

# BIRKBECK INSTITUTE FOR THE HUMANITIES

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## CONFERENCE FUNDING GUIDELINES 2025/26

The Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities (BIH) was established in 2004 to stimulate research, public debate and collaboration among academics and intellectuals on important public issues of our time.

Key to its remit is the promotion of new ideas and forms of understanding in the humanities. As part of this mission, the BIH aims to foster a climate of interdisciplinary research and collaboration among colleagues from five schools (Creative Arts, Culture and Communication; Historical Studies; Social Sciences; Law School; Psychological sciences) in three faculties (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences; Faculty of Business and Law; Faculty of Science) at Birkbeck, University of London, as well as inviting in other UK-based and international academics and researchers.

There is consonance between the topics we cover at BIH and the preliminary ideas of the OSF Ideas Workshop – in particular with reference to the Anthropocene, Climate Crisis, Learning from the Right, Democracy and its Discontents, Complicating Identity Politics, Recreating the Global, Mapping Ideas.

### GUIDELINES

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- Each year the committee will set a maximum amount to be given to successful conference proposals. This will be determined by the annual budget and any external funding available.
- This year, thanks to the generous support of the Open Society Foundations, we are able to fund ca 4-6 conferences, workshops or symposia. These would take place between early December 2025 and early July 2026.
- Priority will be given to conferences, workshops or symposia whose project falls within the remit of the BIH: interdisciplinary research in the field of critical thinking and questions of social justice in the Humanities (ie increased inequalities; the rise of authoritarianism; decolonisation; sexuality and gender). We especially welcome proposals that challenge conventional thinking and have a contribution to make in relation to key, critically urgent ideas under three main themes: Dissent; Aesthetics and Transformational Politics; Psychoanalysis and Freedom.

- The BIH is an external-facing institute and all its events are open to the public. Therefore, any conference or workshop must have a public element (i.e. the whole event may be open to the public or some of it, such as a keynote lecture) and must be taking place at Birkbeck or somewhere local to the College.
- The BIH conference funding can be used for speakers' fees, travel and/or accommodation expenses as well as other general conference expenses as detailed in following pages. Catering costs **cannot** be funded.
- The organiser of the conference is responsible for passing on the required details to the BIH office for the organisation, budgeting and advertising of the conference. A schedule for this will be set in place upon award of funding.

## BUDGETING

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To assist with the budgeting for your event, please find below some information that may be relevant to your planning.

### TRAVEL, HOTEL ACCOMMODATION AND SUBSISTENCE

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BIH does not have the capacity to book accommodation and travel. Organisers and speakers would be required to make their own arrangements and request reimbursement.

International air or rail travel can be claimed. Please note: only standard class / economy faire travel can be reimbursed.

- There should be no detour from the most direct route for anything other than business reasons.
- The full ticket showing the name of the person travelling, the route and the amount paid should be attached to the claim.
- The University will not cover the cost of travel for dependents, spouses, partners, friends or family members so this must not be claimed.

Travel should be booked in advance by the person travelling, and tickets or receipts submitted, along with the relevant forms, to the BIH to be reimbursed following the event.

The College's guidelines for hotel and subsistence expenses must be followed, when expenses are incurred. Please note that the amounts stated below are not allowances, but the maximum amounts to be reimbursed upon provision of receipts.

A non-staff expense claim form will need to be completed and attached to transaction when a reimbursement request is submitted along with itemised receipts.

### Guidelines for hotel accommodation and subsistence

The cost of hotel accommodation should be approved by the budget holder prior to booking. The cost of meals should be reasonable. Excessive claims will be rejected by the relevant approver.

Actual expenditure should be claimed subject to the maximum rates set out below:

- **Night subsistence**
  - Bed, breakfast and evening meal (less £9.95 if no evening meal) : £105.00 (London: £146.68)
  - Mid-day meal : £9.85
  - Daily rate for personal incidental expenses £3.50
- **Day subsistence**
  - Absence of 7-10 hours: £10 (including VAT)
  - Absence of over 10 hours: £30 (including VAT)

Employees may claim up to a maximum of £30 (or rate of exchange) for each day on which they purchase meals, snacks, etc. whilst necessarily away from both home and their normal place of work exclusively for work purposes, provided they are absent from each for more than 10 hours, spanning two normal meal times

Please note that these amounts are not allowances, but are the maximum amounts that can be claimed. Receipts must be provided in support of claims for subsistence costs where it would be reasonable to expect a supplier to give them.

An alcoholic drink is permitted as part of an evening meal, claims for alcoholic drinks alone are not permitted.

## ROOM BOOKINGS

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Room bookings can be placed by the BIH. Room bookings for evening events during term times will be confirmed up to 3 weeks before the event. Day time bookings are likely to be confirmed sooner, but will depend on availability. If you wish you book externally, Room Bookings will cover a proportion of these costs, but you will need to make the arrangements yourself and pass on to the BIH for payment. This is preferable if you wish to make catering arrangements for your event.

If you choose to charge for your event to recoup costs, Room Bookings will charge you for your event (cost per day: ca £70 for a lecture theatre).

## AV / TECH

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For larger events where lecture theatres are required, you can book extra AV such as handheld, lapel and conference microphones. Handheld and lapel microphones can be booked free of charge (you can book maximum of 2), and conference mics are charged (£60 charge for set up)

If you would like to record your event, you can use the in-built cameras and AV technology available in the lecture theatres free of charge.

If you are looking for a good quality livestreaming and dedicated AV support, BIH can bring you in touch with the [Derek Jarman Lab](#) for quotes and enquiries. To avoid disappointment, arrangements should be confirmed 1 month in advance of the event at the latest.

Conference Microphones	£60 (per day)	This charge is static regardless of how many you book
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## EVENT ASSISTANCE

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The BIH does not have the resources to assist at events. Organisers will need to make suitable arrangements if they require help with registration (checking names and handing out programmes / name badges), or event assistance (such as handing out programmes, passing round microphones, and other ad hoc tasks). Team Birkbeck offer a helpful service of students trained for such events. They are paid per hour (for a minimum of two hours)

Team Birkbeck	£16.73	Per hour, minimum of 2 hours
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## CATERING

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The BIH cannot fund catering requests. If you have extra funding for your event, you can contact the BIH to request a menu to select your preferred internal catering.

For queries on issues of theme or scope, please contact BIH Co-Director [Prof Esther Leslie](#). For all other queries, please [contact BIH](#).