fEC) budget available under this call? Can you give an indication of eligible costs at this stage?*

* The expectation is that the full £11m (100% FEC) budget will be spent on delivering the activities of the PEC in the period June 2023 to May 2028 and, relatedly, that the new host will make a significant contribution to the operation of the PEC, to ensure the grant generates as much value as possible.
* Specific detail on eligible costs will be provided by the AHRC at a later stage but will include salaries and associated staff costs, research commissioning costs, and costs associated with engagement and networking activities. Leverage contributions from the host organisation could, for example, include funding of key roles within the core team e.g. full funding of the Director role (as Nesta has done in the PEC under the current AHRC award) or funding of the new Head of Research position. The expectation is that any such leveraged roles should be members of the core team under the core team’s direction, not roles outside the core team’s management that are simply ‘aligned’ with the PEC. Specific external leverage contributions, which the preferred host organisation will be invited with the Director to set out when submitting a funding application in November, could include Co-Investigator time by CoIs from partner organisations and cash secured from partners to co-commission new research.
* (See also FAQs 22 and 23).

1. *The implication of the call is for a stronger PEC core, a reduced number of research themes and increased responsive research budget. Can you give any more details about whether existing PEC academic institutions / collaborators are expected to remain within the newly hosted PEC consortium? What does this mean for the host institution in terms of the partnership to be hosted? What role would the host institution itself have in the partnership?*

* The current PEC involves a consortium of 1 host and 10 partners. The new PEC will see this streamlined to become a consortium of 1 host and a smaller number of partners. The responsibilities of these partners, which will be set out in the funding application at Stage 2, may differ from those of current PEC partners in line with the changes to the anticipated priority themes, but the intention is that the proposed Research Network will enable the full breadth of research to be undertaken. In terms of the reduced number of partners, these will be determined at Stage 2 of the process whereby the Director and the selected host submit the funding application. However, certain current partners have expressed an interest in continuing.
* The new host institution, as the central controlling body for the entire operation of the next phase of the PEC, will be the lead partner, and so fully embedded in the partnership. The expectation is that the creation of the new Head of Research role within the core team, reporting to the PEC Director, and the new post-doctoral roles, could enable the host to assume lead responsibility within the consortium for one of the thematic priorities. The details of this, the different partners and their responsibilities will need to be set out in the funding application by the Director and the selected host organisation.

1. *What is the status of the partnership with CreativeUK Group (formerly Creative Industries Federation)? Is this partnership expected to continue into the newly hosted PEC? Will CreativeUK continue to support posts within the PEC central team?*

* Currently the CreativeUK Group co-fund a Policy Manager position within the PEC. Moving into the next phase, it has not been decided if this particular arrangement will continue - that will need to be considered when submitting a funding application in Stage 2. In general, the objectives as set out in the call guidance document explain the PEC’s intention to align priorities with the plans of industry bodies such as the Creative Industries Council, and the developing Creative Industries Sector Vision from DCMS. An aim is also for the PEC to complement the work of UKRI, and wider investments in the creative industries, through forging relationships with those currently making investments and supporting the evidence for future investments. It is expected that the new host will work closely with the PEC to determine suitable partnerships to achieve this aim.
* (See also FAQ 18)

1. *Will the governance structure of the newly hosted PEC change, including its current Advisory Board? What do you envisage as the representation of the host institution within the PEC's Advisory and Governance structure?*

* The AHRC will set a governance structure for the PEC commensurate with the significance of its investment. As in the current award, these governance arrangements will recognise the importance of policymakers and industry as the PEC’s key constituencies. In response to the specific questions. As part of this, the AHRC and the PEC plan to continue running an Advisory Board and keep a level of continuity between the current PEC Advisory Board and that established for this next phase of the PEC. However, the makeup of the Advisory Board will be reviewed by the PEC’s Director in consultation with the AHRC when the award is being finalised.
* Bidders are expected to set out clear proposals for how the PEC will be incorporated into their own management and governance structures in a way that supports its distinctive role within the R&D infrastructure for the UK’s creative industries.

1. *What are the terms of the potential contract that would be signed by the host?*

* The contract would reflect standard AHRC/UKRI T&Cs for a research grant, with additions around reporting requirements, governance and other areas which might go beyond the normal expectations of RC grants, including anything set as conditions through the review process. The detail of this would be set out in the Stage 2 call specification and in discussion with the selected host at the point an award is made. There would also be an expectation for a collaboration agreement to be established between the partners involved in the PEC as there currently is between Nesta and the current consortium partners. The arrangements for this would be the responsibility of the selected host and PEC Director.

1. *What was the level of leverage achieved in phase one? What is the purpose of leverage in this phase i.e., to co – fund the activities or to prioritise the Centre’s sustainability plans? Does AHRC have guidance on what is the expected level of leverage?*

* FAQ 22 in the call guidance document explains that in its first phase the PEC was expected to leverage substantial additional resources, whether from consortium partners or other means, over the course of the grant. In the original call specification this amounted to a minimum of £2m against the £6m AHRC grant.
* It is expected that significant amounts of leverage will also be achieved over the course of the next phase of the PEC. At this stage we would like bidders to set out ideas of how they would go about leveraging funding in the next phase of the PEC.
* Leverage contributions from the host organisation could include funding of key roles within the core team e.g. full funding of the Director role (as Nesta has done in the PEC under the current AHRC award) or funding of the new Head of Research position. The expectation is that any such leveraged roles should be members of the core team under the core team’s direction, not roles outside the core team’s management that are simply ‘aligned’ with the PEC. Specific external leverage contributions, which the preferred host organisation will be invited with the Director to set out when submitting a funding application at Stage 2, could include Co-Investigator time from partner organisations and cash secured from partners to co-commission new research.
* The AHRC would welcome proposals as to how the host organisation would hope to use some of the leverage to support the future sustainability of the PEC.
* More details on the nature and scale of expected leverage will be set out in the commission from the AHRC to the new host and PEC Director at Stage 2 once the new host has been selected.

1. *To what extent can the particular expertise of the new host organisation be expected to be reflected in the research themes tackled by the PEC?*

* The PEC’s overall proposed research themes have been set out in the call document. However, one of the rationales for the new Head of Research and Postdoc Research Fellow roles is for the host organisation to contribute research in one of the four priority areas. Naturally, these should align with the particular expertise of the new host organisation. Of course, in addition to this, the Head of Research and Postdoc Research Fellows will need to work closely with the PEC’s Director (and the Network Manager) in overseeing the whole research portfolio of the PEC, including that produced by other partners as well as the Research Network from which research will be commissioned. This means that the Head of Research needs to have outstanding research direction skills as well as being an excellent researcher in their own right.

1. *How can the new host best further their own research agenda and support a UK-wide research network?*

* We see benefits in the host organisation taking responsibility for producing excellent research in one of the core thematic areas as well as overseeing the PEC’s research portfolio as a whole, which would include the research outputs of partners in the other three thematic areas and research commissioned from the UK-wide Research Network. Indeed, this has been a broad feature of the PEC under the current award, whereby Nesta staff produce their own PEC research outputs as well as managing the portfolio from the consortium and commissioned researchers. What is crucial is that the PEC’s research and policy work as a whole is coherent and addresses the priorities of its key policy and industry audiences.
* Any research organisation like the PEC which is expected to produce a breadth of research outputs in a wide range of topic areas must build robust mechanisms for prioritisation. The PEC under its current award has introduced such processes and the Director will be expected to build on these and improve on them where needed when submitting a funding application with the preferred host organisation at Stage 2.

1. *What are the PEC's expectations when it comes to investment from the Host into the PEC? (above and beyond the 20% of FEC)*

* In the FAQs in the call guidance document, 22 explains that in its first phase the PEC was expected to leverage substantial additional resources, whether from consortium partners or other means, over the course of the grant. In the original call specification this amounted to a minimum of £2m against the £6m AHRC grant.
* It is expected that significant amounts of leverage will also be achieved over the course of the next phase of the PEC. At this stage we would like bidders to set out ideas of how they would go about leveraging funding and support.
* Leverage contributions from the host organisation could include funding of key roles within the core team e.g. full funding of the Director role (as Nesta has done in the PEC under the current AHRC award) or funding of the new Head of Research position. The expectation is that any such leveraged roles should be members of the core team under the core team’s direction, not roles outside the core team’s management that are simply ‘aligned’ with the PEC. Specific external leverage contributions which the preferred host organisation will be invited with the Director to set out when submitting a funding application at Stage 2 of the process could include Co-Investigator time from partner organisations and cash secured from partners to co-commission new research.
* More details on the nature and scale of expected leverage will be set out in the commission from the AHRC to the new host and PEC Director at Stage 2 once the new host has been selected’.

1. *What does the PEC think the benefits to the host are in hosting the PEC?*

* The PEC has rapidly built a strong track record in producing and translating academic evidence which meets the needs of policymakers. The domain knowledge of its team, the networks it has grown (including its Industry Champions and International Council) and the processes for engaging industry and policymakers it has developed will all be valuable assets for any impact-focused university. The PEC also expects to play a key role in helping the host organisation secure further investment in policy-related creative industries research activities.
* (See also FAQ 6)

1. *Does the new host have to be an existing partner?*

* No, the new host does not need to be an existing partner of the PEC.

1. *With which people/teams/organisations does the PEC currently have policy relationships? Is DCMS the primary relationship?*

* The PEC works intensely with a number of policymakers across different departments. Unsurprisingly, the relationship with DCMS is a particularly important one - they have the creative industries as their direct responsibility, and it is an official from DCMS who represents the Government on the PEC’s advisory board. Within any given week it is likely that members of the PEC, and most regularly those in the policy unit, will meet with a policymaker from DCMS at least once. However, the PEC’s work aims to influence policies across Whitehall and national Governments and, on occasion, the local level. This requires relationships to be maintained with elected and unelected officials across departments.

1. *What opportunities are there for introducing new ways of developing and delivering research?*

* While the PEC has necessarily had to bring in new forms of knowledge exchange and engagement with policymakers and industry, the PEC’s principal function is to build an evidence base to inform policy development for the creative industries. Our fundamental function will remain building the evidence base for policymakers, however, we will always look to innovate further in our engagement and other mechanisms where it furthers this mission.

1. *To what degree will the PEC operate like a think tank in its new phase?*

* The PEC is sometimes described informally as an academic research-led think tank in its emphasis on policy-relevant research, policy development and engagement. But, this does not cover its major contributions to primary research and data collection, as well as its value as a platform for excellent policy-relevant research on the creative industries wherever that is produced.

1. *Who will choose the preferred new host (who is on the panel)?*

* AHRC does not normally set out who is on assessment panels. The panel will include a mix of expertise from current AHRC advisory groups and other relevant experts. The panel will also be advised by the current PEC Director.
* (See also FAQ 25)

1. *Would co-hosting be appropriate/of interest?*

* While the natural expectation is that a single organisation would host the PEC, the AHRC is in principle open to arrangements where these add clear value and are essential for the host to play its required role e.g. in providing space for the policy and comms team to have proximity to Westminster. However, in such cases the bidder will have to explain clearly the benefits of such an arrangement over a single organisation and the mechanism for managing the co-hosting. If selected through Stage 1 of this process and invited to submit a bid in Stage 2, formally there will need to be one submitting organisation to AHRC.

1. *How the PEC might interface with CoSTAR? (*[*https://www.ukri.org/news/shaping-cultural-and-creative-research-through-infrastructure/*](https://www.ukri.org/news/shaping-cultural-and-creative-research-through-infrastructure/)*)*

* CoSTAR will be one of the significant new features of the CI R&I landscape over the next few years and there will be an interface given the PEC's continued focus on R&D, innovation and clusters. The PEC could have a role in helping understand and realise the potential of CoSTAR by ensuring that evidence about its role within that wider landscape is developed, connecting the PEC's wide networks with CoSTAR and considering how CoSTAR's presence and operation can help address challenges within the sector. It potentially could also have a role in working directly with CoSTAR, especially its data and horizon scanning function.

1. *Would you be able to supply us with broad salary costs for your team, as you envisage them carrying on with the new entity, and the new roles as yet to be recruited to?*

* We will be able to make available a version of the organogram with academic grades applied (likely to be presented at the Town Hall event). However, it should be noted that the stated FEC amount of £11m has been set to ensure that all planned staff and functions of the PEC can be supported.

1. *How could sustainability be seen and supported as a cross-cutting policy concern?*

* The PEC intends to produce regular ‘state of the nation’ style reporting in each of the four thematic priority areas listed in the call document. It expects to undertake additional priority research in these and other areas identified as needed by stakeholders. However, the PEC sees the key areas of sustainability and diversity & inclusion as a critical focus for all of our research activities, not just topics for specialised research. As such the PEC will need to develop new processes to ensure that these foci are addressed across its research portfolio, and could also be addressed through funding routed through the PEC’s planned research commissioning budget.

1. *What is expected of the PI in case of a successful award? Is the PI expected to continue working with the PEC in some capacity?*

* Hasan Bakhshi is currently the PI and Director of the PEC. It is expected that he will continue in these roles as the PEC moves in its new phase with a new host. However, the role of Head of Research, reporting to the PI, is a new position in the core team and will have scope to shape and influence the studies produced by the PEC.

1. *Are you looking for academic roles to be advertised?*

* Certain roles in the structure of PEC 2.0 are new and, as such, do not currently have staff in place. Yes, the new academic roles could be advertised, or a case could be made for the appointment of existing members of staff from the host institution. The important thing is that these roles contribute directly to generating the research outputs of the PEC - these people will be part of the core team, and will report to the Director. It is up to the prospective host to set out how they best see the roles being filled and the consequences for the PEC. To note, contributing to the staffing costs could be one way of generating the required leverage.

1. *The key thematic priorities for the PEC (Policy and Evidence Centre) have already been identified. Are these open to further refinement in terms of PEC core work (rather than exploring these through commissioned research funding)?*

* The PEC’s proposed overall research themes have been set out in the call document. These will be the subject of regular ‘state of the nation’ style reporting produced by the host organisation and its partners. In addition, further research on these topic areas and others identified as important for the PEC’s stakeholders will be undertaken through the Research Network.

1. *What are AHRC’s expectations in terms of the host institution's disciplines and/or adjacent expertise i.e., is there an expectation that the host institution covers disciplines such as economics, employment studies, public policy, etc., in addition to a strong expertise in creative industries?*

* Naturally, bids will be welcomed from organisations that have disciplinary strengths corresponding with those that are important disciplines for undertaking policy-relevant research related to the creative industries, and where there are complementarities with core PEC team strengths. However, this is not the only consideration.  It is equally important that the organisation and its researchers have a strategic understanding of and commitment to the creative industries. A further consideration will be the balance that is brought by the expertise of the host and that within the partner organisations that are included in the bid at Stage 2.

1. *Is there an expectation that the host will play a role in identifying future partners?*

* The selection of partners is a decision for the PEC’s Director and the selected host organisation when submitting a funding application in Stage 2. It should be noted that a number of partners in the existing consortium have already expressed an interest in partnering in the next phase and this will form part of the discussion in Stage 2.

1. *Does AHRC have any indication on the desired % allocation to fund commissioned work?*

* This detail will be presented in the funding application from the Director and the preferred host organisation at Stage 2. However, the expectation is that the annual budget spent on research commissioning funds from the AHRC grant will be significant and supplemented by co-commissioning funds from other sources (This will form part of the leverage raised by the PEC). It should also be noted that the stated FEC amount of £11m has been set to ensure that all planned staff and functions of the PEC can be supported.
* As a guide, it is currently planned that there will be a significant budget each year available for research commissioning, plus commensurate budget for research support activities (events, seminars etc), plus a budget for the production of state of the nation reports by consortium partners. Details and funding levels in each of these areas will be agreed at Stage 2 of the process.

1. *Has there been an evaluation of the outcomes of the current phase of PEC, and can this be made available to potential applicant organisations?*

* The work of the PEC in its current phase is subject to an ongoing evaluation of the whole Creative Industries Clusters Programme commissioned by the AHRC from Frontier Economics but results are not yet available. Preliminary insights as to the PEC’s impact and performance more generally are however contained within a sustainability plan that the PEC’s Director submitted in the autumn as well as reflected in the EoI call document itself. The AHRC will make available the full contents of this plan to the selected host organisation.

1. *What is the size of the core PEC team?  How many are currently vacant / to be recruited?*

* 16 posts, of which 7 are new roles.  Please note that the organogram and specific roles could still be subject to change by the Director and host organisation when the funding application is submitted at Stage 2.

1. *What are the existing plans, if any, for business continuity by the current PEC host?*

* Nesta has a long-standing commitment to and investment in the PEC, and is committed to setting up the PEC to succeed longer-term so that the creative industries can continue to benefit from the PEC's work and the impact return on Nesta's significant investment over the years can be fully realised. In practical terms, what this means is that the PEC has access to significant support from Nesta's Legal, Finance and other teams to ensure a smooth transition, and has representation on Nesta's Executive Team (via the CSO) to help resolve any potential challenges as they arise. Nesta has a track record of successfully supporting the establishment of new entities outside Nesta's walls (e.g. What Works Centres, BIT), and is considering similar processes for other teams. As many of the logistical questions are the same across different teams, best practices will be transferred to and from this process to ensure as much stability and continuity as possible for PEC. Nesta is deeply invested in ensuring a successful outcome and will continue to mobilise the resources needed to make this happen.

1. *Does AHRC have plans to publish further details on the assessment process and how the panel will reach its decision?*

* The panel will be asked to make its decision by using the criteria set out in the EoI Call document. There is no plan to publish further details about the panel beyond that contained within the EoI Call document.