

Manchester Museum, part of the University of Manchester, is one of the UK's leading university museums. We are driven by our mission: to build understanding between cultures and a sustainable world, and our work is underpinned by our core values of inclusion, imagination and care. We believe that the ecological and climate crises are relevant to both aspects of our mission: they are as much cultural and social justice issues as they are scientific and environmental. The climate and ecological crises call for collaborative working, collective action and cooperation both globally and locally.

We are urgently transforming how we support ecological thinking and action, build more sustainable futures and inspire cooperation and change in our city. We believe a better future requires us to rethink how we care and are convinced that our future is collaborative: long term relationships, inclusion and partnerships will be the hallmarks of our ethos of care.

### **Questions we're asking ourselves:**

How can the Museum use its convening power to actively support collective action and positive change across Manchester in response to the climate crisis? We believe that positive action / change is being held back by the lack of quick and easy access to information about:

- who is doing what, where and how
- the skills, expertise, knowledge and motivations of individuals, communities and organisations
- what has worked, what hasn't worked and why?
- the impacts and legacy of different ways of working

In the absence of this information, we believe that:

- people are wasting time trying to find out what is already going on
- partnerships and collaborative working are being stifled because people are not aware of the different opportunities that are out there
- opportunities for creativity and innovative new ways of working are being lost because it is often easier to work with partners we already know about / have already worked with
- there is a lack of sharing between individuals and organisations about what does and does not work

We believe that there is a role for the Museum to actively support connections and collaboration between individuals and organisations.

To ensure that our work is grounded in the communities on our doorstep, we need to understand the scope and scale of activities and collaborative work that is already underway: What is already happening in our local wards? What are the issues that prevent people and organisations from working together?

We are particularly interested in the range of skills involved in different activities: What skills are involved in taking action? Who has these skills and who doesn't? How do people gain the skills that they need?

## Consultant brief

Manchester Museum is seeking to appoint a consultant to map out the different ways in which people - individuals, organisations and groups - are currently responding to the climate and ecological crises in **Ardwick and Hulme**. By scoping out the varied responses and actions being taken on our doorstep, and by mapping the skills that are used and needed, the consultant will get to grips with what people need and the issues that are important to them. These insights will be used to identify where the Museum's convening power is most appropriately developed in the future as part of city-wide action and change. We would expect the consultant to undertake this work in two phases:

### Phase 1: Scoping activity

Phase 1 will involve detailed research focusing on Hulme and Ardwick wards, to map out the current situation, creating a detailed picture of what is already happening. We want to know:

**Who:** different people, organisations and groups in Hulme and Ardwick

**What:** work broadly conceived (but not limited to): activities / programmes / projects / campaigns / research / meetings / schemes, and in response to the ecological and climate crises as social / political / cultural / economic / scientific / environmental matters of concern.

**How:** what are the skills involved in this work: who already has these skills, who needs them, how are they developed?

**Where:** within Ardwick and Hulme, where are these skills located and where are they needed?

**Why:** what motivates individuals and groups to take action; how does thinking lead to action and what gets in the way or stops action from happening?

Through this process we would expect the consultant to start to get a feel for the skills and factors that support collaborative working, and where their absence either limits or prevents people and groups from taking action.

### Phase 2: Recommendations and opportunities

The mapping work carried out in phase 1, along with the insights gained around barriers and issues, particularly related to skills, will be the starting point for working with colleagues from the Museum, key community voices, and stakeholders, to co-produce a series of recommendations. Reflecting the Museum's strengths, and aligned with our mission and values, the recommendations will focus on care-taking as a way of building ecological action on our doorstep. The work carried out in phase two will be compiled into a final report that sets out:

**What?** Facilitated conversations between Museum staff, community members and key stakeholders will be used to understand where the needs and challenges faced by communities are aligned with the values and strengths of the Museum.

**How?** Drawing from the conversations, a series of recommendations will be set out, providing a range of different ways in which the Museum could respond to the needs and barriers that have been identified. The recommendations will include a number of options based on different costs, durations, models and platforms for development and delivery, with reference to the scope and scale of expected impacts.

**Who?** Drawing from the first phase of work and informed by conversations in phase two, each option will include a list of key individuals and organisations with relevant expertise, skills and insights and a description of the capacity in which they would potentially be involved.

## **What we are offering**

**Fee:** £3,600 (£180 daily rate x 20 days)

**Payment schedule:** 50% midway (mid-May), 50% completion (mid-June)

**Timetable and Deadlines:** Start asap. Phase 1 mid-May 2021. Phase 2 mid-June 2021.

**Consultant will be supported by:** Museum staff

## **Expressions of interest**

Please submit: a summary of why you are interested in the brief, an outline methodology and a CV <https://www.mmfromhome.com/building-ecological-action>

We strongly encourage you to consider both the brief and the broader context of this work (see below for further information) in your response.

**Closing date:** Monday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2021: midnight.

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## Background and context

As a leading university natural history gallery with award-winning vivarium (live animal team and a wide range of specialist staff, the museum is a critical part of the research and environmental education infrastructure. We're reimagining education for future survival and museum spaces as part of our capital transformation, opening in late 2022: <https://mmhellofuture.wordpress.com>. For example, the top floor of the museum is being developed into co-working spaces for educational and environmental charities that share our mission and we're currently developing a UK-wide touring exhibition on rewilding. We are also urgently transforming how we support ecological thinking and action, build more sustainable futures and inspire cooperation and change in our city. Our Director convenes and leads Manchester's cultural sector in its collective work to address climate and ecological emergency.

The climate and ecological crises call for action on a variety of different scales, and likewise, our own work reflects this breadth, from our international partnerships and programmes, to numerous partnerships and collaborative programmes with our local communities. We have been doing a lot of talking and listening – with individuals, communities, and other organisations - across the city, to better understand the needs and aspirations of Manchester and citizens. Time and again, when we have asked those leading change what more is needed and how we could help, they asked us to use our convening power, encourage greater connectedness and a sense of shared purpose.

## The challenge

Conversations with activists, students, ecologists, educators, researchers, and community members has revealed important work that is already being carried out across the city. But as it stands, there is a lack of accessible information about the recent and ongoing work that is underway; the range of skills, experiences, understanding and resources held by individuals and organisations involved in this work; and the impacts and changes that such work has achieved.

These insights will be vital if we are to work together more effectively in the future, and at the moment, without this information, we risk wasting precious time and resources by re-inventing the wheel, making the same mistakes, and duplicating effort. Our own sense of frustration about this lack of accessible and up to date information, is also shared by many of the individuals and organisations we have spoken to. As such, this is a real barrier to the type of collective action and collaborative working that will be essential if we are going to be able to deliver the scale and scope of change that is urgently needed.

## Evolution and thinking in public

Our thinking started when we came across the [Climate Reframe](#) document, which felt distinctly London-centric. After connecting with some of our local organisations and groups, it became

apparent that the lack of central listing of the great variety of passionate and skilled individuals and groups in Manchester was a problem that seemed to be stifling the potential of creative and innovative action. Our own experience, it turned out, was quite common: only hearing about amazing programmes, practitioners and work by chance and having no real sense of the range and scope of activity that is currently going on, even on our doorstep.

A small group of museum staff spent some time thinking about this and looking at some possible solutions. We have recently taken a step back and paused. We realised that we were jumping ahead of ourselves. While we feel that the idea of creating and looking after some sort of central online directory or registry, where people can make connections with others around a shared purpose and values is something that we would find useful, we do not know if this would be the right solution or, indeed, if we are trying to solve the right problem.

### **A care-taking role**

Our thinking has shifted away from the Museum acting as a gate-keeper and instead, how our convening power is better suited towards the role of care-taker. We have been particularly inspired by the approach taken by [Geeks for Social Change](#) in the production of [PlaceCal](#). This platform is grounded in collaborative research with members of the community and grew from the process of co-producing a solution with the community and partners in response to the circumstances and experiences of the people who use and manage it. This collaborative process and the resulting open source platform feels like the right sort of approach for us to be taking. This is why we are now looking for the right person to join us on this journey, and work with us to figure out where our strengths are best placed to make a real difference to our local communities.