



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

**AHRC**

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# Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement PROPOSAL

Document Status: With Council

AHRC Reference: AH/ [REDACTED]

## Follow-on Funding for Impact & Engagement (Open Call)

**Organisation where the Grant would be held**

Organisation	The University of Manchester	Research Organisation Reference:	AHRC FOF
Division or Department	Arts Languages and Cultures		

**Project Title** [up to 150 chars]

Confronting alienation: bringing theatre to 'areas of low cultural engagement'

**Start Date and Duration**

a. Proposed start date	01 June 2020	b. Duration of the grant (months)	12
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**Applicants**

Role	Name	Organisation	Division or Department	How many hours a week will the investigator work on the project?
Principal Investigator	Dr Ben Harker	The University of Manchester	Arts Languages and Cultures	3.75

**Data Management**

Has this proposal been written in line with your organisation's and AHRC's data management policies? See Help for full details. Yes

## Objectives

List the main objectives of the proposed research in order of priority [up to 4000 chars]

To support the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) conviction that 'everyone should be able to access and participate in the arts' by the artistic transmission of key elements of the original AHRC Leadership Fellowship's research to a diverse national audience of approximately 10,000 people between September 2020 and April 2021;

To confront what the AHRC's 2016 report 'Understanding the Value of Art and Culture' terms 'inequality of engagement' by bringing live theatre's unique combination of immediacy, cognitive, affective and sensory experience to 'areas of low engagement', communities defined by the Arts Council as 'parts of the country where involvement with the arts is significantly below the national average' (Active Lives Survey, 2015-2017)

To forge for these purposes a collaboration in which research and creative working practices meet between the PI and Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP), the latter a young, highly promising socially committed company with a proven record in planned, sustained, innovative engagement with 'areas of low engagement';

To create through this collaboration a new multi-media documentary play, based upon the PI's original research, re-imagining, re-contextualising and analysing the history, meaning and contemporary resonances of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' (UCS) work-in (1971-2) to mark the event's fiftieth anniversary;

To privilege for particular engagement the location of the UCS work-in, Clydebank, which fifty years on continues to face the consequences of what UCS shop-steward Jimmie Reid called 'economic decisions abstracted from their social consequences' in the form of high unemployment and declining population;

To inspire, educate and move audiences in Clydebank and thirty five other UK cities, town and villages by recovering and celebrating a forgotten history of industrial creativity, community resilience and international solidarity obscured by deindustrialisation and dominant political narratives which stigmatise economically deprived 'post-industrial' communities;

To create a space in which audiences can, in the words of 'Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture', reflect on 'personal, community and societal challenges' in particular their communities' historical access to work, resistance against worklessness and struggles to influence the meaning of work;

To infuse into contemporary debates about automation, precarious work and contemporary and future worklessness the story and lessons contained about confronting alienation in the UCS dispute;

To support Townsend Theatre Productions to share its work with even more diverse UK audiences in terms of geographical reach (especially Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), demographics (a younger audience) and with disabled audiences, especially the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing community, whose access to live theatre is impeded by the lack of the facilities necessary for their participation;

To enhance, through creative collaboration with the university sector and leading academic research, TTP's engagement with culturally and economically marginalised audiences through the broadening of its repertoire and the deepening of its production preparation and quality, supporting the company further to raise standards with its most ambitious and rigorously prepared production to date;

To further improve the company's fundability and future work by enhancing its ability to capture, gauge, reflect on and assimilate into its future practice and funding applications the lessons learned from this creative collaboration;

To scope, in and through this collaboration, the feasibility of future substantial grant applications to support the company's

long-term objective of advancing from a project-based organization into a permanent company resourced to confront cultural alienation by delivering simultaneous productions and outreach work to areas of low engagement.

## Summary

Describe the proposed research in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience [up to 4000 chars]. Note that this summary may be published on the AHRC's website in the event that a grant is awarded

The Leadership Fellow research focussed on campaigns and episodes in twentieth-century Britain which challenged the opposition between "politics" and "culture" as usually understood. Its impact was confined to the North West of England, and primarily museum-based. The Follow-on project delivers new UK-wide social, cultural and educational impact by recasting key elements of the research in the form of an accessible and engaging multi-media documentary play produced by the political touring theatre company Townsend Theatre Productions. The play is about the 1971-2 UCS work-in, a shipyard occupation which knowingly possessed a strong 'cultural' or performative dimension in an age of mass television. Rather than withdrawing their labour, employees facing redundancy continued to work, demonstrating their industrial creativity and imagining a workplace freed from alienation, the speed-up and the bottom line. Though some in the labour movement saw class collaboration (working for free), the work-in caught the popular imagination and was a partial victory. The proposed closures were mitigated and over six thousand skilled Clydeside jobs saved. The play retells the story of the UCS work-in in its fiftieth anniversary year, and will be performed to an estimated UK-wide audience of 10,000 people in 50 performances (2020-21) across 35 venues, including theatres, libraries and community spaces. As well as returning the dispute to its original form--it was always a type of political theatre--this project creatively 'returns' the work-in to the community that made this history. The play will twice be performed at Clydebank Town Hall (the centre of UCS operations fifty years ago) where tickets for the first performance will be free to members of the local community, thanks to a trade union subsidy. The second performance will be supplemented by a free day-school. Drawing on the PI's and TTP's links with trade councils, trade union education departments and community support groups, the event will situate the meaning of the UCS work-in in relation to contemporary debates about worklessness and automation through accessible presentations from a gender-balanced panel of former shipyard workers and their families, community activists, academic researchers, local historians and archivists. Both production and day-school will be professionally filmed and uploaded onto the websites of the theatre company and the University of Manchester, prefaced by a brief statement from the PI contextualising the production and its underpinning research. In the spirit of that original research, the project connects past and present. At a moment when the Bank of England predicts that automation will displace 15 million jobs from the British economy in the decades ahead--40% of the total labour market--the issues at stake in the UCS work-in are by no means historical. The production, day-school, films and promotional material will illustrate how the key themes of the UCS struggle--creativity, alienation, the meaning of work--shed light on contemporary debates about de-growth, precarity, joblessness, automation, Universal Basic Income and what Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams' widely-discussed book, *Inventing the Future*, terms 'a world without work' (2016).

## Outputs

### The main outputs of the research

Performance, film or recording
Artefact, work of art
Case Study Material
If Other,

## Ethical Information

Are there ethical implications arising from the proposed research ?

Yes

Provide details of what they are and how they would be addressed [up to 1000 characters]

The ethical concerns relate only to data management (copyright, financial benefits, personal data) and are addressed in the DMP.

Does the institution have a policy on good conduct in research?

Yes

Details of where the policy can be accessed

<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/research/environment/governance/ethics>

## Impact Summary

Impact Summary (please refer to the help for guidance on what to consider when completing this section) [up to 4000 chars]

The project enhances the value and benefit of AHRC-funded research beyond academia by crystallizing ideas around class, creativity, alienation, work and cultural politics developed through the original Leadership Fellowship in the form of an accessible, educational and widely-performed and filmed play. The crucial impact will be upon an audience of around 10,000 people who correspond to the 'low engagement' demographic defined by the Arts Council--living in 'parts of the country where involvement of the arts is significantly below the national average', belonging to 'segments' of the population 'not currently engaged'--who will come to see the play and be entertained, challenged and educated. DCMS indicates that the benefits of cultural participation to such audiences can include 'increased health and well-being' and 'enriched lives', what the AHRC's 'Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture' report conceptualises as 'an improved understanding of one's own life, an enhanced sense of empathy with respect to others, and an appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultures.' In particular, the play might stimulate in audiences social, cultural and political reflection through its representation of a history of industrial creativity, community resilience and solidarity obscured by forty years of deindustrialisation and dominant political discourses which demonise economically deprived communities. The production aligns with the AHRC's emphasis on the capacity of culture to help to shape 'reflective individuals' and 'engaged citizens.' The PI's collaboration with TTP will deepen and extend these benefits for the company's present and future audiences. TTP has a strong track record in connecting with these 'areas of low engagement', its tours typically covering over 80% of the Arts Council's 100 regions of lowest engagement (2015-17 Active Lives Survey). TTP's critically acclaimed work will be improved further by the project for the benefit of these communities in terms of repertoire, writing, direction, rehearsal, movement, sound and lighting. Geographical and demographic reach will be extended, notably by enabling TTP to perform at venues across the whole of the UK, bringing its work beyond the regions covered by Arts Council England, who have provided support in the past. It will enable TTP to improve its engagement with the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing: 20% of the performances will be BSL interpreted. It will strengthen TTP's development plan, further enhancing its reputation with a wider range of funders by demonstrating its ability to build sustainable links with the university sector. It will benefit the future careers of the six members of the core production team hired for the collaboration. Clydebank Town Hall and thirty four large and small theatres, Arts Centres and venues will benefit through increased revenue (sales of tickets, merchandise, refreshments). Some venues will additionally benefit through the diversification of their usual programming. Third and heritage sector organisations will benefit through increased revenues, new visitors and raised awareness of collections, public events and volunteering opportunities. Built into the project are pathways to future impact, notably via the filming of both the play and day-school and concrete proposals to pursue the maximum dissemination of the play across different media (BBC Radio, film and television adaption, the play's publication). All of these actual and potential impacts will be gauged, captured and analysed with a view to supporting this company--with its distinct combination of artistic flair and commitment to social justice--to realise its ambition of becoming a permanent organisation, and thereby to secure a firmer future for its work in confronting 'inequality of engagement' ('Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture').

## Summary of Resources Required for Project

### Financial resources

Summary fund heading	Fund heading	Full economic Cost	AHRC contribution	% AHRC contribution
Directly Incurred	Staff	█	█	█
	Travel & Subsistence	2380.00	1904.00	80
	Other Costs	█	█	█
	<b>Sub-total</b>	█	█	
Directly Allocated	Investigators	█	█	█
	Estates Costs	█	█	█
	Other Directly Allocated	█	█	█
	<b>Sub-total</b>	█	█	
Indirect Costs	Indirect Costs	█	█	█
Exceptions	Other Costs	█	█	█
	<b>Sub-total</b>	█	█	
	<b>Total</b>	█	█	

### Summary of staff effort requested

	Months
Investigator	1.25
Researcher	0
Technician	0
Other	0
Visiting Researcher	0
Student	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.25</b>

## Other Support

Details of support sought or received from any other source for this or other research in the same field.

Awarding Organisation	Awarding Organisation's Reference	Title of project	Decision Made (Y/N)	Award Made (Y/N)	Start Date	End Date	Amount Sought / Awarded (£)
Arts Council England	Grant for the Arts, ACPG-00189721	Research and Development with Former Shipbuilders	Y	Y	04/11/2019	12/05/2020	██████

## Related Proposals (mandatory)

Proposal is related to a previous proposal to AHRC

Reference Number	How related?
AH/N002903/1	Continuation

**Staff**

**Applicants**

Role	Name	Post will outlast project (Y/N)	Contracted working week as a % of full time work	Total number of hours to be <b>charged</b> to the grant over the duration of the grant	Average number of hours per week <b>charged</b> to the grant	Rate of Salary pool/banding	Cost estimate
Principal Investigator	Dr Ben Harker	Y	100	165	3.8	██████	██████
						<b>Total</b>	██████

### Travel and Subsistence

Destination and purpose		Total £
Within UK	PI: train ticket, accommodation and subsistence to Bedford	250
Within UK	PI: train tickets to Clydebank, accommodation and subsistence	700
Within UK	PI: train tickets, accommodation and subsistence to attend 3 performances	555
Within UK	PI: train tickets and subsistence to London and Glasgow to attend post tour meetings	375
Within UK	Day-school speakers: travel and accommodation costs	500
Total £		2380

### Other Directly Incurred Costs

Description	Total £
Fee to TTP for Project Management Services including audience activator duties	████████
Fee to TTP for Stage Manager	████████
Fee to TTP for Actors, 2 at 17 weeks including relocation rates	████████
Fee to TTP for Choreographer	████████
Fee to TTP for Sound Designer	████████
Fee to TTP for Signer for 10 performances	████████
Fee to TTP for filming and editing	████████
Fee to TTP for writing a new play	████████
Props and costumes	3500
Set costs	6770
Day-School Costs: full day conference at £50 per person for 50 delegates	████████
Hire of rehearsal room	1000
TTP's membership of the Independent Theatre Council	540
Total £	████████

### Estates Costs

Amount (mandatory)	████████
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### Indirect Costs

Amount (mandatory)	████████
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**Project Partners:** details of partners in the project and their contributions to the research. These contributions are in addition to resources identified above.

1	Name of partner organisation	Division or Department	Name of contact		
	Townsend Theatre Productions	Production and Information	Ms Louise Townsend		
Direct contribution to project		Indirect contribution to project			
	Description	Value £	Description	Value £	
cash			use of facilities/ equipment	Equipment and Set Design	11647
equipment/ materials			staff time	Directors and other company staff	████████
secondment of staff			other	transport, marketing/advertising, posters, public liability	16250
other			Sub-Total		████████
Sub-Total		0		Total Contribution	████████

Total Contribution from all Project partners

████████
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## Proposal Classifications

### Research Area:

Research Areas are the subject areas in which the research proposal may fall and you should select at least one of these. Once you have selected the relevant Research Area(s), please ensure that you set one as primary.

To add or remove Research Areas use the relevant link below. To set a primary area, click in the corresponding checkbox and then the Set Primary Area button that will appear.

Subject	Topic	Keyword
Cultural and museum studies	Cultural Studies & Pop Culture	
Drama and theatre studies	Performance And Live Art	
Drama and theatre studies	Theatre And History [Primary]	
Drama and theatre studies	Theatre And Society	
History	Economic & Social History (General)	

### Qualifier:

Qualifiers are terms that further describe the area of your research and cover aspects such as approach, time period, and geographical focus. Please ensure you complete this section if relevant.

To add or remove Qualifiers use the links below.

Type	Name
Approach	Experimental
Approach	Knowledge exchange
Collaboration location region	UK & Ireland
Geographic Area	Scotland
Project Engagement by Sector	General Public
Project Engagement by Sector	Third Sector
Time Period	20th Century

### Free-text Keywords:

Free-text keywords may be used to describe the subject area of the proposal in more detail. It is particularly important that you provide these where the Research Area(s) you have selected are only defined to two levels.

To add or remove those previously added use the links below.

### Classification

Is your research multidisciplinary (i.e. involves researchers from two or more different disciplines)?

Yes  No

Is your research interdisciplinary (i.e. applies methods and approaches of several disciplines)?

Yes No

## Confronting alienation: bringing theatre to 'areas of low cultural engagement'

### 1. Aims and Objectives:

This project generates new impact from the 2016-17 Leadership Fellowship, 'Wars of Position: Communism and Civil Society' (AH/NOO/2903/1). It confronts what the AHRC's 'Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture' (2016) terms 'inequality of cultural engagement' through innovative and creative cultural engagement with 'parts of the country where involvement in art and culture is well below the national average' and 'segments' of the population 'not currently engaged' (Arts Council England, Active Lives Survey, 2015-2017). The overarching objective--aligned with the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's conviction that culture brings about 'improvements in people's subjective well-being'--is the cultural transmission of key elements of the Fellowship's research to a diverse, culturally marginalised national audience of approximately 10,000 people between September 2020 and April 2021. The route to this audience will be a new multi-media documentary play based on the PI's leading research exploring the history, meaning and contemporary relevance of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' (UCS) work-in (1971-2) to mark the episode's fiftieth anniversary. The play will be written, produced and toured by Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP), a socially-engaged company--recently praised by the *Observer* for 'vivid, politically committed theatre'--whose combination of critically acclaimed productions, affordable tickets and relentless touring has created a well-documented record in engaging audiences in what the Arts Council terms 'areas of low engagement' through tours typically covering at least 80% of the regions listed in the Arts Council's 100 regions of lowest engagement in the 2015-17 Active Lives Survey. The project will enable the company to share its work with even more diverse UK audiences in terms of geography (especially Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), demographics (a younger audience, notably through the networks of the World Transformed Festival) and to improve its access to audiences with disabilities (twenty per cent of the tour's performances will be British Sign Language interpreted). In particular the project will work with the people of Clydebank whose history it chronicles, the site of the UCS work-in where population is falling and 20% of residents are now 'employment deprived' according to Scottish National Statistics. Here free tickets will be provided for the local community for first of two performances (provisionally 15/10/20) by Unite the Union, with whom TTP have established links, The second performance (provisionally 26/3/21) will be framed by a free community local history day-school blending radical commemoration and popular education, analysing and celebrating a significant and often forgotten episode in which work-based identity and community solidarity made Clydebank internationally synonymous with creative and principled resistance to what leading UCS shop-steward Jimmie Reid called alienation by 'blind economic forces.'

Both the final production and day-school will be filmed for the benefit of future audiences. The collaboration will further enhance the capacity of TTP to confront inequality of engagement, enriching the quality and appeal of its work for culturally disenfranchised audiences by diversifying its repertoire and raising writing standards through collaboration with a leading academic whose research links historical analysis and contemporary questions. By also supporting further improvements in the quality of the company's direction, rehearsal, movement, sound, set and costumes, the collaboration will set a new future standard with TTP's most ambitious, wide-ranging and engaging production to date. The project will support the company better to capture, gauge, reflect on and assimilate into its practice and funding applications the lessons learned from this especially challenging and ambitious production. Sustained collaboration with the HE sector will further improve the company's record and profile, increasing the likelihood of future funding. The project will test the viability, through this collaboration, of a larger project with TTP as a Project Partner. As such, this application supports the company's long-term objective of transforming itself from a project-based organisation into a permanent company resourced to deliver simultaneous productions and outreach work, and thereby better able to bring its distinctively engaging and educational productions to still larger and more diverse audiences in the entire UK.

### 2. Context:

The Leadership Fellow research analysed the relationship between culture and communism in twentieth-century Britain. It culminated in two special issues of journals edited by the PI (2017, 2018), a 7000 word entry for the *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (2019, in press) and the PI's career-defining 148,000-word monograph, *The Chronology of Revolution: Communism, Culture and Civil Society in Twentieth-century Britain* (in press, University of Toronto Press, 2020). The latter was described in peer-review as 'a brilliant, much-needed book that displays the very highest standards of scholarship and is sure to have a transformative effect in the field.' The research focused on campaigns and episodes which challenged the opposition between "politics" and

"cultural work" as usually understood. Led by communist trade unionists, the UCS work-in is a key moment in this story, analysis of which crystallizes the book's core arguments. Though on one hand a workplace occupation against the closure of shipyards central to the Clydeside and Scottish economies, the work-in possessed a strong 'cultural' or performative dimension, uncannily echoing the BBC Television drama *The Big Flame* (1969) by dramatising a 'what if' scenario in which, for sixteen months, employees worked for the social good rather than the bottom line and controlled the creativity of their own productivity. The tactics divided the labour movement. Some saw class collaboration (working for free), but the work-in caught the popular imagination, inspiring solidarity industrial action, attracting wide community and church support, mobilizing mass demonstrations, energising the cultural field (John Lennon and Yoko Ono sent first red roses, then cash), and stimulating local creativity (the songs and poems composed were recently published in *A Rose Loupt Oot: Poetry and Song Celebrating the UCS Work-in* (2011)). The work-in was a partial victory, as the proposed closures were mitigated and at least six thousand skilled Clydeside jobs saved.

The project's original impact, confined to the North West of England, was primarily archive and museum-based, involving the cataloguing and opening to researchers of newly deposited material in the Labour History and Study Archive (2016-7), two conferences (2016, 2017), and two exhibitions in Manchester's People's History Museum. The FoF project will deliver new UK wide social, cultural and educational impact. As well as returning the dispute to its original form--it was always a type of political theatre--this project will creatively 'return' the work-in to the community which made this history, with focussed activities in Clydebank. At a moment when the Bank of England predicts that automation will displace 15 million jobs from the British economy in the decades ahead, 40% of the total labour market, the project emphasises that the issues at stake in the UCS work-in are by no means historical. In the spirit of the original research, the follow-on project connects past and present, extracting the work-in's contemporary relevance as its key themes resurface in debates about alienation, precarity, joblessness, automation, Universal Basic Income and what Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams' widely-debated book, *Inventing the Future*, terms 'a world without work' (2016).

### **3. Proposed Activities:**

The proposed activities are geared towards optimising the impact of the original research through innovative and creative engagements with new audiences, and to paving the way for future creative engagements in partnership with TTP, building its capacity to enrich and expand its longstanding work in popular education and knowledge transfer. One sphere of activities concerns the enhancement of TTP's production quality: the development of more ambitious and wide-ranging productions will increase the company's proven ability to move, inspire and educate diverse audiences to see themselves and their communities in history. This production enhancement will encompass all aspects of TTP's working practices. Centrally, TTP's writing quality will be improved. For previous TTP shows, hard-pressed Writer, Performer and Finance Manager Neil Gore--recently listed successfully for Stagescripts' 10@10 Quest for ten new significant plays by living UK-based writers--has researched and written each script single-handedly and under time pressure, visiting archives, conducting interviews and writing one draft alongside fulfilling company administrative work. Being relieved from such work, and creating a play from the PI's 'ready-made' arguments and research, informed by ongoing consultation with the PI, will enable Gore better to situate the UCS story in a larger historical, political and philosophical frame, especially in terms of pressing ideas around work, culture, creativity, alienation and automation. This support will enable Gore to devote additional time to redrafting and revising the script. The project's first activities will therefore be two half-day writing workshops attended by Gore, the PI and TTP Producer and Director Louise Townsend to discuss the play's broad themes and structure, drawing on key sections of *The Chronology of Revolution* (the Introduction and Conclusion for central ideas and contemporary debates, Chapter Five for direct coverage of the UCS work-in). TTP's enthusiasm for this material has already motivated them to apply successfully for a supplementary £15,000 'Grants for the Arts' Award from the Arts Council, 'Research and Development with Former Shipbuilders' (to be conducted October 2019-Spring 2020). This has enabled them to flesh out the PI's key theoretical and empirical analysis through oral history methods, interviewing surviving UCS activists and members of other shipbuilding communities, an instance of what their mission statement describes as 'grassroots development practices' which 'engage communities in the professional retelling of their own stories.' The second writing workshop will sift this testimony in the light of the project's key concerns, identifying the richest material. Three drafts of the scripts will be written by Gore in total, and each rigorously revised in the light of feedback from the core project team (PI, Louise Townsend: all three versions) and from the cast (third version), a process of ongoing script enhancement that represents a significant development from TTP's usual more time-pressured working methods.

Production practices will also be improved with a view to increasing the richness of the social, cultural and educational experience for TTP's 'hard to reach' audiences. The hiring of a Project Officer (PO) to complete preparatory tour administration and manage the day-to-day organisational and 'audience activator' work typically undertaken by Louise Townsend, will release the latter to work with the cast for eight weeks as Director, as opposed to the usual two weeks, a fourfold increase in the company's usual rehearsal time. The hiring of two additional young actors will double the size of the usual TTP production cast, creating a fuller, more sophisticated production for the audience. The dramatic impact of this larger cast will be maximised through a more elaborate set--with multiple levels to create a more dynamic show-- better costumes and props. The production will be finessed by the hiring of a choreographer--a first for TTP--to coach the cast in rehearsals. The production will also mark TTP pushing beyond its usual soundscape--predominantly acoustic and folk-based--by drawing on early 1970s rock music, a device explored in *We are the Lions, Mr Manager* (2017), where the artistic benefits were clear, despite the amplified music periodically overloading the company's sound equipment. A new Q-Lab system capable of intercutting amplified music and period sound effects-- provided in-kind by TTP--will be integrated into their working practices by a Sound Designer. S/he will liaise with a Stage Manager--another precedent for TTP--who will tour with the expanded cast, assemble the more elaborate set and prepare and operate the expanded sound systems for each performance. S/he will also manage the day-to-day on-tour business, providing professional and pastoral support for the cast, liaising with and seeking advice from Director / Producer to maintain and where possible improve technical and performance quality throughout the run.

The second and most important sphere of activities concerns the diversification and deepening of the reach of both the PI's research and TTP's established networks. The impact activities of the original Leadership Fellowship were museum-based in the North West of England; TTP's traditional reliance on funding from Arts Council England has unavoidably restricted its work in the rest of the UK. FoF will enable the company to bring the PI's work beyond even its usual, significant geographical reach to cover Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, while a possible premiere at the 2020 World Transformed Festival--to be brokered via the PI's links--will bring the work of TTP to so-called 'millennial' activists historically remote from the UCS work in, but shaping contemporary debates around unwaged productivity, automation, populism, precarity and worklessness to which the production directly speaks. FoF will improve access for the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing, communities 'in danger' of 'being disenfranchised' according to the AHRC's 'Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture.' On previous TTP tours less than five percent of performances have been BSL interpreted, piecemeal arrangements having been made by supportive trade unions keen to widen participation. FoF will enable TTP to take this provision 'in house', and to hire a BSL interpreter who will sign ten of the fifty shows, 20% of the total. The shape and scope of the tour will be grounded in and build upon TTP's annual, ambitious, tried-and-tested touring practice (50 performances across 35 venues), benefitting from the longstanding, open and consultative approach which has enabled the company to establish a network of stakeholder venues and organisations, including third sector and heritage sector and voluntary and community groups keen to collaborate with them in hosting return productions and events (Derby Asian Women's Network, Ruskin College, the Marx Memorial Library). The first of the two Clydebank shows will be free to the local community, tickets being provided by Unite the Union. The free, community-based interactive Clydebank day-school will also draw upon the PI's and TTP's links with trade councils, trade union education departments and community support groups. It will add an interactive forum for engagement, situating for audiences the meaning of the UCS work-in in relation to contemporary debates about worklessness and automation through engaging and accessible presentations from a gender-balanced panel of former shipyard workers and their families, community activists, academic researchers, local historians and archivists.

In order to reach beyond established cultural networks, optimise audience engagement and maximise new user contacts, knowledge exchange and interactive public engagement, the project will be energetically promoted through media and social media (news items promoting two of TTP's previous shows, *United We Stand* and *Dare Devil Rides to Jarama* reached four and a half million people through mainstream television coverage--BBC Breakfast, ITV Regional News; *Rouse Ye Women* was featured on Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*). Film production company Reel News will film the final Clydebank Town Hall performance and the day-school. Professionally edited versions of the films will be uploaded onto the TTP and RO websites, where they will be free to view and prefaced by brief statements from the PI contextualising the production in terms of the original research. Audience questionnaires will be prepared, printed and circulated for each performance. The PO and Stage Manager will conduct vox-pop interviews at three of the early shows, including the first Clydebank date, thus embedding an immediate audience-feedback loop upon which the Director will draw

during the second round of rehearsals as refinements are made to the production prior to the tour's second leg. Impact capture will also be facilitated by the use of TTP's social media sites (currently 8000 Twitter, Instagram and Facebook followers). Site traffic, shares and likes will be measured by the PO. The project will also be promoted throughout by the University of Manchester's Division of Communications and Marketing. A file of media features and reviews will be compiled by the PO in line with TTP's usual practice. The PI will write a 500 word piece reflecting on the collaboration and outlining lessons learned for the TTP and RO websites. He will hold three post-tour meetings with TTP to extract central findings and plan how they can be fed into future plans, bids and projects.

#### **4. Timetable:**

**Phase One** (June 2020). Two half-day writing workshops (Gore, Townsend, PI). Hiring of Project Officer (PO), Stage Manager, Choreographer, Sound Designer and BSL Interpreter. TTP to confirm provisional booking of rehearsal room. PR campaign commences (1/6). TTP to determine set, lighting, costume and sound design (commencing 8/6). New equipment to be purchased by 27/6 (Gore, Townsend). Cast auditions commencing 15/6, recalls 22/6, hire actors by 29/6.

**Phase Two** (July 2020). Delivery of the first (1/7) and second (27/7) version of the script (Gore). TTP set design to go to builders (20/7). PO to finalise tour: provisional dates have already been booked in fifteen venues within TTP's established networks including The Lantern Theatre, Sheffield (5/10/20), Wortley Hall, South Yorkshire (21/10/20), Clydebank Town Hall (15/10/20 and 26/3/21), Chilwell Arts Centre (22/10/20) and Epsom Playhouse (4/11/20). PO and PI to arrange the day-school. PO to arrange all accommodation and all travel plans associated with the tour, to devise a marketing plan, produce publicity materials and arrange filming of final Clydebank performance and day-school (to be held 26/3/21).

**Phase Three** (August 2020). Third version of the script to be delivered (3/8). Set delivered to rehearsal room (10/8). Rehearsals for 3 weeks (commencing 10/8), involving choreographer. Script finalised during rehearsals through consultation with cast. Theatre programme written by the PI in consultation with TTP.

**Phase Four** (September 2020). Rehearsals continue for three weeks. Play to tech and preview in Bedford (commencing 28/9) and ideally open at the World Transformed Festival, Manchester (late September, dates to be confirmed).

**Phase Five** (October - December 2020). Play to tour on its first leg of 25 dates (including dates listed above). Vox-pop feedback to be gathered at three venues including Clydebank.

**Phase Six** (January 18 2021 until 29 January 2021). Two weeks' rehearsal after recess; audience feedback gathered to date and summarised by PO to be fed into rehearsals; relevant comments to be considered by Gore and Townsend as the play is prepared for the second leg of touring.

**Phase Seven** (February to late March 2021), second leg of 25 tour dates culminating in return to Clydebank for final show (26/3/21), to coincide with the day-school. Films to be edited and uploaded on to RO and TTP websites.

**Phase Eight** (May 2021). PO will collate audience questionnaires and transcribe vox-pop interviews. These will be analysed by Gore, Townsend and PI across three post-tour meetings. Final two meetings will face forward, discussing legacy consolidation and future funding plans. The PI will write a 500 word piece reflecting on what has been learned about impact innovation, creativity and community engagement for the TTP and RO websites.

#### **5. Project Management:**

The PI is experienced in managing large grants in collaboration with non-academic partners, having previously been PI for a treble AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award (2010-15, [REDACTED]) with the Working Class Movement Library, Salford, and an AHRC Leadership Fellow (2016-17, [REDACTED]) in partnership with the People's History Museum, Manchester. He will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the project, financial management and progress review, ensuring that the schedule remains on track and that activities align with project's objectives. He will work closely with his RO's Research Office, monitoring budgets and ensuring value for money. The PI, Gore and Townsend--the project's core team--have agreed their roles and responsibilities before and through the preparation of this application. The Project Officer (PO) will possess excellent organisational and communication skills and experience of working directly with creative, technical

and marketing teams and in audience development. S/he will be managed by Louise Townsend, whose usual administrative work s/he will undertake. The PO will make the remaining arrangements for the tour, energetically promote the production and build links with venues, liaise with the film company and assist the PI in making practical arrangements for the day-school. The Stage Manager will be managed by Townsend and will ensure the welfare of the touring company members. S/he will oversee the distribution and gathering of questionnaires and coordinate the post-show vox-pop interviews. The core team (Gore, Townsend, Harker) has built eight meetings into the project (two writing workshops, three meetings to coincide with tour, three post-tour meetings). Each will be attended by relevant additional team members and address issues arising alongside agreed business. Progress on the project against its objectives will be monitored by regular communication.

## **6. Collaboration:**

This FoF application builds upon the productive relationship between the PI and TTP that first developed when TTP drew on the PI's earlier books and articles for their Spanish Civil War drama, *Daredevil Rides to Jarama* (2016); the creation of a new play based on the PI's Leadership Fellow research represents a substantial and purposeful deepening of that relationship. Following that earlier collaboration, the PI kept TTP informed about the Leadership Fellow project and secured a Research Support Fund grant from his RO to bring Gore and Townsend to Manchester to view the project exhibition and to discuss future projects. Four meetings were held in Manchester (1/9/18, 10/11/18, 31/5/19, 1/6/19) to identify the most dramatically promising elements of the research. Gore and Townsend read sections of the PI's draft monograph with a view to future productions. Politically, the PI's analysis of the UCS story struck a chord with the company's longstanding interest in workplace struggle, an issue central to previous shows including *We Will be Free!* (2013-14) about the Tolpuddle Martyrs, *United We Stand* (2014-16) about the Shrewsbury Pickets, *We are the Lions, Mr Manager* (2017-18) about the Grunwick dispute, and *Rouse, Ye Women: The Story of Mary Macarthur and the Women Chainmakers* (2019), TTP's re-plotting of the Cradley Heath 1910 strike. In particular, the PI's analysis of the politics of work-in as knowingly 'theatrical' appealed to their ongoing commitment to finding new forms for accessible political theatre, for them part of a broader agenda of radical education, their aesthetic being what they call 'interactive theatre' that 'breaks the "fourth wall."' The importance of music and musicians to the story was equally attractive to TTP, to whom music has always been a key means of increasing accessibility (Gore is a multi-instrumentalist and songwriter; *Rouse, Ye Women*, was a folk-ballad). The political and cultural fit between the original body of research and the identity, purpose and priorities of TTP is therefore compelling. The relationship between the RO, the PI and TTP was further developed through the participation of the PI's undergraduate students in a post-show Q and A (Working Class Movement Library, Salford, 10/11/18) with Gore, and regular email and telephone conversations around this application.

A Community Interest Company, TTP is the ideal partner organisation and medium for delivering the 'impact innovation, creativity and engagement' required by the FoF scheme. TTP has an annual turnover of approximately [REDACTED]. Its ability repeatedly to secure support from Arts Council England--including in July 2018 a grant of [REDACTED]--is a measure of its sound governance. TTP is centrally committed to the creativity required by the FoF scheme, and to the production and promotion of new writing that is, as TTP's mission statement puts it, 'relevant, challenging and ultimately entertaining.' TTP is especially well-placed to deliver creative impact innovation in areas of low cultural engagement, its *raison d'être* being widening cultural access by taking 'theatre to non-theatre venues for audiences that find access to theatre centres a challenge', thereby fulfilling the FoF criteria of engaging 'a variety of user communities', especially 'third sector and heritage sector' and 'voluntary and community groups and the general public.' Formed in 2011 and with seven plays and six national tours to its growing name, it has played over 1000 diverse venues to a collective audience of 100,000. Its ability to move and inspire hard-to-reach audiences is well documented. 60-70% of TTP's audience on each tour has never been to a previous company production. 53% of the audience polled during their 2017 Audience Survey reported attending theatre either irregularly, once or twice or never before. Squarely in the spirit of FOF's concern with reaching new audiences, TTP prioritises affordable ticketing and typically takes its shows not only to established theatres but to community centres, village halls, trades clubs, schools, pubs and festivals, including rural areas, networks with whom it has built sustained connections over the last eight years. As well as benefitting from and reinforcing these collaborations built by TTP, the project will extend them by introducing a new stakeholder--already consulted--Stockport's Arts for the Recovery in the Community (ARC), a charity specialising in public workshops, well-being and community development events as a means to overcome economic, social and cultural alienation with which the PI and his RO are currently forging links. Fundamentally concerned with questions of the creativity, society and mental health, ARC is

keen to develop its work in the performing arts by hosting the production in its new space in Stockport town centre.

The firm link between the PI and TTP will be further consolidated through the process of creating the research-based play and of working together around the production, tour and day-school. Intellectual ownership issues have addressed: the PI's published research will form the principal source for the proposed play, both in terms of content and arguments, but this material will be fleshed out with the oral testimony gathered. The PI's ideas will be imaginatively recast for theatre by Gore, who will be the play's sole author, and credited as such. TTP will be free to revive the production at future dates. The copyright of the films will be owned by TTP. The PI will have no claim to subsequent royalties arising from the play or production in any format, although his input and the support of the AHRC will be registered in future production programmes and all promotional material. To formalise the links between the PI and TTP, the former has agreed to become a member of TTP Community Interest Company, to attend their upcoming AGM, to write references in support of their funding applications, to continue to read and comment on major funding applications and to act as an historical advisor for future productions.

### **7. Outcomes and Impact:**

The project meets the aims of the Follow-on Funding scheme by exploiting pathways to impact that emerged when the PI developed a mutually beneficial relationship with TTP and when the synergies between the company's social and artistic concerns and core elements of the PI's AHRC-funded research became apparent. FoF would enhance the value and benefits of the AHRC funded-research beyond academia by distilling, in the form of an accessible, educational and widely-performed play, key ideas around work, cultural politics and community resistance and resilience developed through the original Fellowship. FoF will benefit TTP at a crucial stage in its development, extending its geographical and demographic reach, and improving its engagement with young and disabled user communities, especially the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing. It will facilitate the improvement of the company's working practices for the benefit of its diverse audiences, further raising standards in writing, direction, rehearsal, movement, staging, sound and feedback gathering. FoF will broaden TTP's funding base by consolidating the link with the PI, his RO, ARC and further enhancing TTP's reputation with the Arts Council by demonstrating the company's ability to build sustainable links with the university sector based on a productive collaboration where working practices meet for mutual benefit. The resources provided by FoF, especially the investment in the PO--whose CV and career will be strengthened through experience in liaising with diverse audiences and organisations, including the RO--will support the reinforcement and extension of TTP's existing development plan. This involves 'audience activation' work which targets, through a combination of careful tour planning, bespoke participation activities, strategic collaborations and focussed marketing, those geographical regions defined by the Arts Council as 'areas of low engagement' and all ten 'segmentations' of its Audience Agency Segmentation Descriptions (2015), especially the two segments defined by the Arts Council as 'not currently engaged.' It will benefit the CVs and careers of the Choreographer, Sound Designer, Stage Manager and especially the two actors hired to play principal roles and work under the demanding, supportive direction of Louise Townsend (170 actors applied for two roles in TTP's most recent production). The career benefits of working with the company are a matter of record: in 2018, Medhavi Patel (Jayaben Desai in *We Are The Lions, Mr Manager*) was nominated as best actress for at the Eastern Eye's Arts, Culture & Theatre Awards (ACTA); David Heywood (Clem Beckett in *Daredevil Rides to Jarama*) has gone on to tour in the fiftieth anniversary production of *Hair*, winner of the 2018 WhatsOnStage Award. FOF will benefit the PI and his RO, deepening his leadership expertise through collaboration with a performing arts organisation, thereby strengthening future socially beneficial applications and projects.

The crucial beneficiaries of FOF will be the hard-to-reach audience in Clydebank and beyond--projected to be around 10,000 people--who will come to see the play and be entertained, challenged and educated and whose responses will be captured, analysed and drawn upon in the creation of future projects. Feedback from audiences at recent shows stress TTP's ability to move, inspire and to communicate historical knowledge through innovative, accessible and interactive formats. Typical is the feedback from Nottingham ('Brilliantly acted, well-designed stage set, serious, funny, songs, audience participation...all too relevant today...'), Salford ('Fabulous performance by talented actors...Look and learn Hollywood') and Harrogate ('a lively and engaging participatory presentation...bringing a major historical event to life'). The Clydebank community will additionally benefit from the free performance and day-school, the latter framing and contextualising the evening's production. Clydebank Town Hall, small theatres and arts centres will benefit through increased

revenue (sales of tickets, merchandise, refreshments) and through the diversification of their usual programming. For third and heritage sector organisations (ARC, Marx Memorial Library, the Working Class Movement Library) benefits will include bringing in new visitors and raising awareness of collections, public engagement activities and volunteering opportunities.

Both the PI and TTP are keen to develop the social reach and longevity of this collaboration through the maximum dissemination of the project across different media. This will involve working together through the PI's and TTP's contacts at BBC Radio 3 and 4 about possible radio adaptation along the lines of Maxine Peake's workplace documentary Radio 4 Play, *Queens of the Coal Age* (tx 4/11/13). Peake, a former collaborator of the PI and longstanding advocate of TTP, has agreed to support this pitch. The likelihood of future adaptation will be increased by the availability of a high quality film of the production, a promotional tool for future venues, funders and potential collaborators. The film will also preserve the production for posterity and for future users such as small theatre companies seeking working models, researchers into cultural and theatre history, and film directors and film companies. *We are the Lions, Mr Manager* is currently under consideration at BBC Television as a two-part series; the film of the UCS production will be shared with the same production team. TTP is keen that the social and cultural impact of their work should be further increased and sustained by the availability of Gore's plays in print in Britain and beyond. One of his seven plays has been published to date. The PI, who is represented by the literary agency David Higham Associates, will work with Gore in preparing a proposal with a view to securing a publishing contract to bring the other six into print, ideally with Methuen. Overall, the PI is keen to support this company--with its combination of artistic flair, political integrity and commitment to social justice and the cultural empowerment of economically deprived communities--to realise its ambition to become a permanent institution. He will continue discussions with them through and beyond this project around the possibility of future collaborations to assist in securing a firmer future for TTP and its innovative and creative engagement with hard to reach communities.



## **FULL NAME**

Dr Ben Michael Harker

## **EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

- 2008 Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and Research Training, University of Salford. Passed with distinction
- 2001 PhD., Department of English and Related Literature, University of York. Dissertation: "Critical Oppositions: Realism, Postmodernism and the Reception of Contemporary American Fiction." Supervisor, Professor Hugh Haughton; examiners, Professor Lawrence Rainey and Professor Richard Godden
- 1994 M.A., 'Fictions of Conflict', Department of English and Related Literature English, University of York, 1994. Passed with Distinction
- 1993 B.A., English, University of Reading, 1993. First Class Honours.

## **PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT:**

- 2012-2014 Senior Lecturer in English and Cultural Studies, University of Salford, Grade 9
- 2007-2012 Lecturer in English and Cultural Studies, University of Salford
- 2005-2007 Freelance writer and musician
- 2004-2005 Lecturer in Modern Literature, Department of English and Related Literature, University of York.
- 1999-2007 Fractional contract tutor at the University of York, the University of York's Centre for Continuing Education and the University College of Ripon and York, St. John.

## **PRESENT EMPLOYMENT**

- September 2017-- present: Senior Lecturer in Twentieth-century Literature, University of Manchester
- January 2014—September 2017: Lecturer in Twentieth-century Literature, University of Manchester

## **VISITING APPOINTMENTS**

- March-April 2013 Jackson Brothers Fellowship, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

## **RESEARCH GRANTS**

- 2016-17, PI for 'Wars of Position: Communism and Civil Society', AHRC Leadership Fellow Scheme, £178,939
- 2012, PI for 'Issues in the Digital Humanities: A Key Skills Package for Postgraduate Researchers' (student led), £2474
- 2010-15, PI for 'Culture, Journals and Working-Class Movements 1820-1979', Treble AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award in conjunction with the Working Class Movement Library, Salford, £237,337
- 2010, PI for 'Communists on BBC Radio, 1935-56', British Academy Small Grant, £2,990
- 2004, PI for Red Haze: The Cultural and Political Life of Ewan MacColl, £4199

## **SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP**

- January 2015- Teaching Peer Review College, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (SALC)
- January 2015-August 2016, January 2018-, EAC Research coordinator
- January 2015-August 2016, January 2018-, REF UoA 27 Coordinator
- January 2015-August 2016, January 2018-, SALC Research Committee

## **INVITED TALKS**

- 'Hiding places for the enemy: The translation and reception of Georg Lukács' work in Britain, 1950-1971.' University of California, Santa Barbara (20-21 April, 2018)
- 'Literature and Institutions', invited respondent, UEA, Norwich, (18 March, 2017).
- 'Monty Johnstone's wars of position', 'Divided Loyalties Symposium', Kellogg College, University of Oxford (18 November 2016)
- 'Jack Lindsay reads the *Short Course*', Anglo-Russian Research Network, Pushkin House, London (21 November 2014)
- 'Theoretical dissonance, 1945.' Symposium on Communism, Class and the 'Cultural Turn', School of Government and International Affairs, Durham University (16 January 2014)
- 'British intellectuals and the "Soviet literary controversy"'. Symposium on 'Anti-Communism: Culture, Literature and Propaganda.' Institute of English Studies, Senate House, University of London (28 August 2013)
- 'Spender's tapeworm'. University of Wolverhampton Humanities Research Seminar, 21 March 2012

'Interwar radio and the left'. University of Reading History Department Research Seminar (2 November 2011)

'Raymond Williams and the Communist Party'. Annual Raymond Williams Memorial Lecture, Working Class Movement Library, Salford (20 November 2010)

“The trumpet of the night”: Communists on the BBC, 1935-39.’ University of Loughborough, Culture and Media Research Seminar Series (4 November 2010)

'Class composition: *The Ballad of John Axon* (1958), cultural debate and the late 1950s British Left'. Manchester University Labour Studies Seminar, (8 December 2009)

'Ewan MacColl and the Left.' International Music Research Forum, University of Newcastle, (20 March 2008)

### **EDITORIAL**

Editorial board member of *Key Words: A Journal of Cultural Materialism* (since 2009)

Editorial board member of *Twentieth Century Communism* (from summer 2013)

Reviews editor of the *North West Labour History Journal* (2008-13)

### **ORGANISATION**

Lead Organiser of 'Wars of Position: Marxism and Civil Society', three-day international conference, 150 delegates, People's History Museum, Manchester, June 2017.

Lead Organiser for 'British Communism and Commitment' Day-school, People's History Museum, (Manchester, 9 June 2016)

Co-organiser for 'Raymond Williams Now', International one-day conference (Manchester, 30 May 2016)

Panel co-ordinator 'Modernist Temporalities and the Popular Front', *Modernism Now*, 26-28 June 2014, London

Lead organiser for AHRC supported interdisciplinary conference, 'Culture, Journals and Political Movements 1820-1979' (Salford, 16 May 2013)

### **KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER**

Invited expert for Q & A / film-screening with Test Department (avant-garde musicians and filmmakers) in collaboration with the AV Festival, Newcastle and Home, Manchester (10 June 2015)

'The cultural and political Life of Ewan MacColl'. Public Lecture at Working Class Movement Library, Salford (6 February 2012)

“A new order of things”: the BBC North Region in the 1930s.’ Public Lecture at the Working Class Movement Library, Salford (8 June 2011)

'Class Act: The Cultural and Political Life of Ewan MacColl'. Public lecture at Bishopsgate Institute, London (12 June 2008).

### **MEDIA AND CONSULTANCY**

'Soul Music: The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face', broadcast BBC Radio 4, 25/10/16. Interviewee and consultant. *Radio Times* pick of the day. £80 fee

'The first time ever I heard his voice' (co-written with Maxine Peake), *Guardian*, 5/11/15.

'The Real MacColl', broadcast BBC Radio 4, 22 January 2015 and repeated on Radio 2 3/2/14.

Interviewee and consultant. Presented by John Cooper Clarke. *Radio Times* pick of the week.

Consultant for Chris Long, 'How trespassing "crystallised" Ewan MacColl's songwriting, BBC News Online, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012. No fee

'Manchester Writers', broadcast BBC Radio 4, 12 August 2010. Interview with John Harris about Salford novelist Walter Greenwood.

'Give us a Job', broadcast BBC Radio 4, 12 September 2009. Interview with Michael Portillo about cultural representations of unemployment.

BBC Radio Manchester interview with Terry Christian about Ewan MacColl

Consultant for Channel Four and Artangel charity for conceptual artist Ruth Ewan's mass busking project based around the music of Ewan MacColl, central London, October 2007. Project subsequently mounted as an exhibition for CAAC, Seville (2014)

Consultant for Salford Museum and Art Gallery's exhibition on Music in Salford, 1950 to the Present (2008-9)

14 November 2019

Dear AHRC,

We are writing in support of Dr Ben Harker's AHRC Follow-on Funding application, 'Confronting alienation: bringing theatre to areas of low cultural engagement.' Our company, Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP), is a Community Interest Company formed in 2011 with an annual turnover of approximately ●●● which has previously secured six grants from Arts Council England, including in July 2018 a grant of ●●●. We have staged eight plays and seven national tours, playing typically small intimate community venues – village halls, trades clubs, pubs, schools – in areas of low engagement, as well as established theatres and arts centres. We prioritise affordable ticketing and take shows off the beaten track, often to rural areas, networks with whom we have built sustained connections over the last eight years. Over the period of touring for nearly ten years we regularly perform to sell-out audiences in these venues. Our digital and online audience and followers over this time has risen to over 10,000, and we have performed in over 1000 venues to a collective audience of well in excess of 100,000. Our work has had national recognition from critics and has been described as “tremendous” (*The Times*), a “vivid, upbeat celebration of important struggles” (*British Theatre Guide*) and “powerful stories, powerfully told” (*Observer*). Our backgrounds have been in leading professional theatre over a period of almost forty years and in all aspects of theatre production--large and small, from West End to education-based work--including producing, writing, directing, casting, musical directing, touring, marketing, performing, fundraising for theatres and companies across the UK as well as our own.

As Ben's *Case for Support* explains, the ethos of our company is firmly in the spirit of the FoF competition. Our purpose is widening cultural access by taking theatre to non-theatre venues for audiences that find access to theatre centres a challenge; our tours and audience activation work typically target 80% of the 100 areas identified by the Arts Council's Active Lives Survey as those showing the lowest rates of engagement. This new collaboration arises from the productive relationship with Ben that first developed when we consulted his writings about Jack Lindsay, 1930s Communist culture and Ewan MacColl for our Spanish Civil War play, *Daredevil Rides to Jarama* (2016). As Ben explains in the application, his more recent work on communism in culture, and especially the UCS work-in, matches our ongoing interest in workplace struggle, an issue central to all of our previous shows. In particular, Ben's analysis of the politics of the UCS work-in as knowingly 'theatrical' appealed to our concern with finding fresh forms for accessible political theatre. The importance of music and musicians to the story was equally attractive, music being a key means through which we increase performance interaction and accessibility. The political and cultural fit between the original body of research and our identity, purpose and priorities is therefore strong. We look forward to a more sustained collaboration and the challenges and benefits of creating a new play based on Ben's research.

The potential benefits to our company are substantial. As Ben explains, producing a research-based drama structured around his work, and reinforced by further consultation through his expertise and feedback, will enable our in-house dramatist, Neil Gore, better to situate the story of UCS in a wider historical, political and philosophical context, especially in terms of ideas about work and play, culture, innovation, alienation and changes in manufacturing including automation. It will also enable writer Neil Gore to spend more time on writing and redrafting, enabling three drafts rather than the usual one. The project's administrative support provided by the Project Officer will free the Producer and Director, Louise Townsend, to spend eight weeks--four times the usual time--in the rehearsal studio. The doubling of cast size, plus the additional production support (Stage Manager, Sound Designer, Choreographer) and equipment (larger set, better props and costumes) will enable us to fulfil a longstanding ambition of up-scaling our productions, creating a show which will, we hope, set a new

standard for the future and prove especially well-researched, enjoyable and memorable for our audiences. The geographical range of our usual touring will be increased, especially in Scotland, as our funding in the past has tended to come from Arts Council England. Our accessibility for disabled audiences will be further increased by the extra resource for signing. Working with an academic and the university sector will, we hope, improve our access to a younger audience of students and activists: we enjoyed working with some of Ben's students at a Q and A in 2018, and a booking at the World Transformed Festival would bring our work to an audience of young activists and their networks with whom we're keen to develop future links. We're also keen to develop new collaborators through the project, notably Stockport's Arts for Recovery in the Community, with whom Ben's department has an established working relationship. We also look forward to working with Ben and his agent in the effort to secure a publisher for the plays of our dramatist, Neil Gore, and to collaborating to promote the new play for possible radio and television adaptation. We have always enjoyed a straightforward and mutually beneficial working relationship with Ben, and were pleased that he accepted our invitation to become a member of TTP Community Interest Company and to act as an historical advisor for future productions.

Our commitment to the project has already been demonstrated by our successful Grants for Arts award, which will enable us to flesh out Ben's core analysis of UCS work-in with the type of oral testimony in line with our usual tried and tested working methods. Through Grants For The Arts, ticket sales revenue and small sums received from trade unions, the company will provide very substantial 'in kind' benefits to the project:

Salaries for two actors:	●●
New sound and lighting equipment:	£ 9000
Tour transport and accommodation:	£ 8000
Director's fee (Louise Townsend):	●●
Producing fee (Louise Townsend):	●●
Set Design	£ 2647
Attending eight meetings with Ben:	●●
Appearance at Clydebank day-school:	●●
Lighting Designer:	●●
PR Manager:	●●
Poster/social media design:	£ 500
Marketing/Social media advertising:	£ 3000
Print/posters	£ 2000
Public Liability	£ 750
Video Trailer	£ 1000
Production shots (photographer)	£ 800

We will liaise with Unite the Union to organise the free tickets for the first of the two Clydebank performances. We will be making available to the project the network of venues with whom we have built good relations over the past eight years, and from whom we have secured repeated bookings, offering an established platform for the wider circulation of Ben's research beyond the academy.

As Ben explains in the application material, this collaboration has the potential to raise our profile and enhance our reputation, outcomes which will, we hope, assist us to build our capacity and to develop the company from a project-based organisation into a more securely established organisation which can run, operate and develop multiple projects simultaneously. Like Ben, we see this project as a new stage in an exciting, mutually beneficial and ongoing process of collaboration.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Gore (Producer/Writer)



Louise Townsend (Producer/Director)

Townsend Theatre Productions

## **Dr Ben Harker, Publications**

### **Books**

1. *The Chronology of Revolution: Communism, Culture and Civil Society in Twentieth Century Britain*. 150,000 words. 2020. Under contract with University of Toronto Press.
2. *Class Act: The Cultural and Political Life of Ewan MacColl* (London and Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2007). 348pp. ISBN 9 780745 321653
3. *British Communism: A Documentary History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011). Co-edited with John Callaghan (50/50). 304pp. ISBN 10 0719082110

### **Academic Journal Papers**

4. 'Jack Lindsay's alienation', 11 000 word article, *History Workshop* 82.1 (Autumn 2016), pp. 83-107
5. 'Politics and Letters: the "Soviet Literary Controversy" in Britain', *Literature & History* 24.1 (2015), pp. 41-57
6. "'The trumpet of the night": interwar Communists on BBC radio.' *History Workshop* 75 (Spring 2013), pp. 81-101.
7. "'On different levels ourselves went forward": pageantry, class politics and narrative form in Virginia Woolf's late writing.' *ELH* 78 (2011), pp. 433-56.
8. "'Communism is English": Edgell Rickword, Jack Lindsay and the Cultural Politics of the Popular Front'. *Literature and History* 20.2 (2011), pp. 23-40.
9. 'Adapting to the conjuncture: Walter Greenwood, history and *Love on the Dole*', *Key Words: a Journal of Cultural Materialism* 7 (2009), pp. 55-72.
10. 'Class composition: *The Ballad of John Axon* (1958), cultural debate and the late 1950s British left'. *Science & Society: A Journal of Marxist Thought and Analysis* 73.3 (July 2009), pp. 340-355.
11. 'Missing Dates: Theatre Workshop in History' (4,000 word refereed review article), *History Workshop Journal* 66.1 (2008), pp. 272-79
12. "'To be there, inside, and not be there": Raymond Carver and class', *Textual Practice* 21.4 (2007), pp. 715-735.
13. "'The Manchester Rambler': Ewan MacColl and the 1932 Mass Trespass." *History Workshop Journal* 59 (Spring 2005), pp. 219-228.
14. "Recording Stories: Realism and the Reception of Robert Stone's *Outerbridge Reach* (1994)." *Arizona Quarterly* 58.4 (Winter 2002), pp. 107-31.

### **Book Chapters:**

15. "'Workers' Music": Communism and the British Folk Revival, 1945-55'. 6000 word chapter in Robert Adlington ed., *Red Strains: Music and Communism outside the Communist Bloc* (Oxford: OUP, 2013), pp. 184-205.
16. 'Mediating the 1930s: Documentary and Politics in Theatre Union's *Last Edition* (1940)'. 6,000 word chapter in Alison Forsyth and Chris Megson eds, *Get Real: Documentary Theatre Past and Present* (London: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 24-38.

### **Popular Journal Papers**

17. "'Was there another England?": Joan Littlewood in Manchester'. *North West Labour History Journal* 28 (2003), pp. 36-42
18. Real Voices, Real Lives: The Inspirational Ewan MacColl, With Maxine Peake, *The Guardian*, 4/11/15.

### **Edited and guest-edited special issues:**

19. *Commitment*. Special issue of *Key Words: A Journal of Cultural Materialism* (2018). Includes 5000 word Introduction.
20. *Communism and the Written Word*. Special issue of *Twentieth Century Communism* 12 (2017), includes 4000 word Introduction .
21. Guest-edited 'The Century's Wide Margin', *Key Words: A Journal of Cultural Materialism* 7 (2009). (Contributors include Professor Sheila Rowbotham, Professor Stan Smith, Professor Colin Chambers).

### **Other publications:**

22. 'A.L. Morton', 1750 word entry for the *Dictionary of National Biography* (2017)
23. 'Monty Johnstone', 7000 word entry in *Dictionary of Labour Biography* (in press, 2019)

## DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

### Confronting alienation: bringing theatre to 'areas of low cultural engagement'

#### Project abstract

This project recasts key elements of a previous AHRC Leadership Fellow Award in the form of an accessible and engaging multi-media documentary play produced by the touring theatre company Townsend Theatre Productions. The play is based on the PI's monograph and retells the story of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS) work-in in its fiftieth anniversary year. It will be staged in 50 performances across 35 venues between September 2020 and March 2021. A free day school will be held to coincide with the final performance in Clydebank (26/3/21). This performance and the day-school will both be professionally filmed.

#### 1. Data summary

The primary source for the play is the PI's monograph, *The Chronology of Revolution: Communism, Culture and Civil Society in Twentieth-century Britain* (Toronto, 2020), which is informed by analysis of documents held in various archives and libraries (mainly in Britain, also in the USA and Australia). These documents are already publicly available, properly managed and stored. They therefore do not raise data management issues for this application. This material will be supplemented by oral testimony collected by Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP) as part of a separate Arts Council England (ACE) 'Grants for the Arts' Award, 'Research and Development with Former Shipbuilders' (to be conducted October 2019-Spring 2020). As part of the application process for this, TTP ensured that the project conforms to the data management policies of ACE and EU General Data Protection Regulation.

Audience feedback questionnaires will be circulated in paper format and collected at all performances of the play in line with the company's usual GDPR compliant practices. Vox pop interviews will be conducted and digitally recorded with audience members leaving the auditorium at three venues on the tour and transcribed. The edited versions of the films will include only those who have given written consent to appear in them. These versions of the two films will be uploaded onto the websites of the theatre company (Townsend Theatre Productions) and the University of Manchester.

#### 2. Data Collection

The PI conducted the original archival research upon which the monograph is based. Townsend Theatre Productions will gather oral testimony as part of their GDPR compliant ACE application. The Project Officer oversee the gathering of questionnaires and the post-show vox-pop interviews. S/he will transcribe the interviews and forward their contents to the PI on a weekly basis, before deleting the sound files. The content of the questionnaires will be summarised by the Project Officer in a word-processed report to be shared with the project team.

#### 3. Short-term data storage

Vox pop interview transcripts and the questionnaire report will be uploaded to the University of Manchester Research Data Storage (RDS) as Word files by the PI, along with appropriate metadata and only strictly relevant information about participants. The University of Manchester provides this service--and up to 8TB of storage space--free of charge. This is sufficient for the needs of the project. The RDS is a centrally hosted and administered, resilient and backed-up data storage service aligned with the RCUK Common Principles on Data Sharing to which the AHRC adheres. Management of this service is provided by the University of Manchester's dedicated Research IT team.

#### 4. Long-term data storage

The physical copies of audience questionnaires will be shredded by the Project Officer at the end of the project (June 2021). Word files of the questionnaire report and vox-pop interview transcripts will be stored for five years in the RDS and their future retention reviewed at that point. The films will be available to view on the theatre company and RO websites for two years after the project's completion (until June 2023). At that point the sharing of this data will be reviewed. When the films are finally taken down they will be permanently archived in the University of Manchester Video Portal, which is supported by the UoM Media Technologies Team.

Gore will be credited as the play's sole author. TTP will own the copyright of the films and be free to revive the production in the future in any format, with no claim to royalties from the PI. However, his input and the support of the AHRC will be registered in future production programmes and all promotional material.

## **5. Data sharing**

The intermediate data produced by the project will not be publicly shared. Oral testimony gathered from interviewees as part of Arts Council England 'Grants for the Arts' Award, 'Research and Development with Former Shipbuilders' (to be conducted October 2019-Spring 2020) will be used in the playscript. As mentioned above, compliance was a condition for this application process and award. Quotations from feedback questionnaires and vox-pop may be used in publicity and promotion material and future grant applications, but only with the written consent of those involved. The film will be uploaded onto the TTP website, which is GDPR compliant in line with the company's policies. It will also be stored in the University of Manchester Video Portal and linked to a project page on the PI's department webpages. This webpage will follow the University of Manchester's guidelines for the design and accessibility of web pages to ensure that content is available to users with diverse requirements. These guidelines stipulate that content should reach at least level 2 (AA) of the W3C's Website Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Guidelines and, as far as possible, level 3 (AAA). Both the TTP and RO web pages will be designed to display appropriately on a broad variety of mobile devices. The PI has consulted with the University of Manchester IT team to ensure that all requirements for data collection, storage and dissemination are adhered to.

## **6. Ethical and legal considerations**

Before the project commences, an ethical review will be undertaken to ensure compliance with the University of Manchester's policies on research ethics: <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/research/environment/governance/ethics>

This Data Management Plan will be checked at the award's mid-point to ensure full compliance with any changes in the AHRC's and the University of Manchester's guidelines and expectations. All data management complies with the General Data Protection Regulation, following University policies.

## Work plan

Month	Activity
June 2020	<p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Two half-day writing workshops (Gore, Townsend, PI).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Recruit Project Officer (PO), BSL Interpreter, Stage Manager, Choreographer, Sound Designer. Confirm rehearsal room booking. PR campaign starts (1/6) (Gore, Townsend).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> (commencing 8/6): Determine set, lighting, costume and sound design. New equipment to be purchased by 27/6 (Gore, Townsend).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Cast auditions commencing 15/6, recalls 22/6, hire actors by 29/6 (Gore, Townsend).</p>
July 2020	<p><b>TTP:</b> Delivery of the first (1/7) and second (27/7) version of the script (Gore).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Set design to go to builders (20/7).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Finalise tour booking: provisional dates have already been booked in fifteen venues within TTP's established networks (PO).</p> <p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Arrangements made for the Clydebank day-school (PI, PO).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Arrange all accommodation and all travel plans associated with the tour, devise a marketing plan, produce publicity materials and arrange filming of final Clydebank performance and day-school (PO).</p>
August 2020	<p><b>TTP:</b> Third version of the script to be delivered (3/8) (Gore).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Take delivery of set at rehearsal room (10/8) (Townsend).</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> Rehearsals for 3 weeks (commencing 10/8) involving choreographer. Script finalised during rehearsals through consultation with cast (Gore, Townsend).</p> <p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Writing of theatre programme (PI, Gore, Townsend).</p>
Sept. 2020	<p><b>TTP:</b> Rehearsals continue for 3 weeks.</p> <p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Play to tech and preview in Bedford (commencing 28/9) and ideally open at the World Transformed Festival, Manchester (late September, dates to be confirmed).</p>
Oct. – Dec. 2020	<p><b>TTP:</b> Play to tour on its first leg of 25 dates.</p> <p><b>TTP:</b> PO and Stage Manager gathers vox-pop feedback at three venues including Clydebank. PO transcribes interviews, summarises questionnaires and forwards to PI on a weekly basis.</p> <p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> regular communication between PI and TTP during this time; three meetings to coincide with first leg of performances.</p>
Jan. 2021	<p><b>TTP:</b> Two weeks' rehearsal after recess (18/1-29/1); audience feedback gathered to date and summarised by PO to be fed into rehearsals; relevant comments to be considered by Gore and Townsend as the play is prepared for the second leg of touring.</p>
Feb. - March 2021	<p><b>TTP:</b> Second leg of 25 tour dates culminating in return to Clydebank for final show (26/3/21)</p> <p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Clydebank day school on 26/3/21 to coincide with final show.</p> <p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Films to be edited and uploaded on to RO and TTP websites.</p>
April - May 2021	<p><b>PI &amp; TTP:</b> Three post-tour meetings with Gore, Townsend and Harker. Feedback data to be analysed by PI, Gore and Townsend. Final two meetings will face forward, discussing legacy consolidation and future funding plans.</p> <p><b>PI:</b> 500 word piece reflecting on what has been learned about impact innovation, creativity and community engagement for the TTP and RO websites.</p>



## Justification of Resources

### Directly Allocated Costs, Staff:

The collaboration involves the writing and production of a new play based on the PI's monograph, the UK wide touring of this production and the hosting of a day-school; the performance and day-school will be filmed. The PI will be available to offer consultation and feedback throughout. The PI's salary at [REDACTED] FTE for 12 months is [REDACTED]. This covers his necessary input in terms of ongoing advice and consultancy around script development, the day-to-day running of the project, financial management and progress review. It will also cover more intense periods of activity: the PI needs to attend two half-day writing workshops, three meetings during the tour to monitor progress, and three post-tour meetings to review the collaboration and plan its further development. His staff costs also reflect his work in organising the Clydebank day-school (26/3/21). He will also appear in the film of both the play and the day-school, write the theatre programme and a 500 word reflection on the project for the Townsend Theatre Production and University of Manchester websites.

### Directly Incurred Costs, Travel and Subsistence:

In two designated writing workshops in June 2020 the PI will offer detailed comments on playscript drafts. To attend these he needs a return ticket to Bedford and one night's hotel accommodation (£100 transport, £100 accommodation, £50 subsistence--two days at £25 per day). The free, community-based, interactive day-school is a crucial forum for extending and enriching engagement. To organise and attend this, the PI will need two return train tickets to Clydebank, four nights' accommodation, plus subsistence (£200 travel, £400 accommodation, £100 subsistence over 4 days). The project also needs [REDACTED] to cover travel and accommodation for some day-school speakers; some speakers will be local and require no costs. As part of his ongoing project management and consultation role, the PI will attend three additional early production performances of the tour; in order to reduce project costs, project meetings will be held on these dates. The budget is £180 rail (three tickets at £60), £300 accommodation (3 nights at £100) and 3 days' subsistence at £25 (£75). He will need an additional three train fares to London or Glasgow to attend the post tour meetings (£300 in total), plus three days' subsistence (£75 in total). These meetings will be used to evaluate the tour and the collaboration as a whole, including feedback from audiences, venues, stakeholders and participants. This information will be vital to help inform future collaborations between the PI and the theatre company, Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP). All of the PI's travel and accommodation will be booked through The University of Manchester to ensure cost effectiveness.

### Other Directly Incurred Costs, Professional Fees:

The production team hired by Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP) to mount this ambitious play will be paid the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) rate of [REDACTED] per week, and the grant will cover ITC membership for the twelve months of the collaboration (£540), an organisation to which TTP subscribe and which provides support and advice for theatre companies in terms of contracts, working conditions and staff wellbeing. The project's core activity is the writing of a new play based on the PI's research. TTP Writer, Performer and Finance Manager Neil Gore, recently listed successfully for Stagescripts' 10@10 Quest for ten new significant plays by living UK-based writers, will be paid the standard ITC rate for **writing this full-length play** [REDACTED]. The project will see TTP stage their largest production to date, with their biggest touring team undertaking their most expansive UK tour. A **Project Officer** will therefore be hired to manage this additional administrative complexity. S/he organise rehearsals, complete tour arrangements, scope and liaise with new venues / stakeholders, organise the filming, make practical arrangements for the day-school, promote the project on social media, prepare and circulate publicity materials, prepare an audience questionnaire, collate audience feedback and media coverage and assist with data management. An experienced professional dedicated to administering and publicising the project is vital to maximise the reach and impact of the PI's research among groups 'not currently engaged' and geographical 'areas of low engagement' respectively (Arts Council England). S/he will be hired for 35 weeks full time at the ITC rate ([REDACTED] in total). This resource will also improve the production for the benefit of these hard to reach audiences by taking on the usual administrative and planning workload of TTP **Producer and Director** Louise Townsend, enabling her to spend eight weeks in rehearsal as director, a contribution she is providing in kind. To keep travel costs down, rehearsals will be held in Sorbie Village Hall, the village in which the company is based. The community rate is [REDACTED] per week; we need the venue for eight weeks ([REDACTED]). A **Stage Manager** will enhance production quality and ensure that the tour proceeds as planned. S/he will work for the duration of the tour (17 weeks) and be paid the ITC rates ([REDACTED] salary; plus the ITC recommended equivalent of relocation costs at [REDACTED] per week ([REDACTED]), total [REDACTED]). S/he will additionally support the collaboration and its future fundability by

enhancing feedback gathering (overseeing the distribution and gathering of feedback questionnaires, co-ordinating the post-show vox-pop interviews), ensure the wellbeing of the expanded cast in lines with ITC guidelines and liaise with the director to maintain and where possible improve performance quality across the tour. The role is also necessary to manage the assembling and dismantling of the much larger set and sound rig. Two additional actors will enhance the production for the benefit of audience, enabling more complicated ideas and narratives to be communicated, enriching the innovative transfer of the PI's leading research. They will be hired for 17 weeks at [REDACTED] per week plus £[REDACTED] relocation rates, totalling [REDACTED]. The **choreographer** will be hired for three weeks to enhance production quality, setting new standards for the company. S/he will be paid the minimum fee (preparation and up to two weeks' rehearsal, [REDACTED]), plus one week at the ITC rate of [REDACTED] per week ([REDACTED] total). The **Sound Designer**, likewise crucial for the enhancement of the production quality, will be hired for ten days at the Association of Sound Designers' rate of [REDACTED] per day ([REDACTED]). The **BSL signer** is crucial for the engagement of diverse audiences. S/he will be hired for 10 performances and paid [REDACTED] per performance, plus [REDACTED] call out rate per day, based on the National Union of British Sign Language Interpreters (NUBSLI) rate, [REDACTED] in total.

**Film production company Reel News** will film the Clydebank day-school (one day filming, two days' editing) and the evening performance (one day filming, four days' editing), and have quoted [REDACTED] for the work. These high-quality films will enhance the project's legacy. They will be preserved on the RO and TTP websites to reach audiences beyond those who could attend either the play or day-school, and promoted by both TTP and the University of Manchester's Division of Communications and Marketing. A professionally filmed record of the play will also be a valuable promotional tool for TTP when seeking future funding and collaboration opportunities.

In order to optimise community engagement, we are also requesting **day-school costs**. The event will be free, but pre-booking necessary due to space restrictions. The day-school will be held in Clydebank Town Hall and will coincide with the end of the tour (26/3/21). The venue charges £50 per person for a full-day conference, which includes room hire, AV equipment, reception tea and coffee, a buffet lunch and tea and coffee in the afternoon. The event will accommodate 50 people, including speakers. We therefore need £2500 for the event, plus an additional £500 to cover travel and overnight accommodation for some speakers (justified above). This provision for the Clydebank community supplements free tickets for one of the two performances which have been donated by the Unite trade union. Gore and Townsend will also give their time in kind to attend the day-school.

### **Equipment**

The larger scale production envisaged requires significant expenditure on new sound and lighting equipment, including a Q-Lab programme, an additional camera and projector, floor monitors, microphones and electric instruments. This equipment is being provided in kind by TTP (see Project Partner Letter of Support for details). We are applying for costs to cover the **set construction, props and costumes**. The latter will either be hired from Admiral Costumes--a company with a longstanding reputation in the profession for quality and value for money--or purchased, whichever is more cost effective. The costume budget is £500 per actor (£2000), with additional £1500 for prop hire / purchase (£3500). These figures are based on TTP's established production budgets. We are applying for the materials and construction costs of the larger, two-tier set necessary to communicate the PI's research in a visually arresting performance (TTP are contributing set design costs). The set will be built by York-based Top Show North Limited and will comprise a demountable Perspex boxes with steel frames, frosted Perspex panels, a small raised plinth will false ceiling (4 components totalling £2812), 4 aluminium panels (£909.68), a small return flat (£226.72), a door flat (£447), two collapsing screens (£750), period-style work benches (£592), an aluminium box and lighting frame (£1034). The set has been fully costed (£6770).



**COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998**

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the personal data provided on this form will be processed by AHRC, and may be held on computerised database and/or manual files. Further details may be found in the **guidance notes**

# Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement Peer Review

AHRC Reference: AH/T012250/1

Document Status: With Council

## Follow-on Funding for Impact & Engagement (Open Call)

### Applicant Details

Applicant	Dr Ben Harker	Organisation	The University of Manchester
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### Title of Research Project

Confronting alienation: bringing theatre to 'areas of low cultural engagement'
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### Review Information

Response Due Date	03/02/2020	Reviewer Reference:	002997086
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### Research Council Contact Details

AHRC Administration Contact:	Email:	Telephone:
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### Quality

*Please comment on the quality and creativity of the activities proposed, the fit to the scheme and its potential to deliver significant impact. Is the original research clearly identified? Is there evidence of demonstrable need and engagement with target audiences in the project formulation? Further guidance is available under 'Help'.*

(1) Aims and objectives: The project generates new impact from a previous AHRC-funded project, as a documentary play based on the research will be written, produced and toured by Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP). Related to the performance of the play, the project will also deliver a day school and a film of the production. It will reach new audiences, specifically those in areas of low cultural engagement. The work explores the history, meaning and contemporary relevance of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' (UCS) work-in (1971-2) and this new piece will be created to mark the event's fiftieth anniversary. The aim is clear, well articulated, relates clearly to the original research. The objectives, as stated in the application, are in my view too many and too ambitious for the project although I do acknowledge that they are interesting, relevant and important.

The proposed activities encompass two writing workshops with TTP, the liberation of time in the writing and rehearsal process, the hiring of new cast, project officer, choreographer, stage manager, sound designer, BSL interpreter (new roles) and enhanced production values. These are in addition to the day school and film. These activities will enable the work to go beyond its previous museum-based context and also expand its geographical area, as well as reach new audiences.

The activities are relatively creative and innovative, although they are based on enhancing existing systems rather than radically changing them. Yet, from the original research, this output would have been unforeseen, so this constitutes completely new impact. Some of the venues for the tour are also third sector, which widens this further. The most innovative activity is the free, community-based, interactive day school in Clydebank. The activities are aimed at audiences and communities that did not access the previous research and would not normally do so, even though the research does concern them directly. There is a well-defined, well-articulated and evidence-based non-academic need for the project. There has been collaboration and engagement with TTP in the definition and articulation of the project. The engagement with other stakeholders (audience, in this case) in this is secondary, as TTP have presumably engaged with their audience but there is no clear evidence of the PI's engagement, although this in itself is not an issue. Audience feedback is part of the project. The activities and chosen methods of delivery are appropriate and likely to deliver the proposed outcome and impact.

(2) Knowledge Transfer activities: The proposed play, process, performance and touring does constitute a well-defined programme of knowledge exchange activity that is founded on completed, high-quality previous humanities research which will see an output through the arts. The original research is clearly identified and the project constitutes an exciting new opportunity for impact arising from that research, benefitting communities that would not otherwise access it, including the original geographic area on which the research was based.

(3) Transformative effect: The proposed activities will clearly have an effect on the partner organisation, allowing time to enhance writing processes, delivering on the ambition of their productions through new roles and reaching new audiences. The programme enhances the original research by widening its context (from museum to theatre) and geographical area, bringing it to Clydebank, where the historical events narrated took place. It will deliver significant new cultural and perhaps social impact beyond academia and to new audiences for the research and for theatre. Whether the transformative effect on TTP and audiences will be sustained longer term is difficult to say, although TTP and the PI have plans to review and apply for further funding.

*Overall, the quality and importance of the work proposed is*

Outstanding	✓ Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactor y
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*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

High	✓ Medium	Low
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## People

*Please comment on the academic team involved in this proposal, ensuring that you refer to any scheme-specific guidance available under "Help". Please also comment on the training and development opportunities available for any research staff as part of the project. This includes opportunities in relation to research expertise, as well as wider opportunities.*

The quality and importance of the PI's work, both academic and in terms of their research profile is of a high standard. The PI has managed successful grants as well as organised a series of events and managed publications (solo, chapters and as guest editor). These show that they are able to monitor and bring to completion projects of the scale as the one in this application. There is no evidence of collaboration with an artistic body, or touring a theatre piece as most of the PI's track record relates to academic work but the proposal is well conceived and there is evidence of consultation with the partner organisation, who have significant experience of this kind of work, albeit at a smaller scale. The collaboration in itself is perhaps the biggest strength of the application so the lack of the evidence of the PIs formal engagement with the arts is not an issue. There is no evident experience of the PIs external engagement, knowledge exchange or understanding of working with user communities or other audiences, especially the kinds of audiences this work will reach but the articulation of the application and TTP's track record demonstrate a potential to successfully undertake the activities in the proposal. Perhaps some form of direct engagement with prospective theatre audiences in areas of low cultural engagement would have strengthened the application, as would any KE work engaged in by the PI as part of the original research.

The core team encompasses two professionals from the TTP company: a writer and performer, and a producer and director. They are experienced, skilled, high quality practitioners that will enhance the work of the PI while, at the same time, offer their theatre work and writing to the previous research done by the PI. They have expertise to deliver the project. The core team is well balanced in terms of the competence they bring into the work. There is only explicit mention of the PI's time (0.1FTE for the duration of the award which, although it might seem too little, is well justified) so it is difficult to comment on any time balance. In addition, the project seeks to appoint a project officer, a stage manager, a choreographer, a sound designer, a BSL signer, as well as cast for the theatre work and a film company. There is explicit mention that the stage manager and project officer will be managed by the producer/director at TTP, but no other management has been detailed, although I assume normal company management will proceed in this situation. This is a common process for theatre companies. There is no mention of opportunities that will be made available for the additional staff other than through the project and conversations about future planning, although this is also common for this type of work. These staff are not research staff so there is no mention of support proposed to develop and manage their career and professional development.

*Overall, the applicant's/applicants' work to date and ability to bring the project to completion are*

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

Outstanding	✓ Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
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High	✓ Medium	Low
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**Management**

*Please comment on the proposed management of the work outlined in the proposal, considering: (1) Feasibility of the project and its likelihood of completion within the proposed timescales; (2) Appropriateness of the project plan, including arrangements for reviewing progress; (3) Arrangements for supervising and managing any staff; 4) Whether the Data Management Plan is appropriate, feasible and valid for the project. Further guidance is available under 'Help'.*

(1) Feasibility of the project and its likelihood of completion within the proposed timescales: The project is divided into 8 phases over 12 months. While this is very tight for a project that involves writing a play (with some background interviews too), rehearsing and touring 50 dates and 35 venues, the plan of work has been thoughtfully drawn out and is based on the experience of the core team. Many of the dates seem to have been agreed in advance. Therefore, I would say I have some confidence that the project is feasible and will be completed in the proposed timescales, even though these do not allow for any leeway (there is no contingency or planning for any eventuality).

(2) Appropriateness of the project plan, including arrangements for reviewing progress: the project plan is appropriate, somewhat realistic and includes arrangements for reviewing progress in the form of eight meetings of the core team (two writing workshops, three meetings to coincide with the tour, and three post-tour meetings, the final two of which will be future planning). My only concern with the plan is the lack of contingency built into it and the fact that, although appropriate, it also feels very tight for what the project needs to deliver. There are some implicit milestones inbuilt into the 8 phases (writing completed, play cast, first part of the tour, day school, feedback gathered etc) but it would be good if these were made explicit and tied to the review meetings.

(3) Arrangements for supervising and managing any staff: As I mentioned above, arrangements are made to supervise and manage the project officer and stage manager roles but there is no mention of any other supervision or management for the choreographer, sound designer, BSL signer, cast for the theatre work and film company, although I assume this will be done by TTP as is usual in this type of work.

(4) Whether the Data Management Plan is appropriate, feasible and valid for the project: The data management plan for

the project is considered and looks at all aspects of the research data that will be produced as part of the project, including issues around IP and copyright. Tying it to how and when consent will be sought would have made it stronger, as would a more precise statement on ethics. The processes for data management seem as robust as expected from University infrastructure and show that advice from data specialists has been sought.

Overall, the proposed management of the project is

Outstanding	Very Good	✓	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
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My confidence level in assessing this is:

High	✓	Medium	Low
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### Value for Money

Please comment on the value for money and appropriateness of the activities and the resources requested in this proposal. You should ensure that you refer to any scheme-specific guidance available under 'Help'.

The proposal is high quality and the costs outlined seem reasonable. Rates have been appropriately sourced from ITC and other professional associations. There is substantial in kind support from the collaborating company TTP and some from Unite trade Union. The costs involve staffing, travel, accommodation and subsistence, filming and editing costs, day-school costs and equipment. All seem very well justified and reasonable in the context of the project, providing clear value for money.

There is clear impact as part of this project, especially around hard-to-reach audiences. The work will provide clear benefits to audiences, communities, professionals in the theatre sector, TTP and the PI. The estimated audience number is 10,000, which is excellent considering the target is areas of low cultural engagement. The methods of reach are good, although not groundbreaking and rely on existing networks, targetted venues and the work of a newly appointed project officer. The sustainability of the outcomes will be secured by gathering and analysing audience feedback to draw up future plans and raise funding, as well as the filmed performance and day-school, a possible radio adaptation of the play and its publication. This is reasonable but, again, not very innovative, although wide reaching and appealing. What seems innovative, though, is the proposed collaboration, which this project tests, the new impact for the PI's academic research and how this will change TTP's ways of working and output.

Overall, the value for money of the project is

Outstanding	✓	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
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My confidence level in assessing this is:

High	✓	Medium	Low
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### Collaboration

Please comment on the strength and appropriateness of the proposed collaboration (if applicable), the commitment of the project partner(s) and the likelihood of the collaboration delivering the benefits as outlined.

(1) The strength and appropriateness of the proposed collaboration: The collaboration between the PI and TTP is very strong, as the theatre company provides an innovative way of disseminating the PI's research, to a new, hard-to-reach audience and the PI, in turn, provides rigour for the play's material. The fit between the PI and TTP is absolutely perfect. The non-academic partner TTP is very appropriate for this impact and engagement project and they have ample expertise and experience to be able to undertake and facilitate the project proposed. In the application, especially in its articulation and planning, there is evidence of TTP's commitment and active involvement, as well as care for the material from the PI which will inform the play. The proposed collaboration is made especially strong, given that it is the 50th anniversary of the

historical events narrated in the PI's book and that TTP specialises in bringing theatre to audiences and venues that don't usually access theatre.

(2) The commitment of the project partner: The PI and TTP have clearly consulted to articulate the project. There is evidence of a similar application of the PI's written research into the development of a play. The current collaboration will significantly enrich this by having the PI be part of the process, rather than just the written text. There is also evidence of a previous internal fund used for meetings to discuss the current application. TTP have touring experience and a 50 date and 35 venue tour, which seems mostly booked already and shows their commitment. TTP have been awarded an Arts Council England grant to fund research and development with former shipbuilders, which will inform and enrich this project. TTP have also secured support from Unite trade union and Stockport's Art for the Recovery in the Community.

(3) The likelihood of the collaboration delivering the benefits as outlined: There is a clear shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations, well delimited and based on each partner's substantial expertise. The application shows how they will work together to achieve the aims of the play, tour, film, and day school, as well as future planning (publication, further funding etc.). The likelihood of the collaboration delivering the benefits outlined in the application is very high, even if the PI has not directly engaged with the audience.

*Overall the proposed collaboration is*

✓				
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

✓		
High	Medium	Low

### **Outputs, Impact and Engagement**

*Please comment on the proposed outputs and the overall impact of the project, including levels of engagement with target audiences. How will the project ensure the widest possible impact and what are the plans for longer-term sustainability?*

The proposed activities and outputs (play, performance, day school and film) have a very high potential to enhance the value and impact of the PI's research, by bringing his academic publication to new audiences through the play and film, and to the place where the actual historical events narrated occurred on their 50th anniversary.

It is clear that the project will bring benefits to both the PI and TTP, the theatre company in charge of co-writing, producing, and touring the play. TTP will also benefit from participating in the day-school, as this will enable them to engage with their audience and the content of their play in a different way. Reel News, will film the final performance at Clydebank Town Hall as well as the day school. My understanding is that TTP will employ them and that they are not partners in the project, but, like the cast and other roles requested, will be working on this specific project. Reel News, the new roles outlined and the venues will benefit directly from the work and the play.

The proposed activities seek to involve areas of low cultural engagement. As far as I understand from the articulation of ideas in the application, the target audience has only tangentially been engaged with by TTP, as this is a type of audience that they specialise in (by the content of their plays and the venues they perform in). There is no indication that the PI has engaged with the audience or that TTP have specifically engaged with the audiences that may attend the Clydebank performances. Therefore, I cannot say that their needs have directly informed the development of the proposal, although through the clear engagement of TTP, audiences have been considered in the application.

The likelihood that the project will meet the needs of the audience is not clear or stated but some steps have been taken towards managing that (from the choice of venues, to subsidised tickets, geographical consideration, BSL interpretation). I envisage that the writing of the play will also take audiences into account, especially through the interviews funded by the Arts Council (secured by TTP). The proposed activities may have a lasting transformative effect if audiences that don't

usually go to see theatre find this is an art form that speaks to them but it is outside of the scope of the application, I think, as it will depend on venue programming. The actual play developed as part of this project may have the transformative effect of informing audiences of historical events (that may have affected them) in a way that is accessible, and inclusive.

Overall the proposed outputs and dissemination strategy are

Outstanding	✓ Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
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My confidence level in assessing this is:

High	✓ Medium	Low
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## Overall Assessment

### Your conclusions

Please give your overall conclusions on this proposal, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses, with an indication of their significance and therefore importance in determining the overall grade. You should ensure that you refer to 'Help' for any scheme-specific guidance

Strengths outweigh the weaknesses, which are often a matter of scope or clarification. The project's biggest assets are its aim and the excellent collaboration.

#### Strengths

The project will reach new audiences for the research and for theatre (areas of low cultural engagement), on the 50th anniversary of the event studied in the original research, making the research timely

It will deliver significant new cultural and perhaps social impact beyond academia

The aim is clear, well articulated, relates clearly to the original research

The output constitutes a new, unforeseen, exciting opportunity for impact from the original research, involving even some third sector venues

The need is clear and TTP have been engaged in the definition of the project (although actual audiences have not). The PI and TTP have consulted and there is ample evidence of collaboration and support

The activities and chosen methods of delivery are appropriate and likely to deliver the proposed outcome and impact

There is a well-defined programme of knowledge exchange activity that is founded on completed, clearly identified, high-quality previous humanities research which will see an output through the arts

The proposed activities will have an effect on the partner organisation

The programme enhances the original research by widening its context (from museum to theatre) and geographical area

The quality and importance of the PI's work is of a high standard

The core team (PI and 2 TTP staff) is well balanced

The collaboration is the biggest strength of the application, as is innovative, especially the new impact for the PI's academic research and how this will change TTP's ways of working and output

The fit between the PI and TTP is perfect

There is a clear shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and expectations

The data management plan for the project is considered and looks at all aspects of the research data that will be produced

There is substantial in kind support from the collaborating company TTP and some from Unite trade Union.

The project represents value for money.

The work will provide benefits to audiences, communities, professionals in the theatre sector, TTP and the PI. Estimated audience number is 10,000 (excellent considering the target is areas of low cultural engagement).

The activities and outputs have a very high potential to enhance the value and impact of the PI's research and will benefit



both PI and TTP.

The proposed activities may have a lasting transformative effect.

**Weaknesses**

The objectives are in my view too many and too ambitious for the project although they are interesting, relevant and important

The activities are based on enhancing existing systems rather than radically changing them

It is not clear whether the transformative effect on TTP and audiences will be sustained longer term

There is no experience of the PI's external engagement, knowledge exchange or understanding of working with user communities or other audiences, especially the kinds of audiences this work will reach. Some form of direct engagement with prospective theatre audiences in areas of low cultural engagement would have strengthened the application, as would any KE work engaged in by the PI as part of the original research

Although reasonable and based on TTP's experience, the timetable lacks any contingency and is very tight

Milestones are implicit. Making them explicit and tied to the review meetings would have strengthened the application

There is no mention of supervision or management for the some of the new roles

Tying the data management plan to how and when consent will be sought would have made it stronger, as would a more precise statement on ethics

The methods of audience reach and of sustainability of outcomes are not groundbreaking

The audience needs have not directly informed the development of the proposal

The likelihood that the project will meet the needs of the audience is not clear or stated

*Please assign the proposal an overall grade, ensuring that you refer to the guidance under 'Help' for grade descriptions and any scheme-specific guidance.*

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

6 (High)	✓ 5	4	3	2	1 (Low)
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High	✓ Medium	Low
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**COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998**

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the personal data provided on this form will be processed by AHRC, and may be held on computerised database and/or manual files. Further details may be found in the **guidance notes**

# Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement Peer Review

AHRC Reference: AH/T012250/1

Document Status: With Council

## Follow-on Funding for Impact & Engagement (Open Call)

### Applicant Details

Applicant	Dr Ben Harker	Organisation	The University of Manchester
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### Title of Research Project

Confronting alienation: bringing theatre to 'areas of low cultural engagement'
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### Review Information

Response Due Date	19/03/2020	Reviewer Reference:	087272573
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### Research Council Contact Details

AHRC Administration Contact:	Email:	Telephone:
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### Quality

*Please comment on the quality and creativity of the activities proposed, the fit to the scheme and its potential to deliver significant impact. Is the original research clearly identified? Is there evidence of demonstrable need and engagement with target audiences in the project formulation? Further guidance is available under 'Help'.*

Based on a firm grounding in the aims of this AHRC scheme (and the broader objectives of the DCMS and AHRC), this project aims to bring the results of the PI's academic research through partnering through a theatre company to produce a new play, focusing on audiences with limited access to cultural programming, especially in rural areas and those with disabilities. It is based on a concrete historical event discussed the PI's forthcoming monograph, with performances taking place at one of the key sites involved in the labour dispute concerned. This will be in living memory of some of the potential audience, giving immediate local interest. At the same time, the application demonstrates the connection to this particular event with broader social issues, such as the consequences of automation and the overall value of labour. The application thus presents an innovative plan to bring the PI's research to new audiences in a genuinely engaging manner, with achievable aims.

The project is based on one identified aspect of completed research that will be published as a monograph during 2020, in advance of the start of public activities. This project will both demonstrate the value of arts and humanities research by showing its implications for key questions that we are currently asking about the status of labour in the economy (which

have only grown since the application's submission), and has the potential to generate new research on labour through engaging with audience responses. The PI achieves his aims by partnering with Townsend Theatre Productions, an experienced political touring theatre company, and the majority of the grant aims to cover additional staffing costs that this group will incur.

This work uses storytelling to transform academic research into a form that engages audiences with their past and burning contemporary questions. If well executed, it will also have a transformative effect on the partner theatre group by allowing it to reach audiences that it has not had resources to engage, both in expanding its geographic reach and ability to deliver accessible productions through sign-language interpretation.

*Overall, the quality and importance of the work proposed is*

✓				
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

✓		
High	Medium	Low

## People

*Please comment on the academic team involved in this proposal, ensuring that you refer to any scheme-specific guidance available under "Help". Please also comment on the training and development opportunities available for any research staff as part of the project. This includes opportunities in relation to research expertise, as well as wider opportunities.*

The PI is a senior lecturer at the University of Manchester and about to publish a substantial monograph on the research at hand. The applicant has an established working relationship with the theatre group in the past. Although neither he nor the partner organization, Townsend Theatre Productions, have previously undertaken a project of this scale, their combined background and experience, as well as the focus on hiring appropriate staff, suggest that they will be able to execute the work plan as presented.

*Overall, the applicant's/applicants' work to date and ability to bring the project to completion are*

	✓			
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

✓		
High	Medium	Low

## Management

*Please comment on the proposed management of the work outlined in the proposal, considering: (1) Feasibility of the project and its likelihood of completion within the proposed timescales; (2) Appropriateness of the project plan, including arrangements for reviewing progress; (3) Arrangements for supervising and managing any staff; 4) Whether the Data Management Plan is appropriate, feasible and valid for the project. Further guidance is available under 'Help'.*

The application presents a feasible work plan to implement the stated objectives between June 2020 and May 2021. Most of this is not within the PI's control, as Townsend Theatre Productions is responsible for most of the project's management and engagement activities. It is heavily dependent on hiring a project officer, and there appears to be some risk that a person with the advanced qualifications required will not be obtained. Nonetheless, the work plan identifies concrete objectives that follow a realistic timeframe.

*Overall, the proposed management of the project is*

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

	✓			
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory

	✓	
High	Medium	Low

### Value for Money

*Please comment on the value for money and appropriateness of the activities and the resources requested in this proposal. You should ensure that you refer to any scheme-specific guidance available under 'Help'.*

In addition to covering the PI's salary for activities related to the grant, it is proposed to mostly cover staffing costs for Townsend Theatre Productions. These costs appear to be realistic, using rates set by the Independent Theatre Council. They represent good value for the AHRC outlay insofar as it will produce new and highly creative material based on funded humanities research, directly achieving the stated aims of the programme. As the funding is largely dedicated to people rather than capital projects, and travel is kept to a minimum, the project should also have a low environmental impact.

Given that the project's expenses are almost entirely dedicated to the creative industry, there is some question in my mind as to why this activity should be funded by the AHRC rather than Arts Council England and DCMS, but I am not sufficiently familiar with the relationship between the funding bodies to determine whether this is a concern.

*Overall, the value for money of the project is*

✓				
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

	✓	
High	Medium	Low

### Collaboration

*Please comment on the strength and appropriateness of the proposed collaboration (if applicable), the commitment of the project partner(s) and the likelihood of the collaboration delivering the benefits as outlined.*

To meet the project's aim of producing a play out of the PI's research, the partnership with Townsend Theatre Productions is entirely appropriate. The dedication to ensuring the programme succeeds as outlined is evident from the interests and experience of both the PI and the partner theatre group. The key roles are precisely outlined and represent a realistic balance of responsibilities to ensure the project's success, as measured by the stated aims.

*Overall the proposed collaboration is*

✓				
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory

*My confidence level in assessing this is:*

✓		
High	Medium	Low

### Outputs, Impact and Engagement

*Please comment on the proposed outputs and the overall impact of the project, including levels of engagement with target audiences. How will the project ensure the widest possible impact and what are the plans for longer-term sustainability?*

By creating a new play aimed at new audiences, this project will demonstrate the value of the PI's about-to-be-published academic research as well as strengthen the position of Townsend Theatre Productions. It presents a plausible plan to engage target audiences based on their identified needs and involve them in the publication of the project's outputs. By engaging audiences through storytelling with their own past, it demonstrates a high likelihood of enabling them to address key societal questions.

Overall the proposed outputs and dissemination strategy are

✓ Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
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My confidence level in assessing this is:

✓ High	Medium	Low
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**Overall Assessment**

**Your conclusions**

Please give your overall conclusions on this proposal, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses, with an indication of their significance and therefore importance in determining the overall grade. You should ensure that you refer to 'Help' for any scheme-specific guidance

Based on new findings that arose from the PI's recent research and a working relationship with Townsend Theatre Productions, this application proposes to engage new audiences with limited access to cultural programming with humanities research. It specifically aims to bring to life the PI's realization during the writing of his monograph that the 'work-in' of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders had a highly theatrical aspect, with planned showings of a new play on one of the sites involved. It presents a clear plan to create and perform this play in a way that will benefit both the PI and the partner organization. Although it is based on local history, it demonstrates that there is a potentially national audience for this story through connection with pressing questions for the future of our society.

This project seeks to surpass what either the PI or the partner organization has achieved in the past. Its successful execution is dependent on an experienced project officer, whose funding is the largest outlay for the project, but who has not yet been identified. The stated qualifications for such a person are ambitious, and there is some risk that the project will not succeed if such a person cannot be found. The proposal also demonstrates, however, that this risk is worthwhile, since it will have a transformative effect for the partner organization beyond this grant.

Although the application does not suggest this, there is likely potential to use the audience feedback from the resulting events as the basis of future research into our understanding of labour and theatre.

The project's association with Townsend Theatre Productions as well as sponsorship by Unite the Union carries some risk that the AHRC will be accused of supporting a particular political movement. This seems to me unavoidable with this area of research; the project's presentation, along with the historical grounding for the PI's research suggests, suggests that he will be able to tread the line of promoting non-partisan, critical political engagement.

Please assign the proposal an overall grade, ensuring that you refer to the guidance under 'Help' for grade descriptions and any scheme-specific guidance.

My confidence level in assessing this is:

6 (High)	✓ 5	4	3	2	1 (Low)
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High	✓ Medium	Low
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