



European Voices A UCL Grand Challenges Special Initiative

Call for Expressions of Interest Mini-Sandpit 2019-20

UCL's Grand Challenge of Cultural Understanding (GCCU) 2019-20 special initiative will address: **European Voices**. Funding is available of up to £10,000 to support one or more major cross-disciplinary activities that could be taken forward under this theme by collaborating sandpit participants.

The sandpit is open to all UCL-based researchers and professional services staff. To be considered for participation, you should submit an expression of interest (EoI) using [the online form](#) by Monday 25th November 23:59. The aims of the sandpit are to share, refine, and combine participants' ideas, to generate exciting proposals for funding. Through cross-boundary (disciplinary/professional) interactions facilitated by the sandpit, GCCU seeks to identify projects that show strong promise to produce outputs with potential to stimulate novel research and collaborations.

Expression of Interest

Eols should include:

1. Your research and/or professional interests, detailing how they relate to the topic of *European Voices* and what your interpretation of the topic is
2. A brief description of your proposed idea to be presented at the sandpit
3. Details of any current UCL collaborators, or who you would like to work with
4. A brief summary of your CV
5. Details of external collaborators, if applicable. We are interested in ideas that can lead to impact beyond academia.

The academic co-chairs of the GCCU Working Group along with the GC team, will apply first-step selection criteria, with those who meet these criteria (outlined below) invited to participate. We will specifically invite a diverse range of participants to the sandpit, so as to maximise UCL staff engagement in this call; prioritise issues to be addressed; define the outcomes to be achieved; and identify applications to be considered for funding.

Participants will be encouraged to use their Eols as the basis for contributing radical ideas and innovative approaches for discussion at the sandpit, with the aim combining forces in order to develop ideas into more developed and costed proposals. Funding will then be allocated after the event, following panel consideration of full proposals.

The sandpit will be held on **Wednesday 4th December 2019, from 2pm to 4pm** at UCL. **In order to be considered as prospective recipients of funding under this initiative, EoI submitters are required to attend on this date and for the duration of the sandpit.**

Premise

In many ways, universities and academia have never been more globalised and inter-connected. As London's 'global university', UCL represents this more than most. Yet, the UK's vote to leave the EU has called into question how to ensure UCL's rich history of academic collaboration across Europe and across cultures continues.

In wider societal debates on Brexit, the voices and views of Europeans living and working in the UK have too often been left out or gone unheard. Thus, as UCL institutionally determines how best to respond to Brexit, UCL's Grand Challenge of Cultural Understanding seeks to ensure cultural interaction and diversity flourishes. GCCU's *European Voices* initiative therefore aims to support research into the individual voices and multicultural perspectives included under the term 'European' at a time when, in many respects, borders matter less and less and yet nationality is more central to political debate than ever.

Themes

The theme of *European Voices* provides opportunity for researchers across UCL to identify topics that require cross-disciplinary attention as a basis for further research, for problematizing current debates, and considering critical issues. For example, provocations and possible questions to consider could include:

- What does identity and cultural understanding mean in a changing Europe?
- What does it mean to identify as European now?
- What role can universities, such as UCL, play in promoting cultural understanding and fostering multiculturalism?
- How can the personal stories and lived experience of those identifying as European be accessed, shared, and included in debates surrounding the changing nature of Europe?
- What might a multicultural society in the UK look like after the UK's departure from the EU?
- What cultural inequalities are likely to persist over the longer term on the basis of current political and social trends across Europe and how might these be countered?

Ideas, however, need not be limited to these themes or topics. Additional documents that may stimulate research ideas and contribute to thinking, include:

- [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(including Goal 17. Partnerships for the Goals\)](#)
- [UNESCO themes - Intercultural Dialogue](#)
- [European Commission - Culture](#)
- [UCL Cities Programme - Research Projects](#)
- [UCL European Institute](#)

Funding & Outputs

Funding of up to £10,000 is available under the initiative, for one or several emergent activities. Due to the UCL fiscal year end of July 31st, all expenses must be identified and invoiced by that date, with costed activities taking place by Monday 27 July 2020. Project outputs could include:

- Research or policy workshops;
- Symposia or conferences;
- Reports;
- Preparatory or exploratory research towards larger grant applications;
- Public and community engagement activities;
- Research-led performance/public art-based outputs, including plays and documentary films.

We particularly encourage interaction with community groups, artists or arts organisations, and with UCL Culture.