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### WUN Understanding Cultures Global Challenge Steering Group Research Project Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

## Introduction

The Understanding Cultures Global Challenge Steering Group (UCSG) has concluded that WUN is particularly well-placed to undertake two major collaborative research projects on *Cultural Heritage and Climate Change*, and on *Migration and Climate Change*.

To help the identify the best project opportunities within these domains, and to ensure that it engages interested researchers, the UCSG is inviting expressions of interest from potential participants. This document outlines the initiative and proposed steps in the development of a project plan.

## Background

We now recognize that climate change is a central driver of many global challenges, including resilience after natural disasters, poor health and disease, the availability of nutritious food, conflict, forced displacement and migration, etc. Climate change also presents risks to culture—our tangible and intangible heritage. The geographical and cultural diversity of its member universities provides WUN with an unusual opportunity to consider the impact of climate change on culture, and to address its consequences and interactions with other global challenges.

The UCSG has identified two domains in which WUN has both the research strength and the opportunity to pursue collaborative work with distinction: *Cultural Heritage and Climate Change*, and on *Migration and Climate Change.* The group would like to refine the initiative through consultation with interested researchers in member universities, and has developed the following steps:

1. Through a call for expressions of interest, identify researchers/institutes at WUN member universities who might be interested in collaborating on projects that fall within these two areas.
2. Following receipt of expressions of interest, organize a virtual workshop(s) to more sharply identify the most promising research questions and approaches to them. The workshops will bring together people from across the network to present relevant work, draw out (geographical, cross-cultural, etc.) comparisons, and curate examples of policy or other impact.
3. Following the workshops, and based on them, the UCSG will develop a detailed plan for the pursuing the most promising collaborative research initiatives.

## Project aims

The project aims to build towards the kind of collaboration that could attract significant funds (e.g., UK GCRF), and impact public discourse and policy through a potential event at COP and/or another major international conference.

## Expressions of Interest (deadline: 8 March 2021)

To help it refine its focus in developing a research plan, the UCSG is now inviting EOIs from **established institutes, centres, programmes, or investigators who have projects under way (or in development) to address aspects of *Cultural Heritage and Climate Change* or *Migration and Climate Change*, and would be interested in contributing to the development of one or more collaborative WUN-wide initiatives**.

In your expression of interest (500 words maximum), please:

1. Include a summary of your active project or project idea.
2. Identify existing or potential collaborating researchers or organizations.
3. Where relevant, identify existing or potential sources of sponsorship or financial support.
4. In order to determine if we can build larger collaborations, please confirm that we have your permission to circulate your proposal to other applicants.

The UCSG will respond to all expressions of interest. It will use them to help in assembling programs for the workshops.

**Please send expressions of interest no later than 8 March 2021 to Dr Aoiffe Ficklin, WUN Program Manager at** [**aficklin@wun.ac.uk**](mailto:aficklin@wun.ac.uk)**.**

## For further information, feel free to contact:

* Prof Elizabeth Brabec Olson (UMass Amherst), Chair of UCSG (ebrabec@larp.umass.edu)
* Prof Stuart Taberner (Leeds), Vice-Chair of UCSG (s.j.taberner@leeds.ac.uk)

1. **Participant Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name & Title:** | **Department/Unit:** |
| **University:** | **Contact Email:** |

1. **Project Information**

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| **Project Research Priorities** (choose one, or both if relevant) | ☐ **Cultural Heritage and Climate Change**  ☐ **Migration and Climate Change** |
| **Potential for Larger Collaborations** | To help us to determine if we can build larger collaborations, we request your permission to circulate your proposal to other applicants. Please check the box if you consent.  ☐ I consent to my proposal being circulated to other applicants. | |
| **Project Title:** |  | |
| **Project Description:** (max 500 words)  - Please include a summary of your active project or project idea.  - Please identify existing or potential collaborating researchers or organizations.  - Where relevant, please identify existing or potential sources of sponsorship or financial support. | | |