

Humanities Pitching Competition | 2023

In collaboration with Lion Television and Whistledown, the Humanities Division invites researchers to propose ideas for research-based radio and TV programmes.

Lion TV is one of the UK's most successful and trusted television production companies, having won BAFTA's, EMMY's Royal Television Society and Broadcast Awards to name a few. Each year they created hundreds of hours of innovative, entertaining and thought-provoking television with strengths in entertainment formats, daytime, ambitious science and history shows, international co-productions and feature documentaries. They work with some of the world's leading television talent to produce compelling stories for many major broadcasters and streamers including Netflix, National Geographic, BBC, Channel 4, Channel 5, ITV, and Sky.

Whistledown is a multi-award-winning specialist audio production company making programmes, podcasts and audio series for broadcasters, publishers and podcast platforms for over 20 years. With studios in London, Glasgow and Berlin, our focus is on factual storytelling, long form journalism, reactive and topical material, as well as engaging and lively conversation shows and a creativity-first approach to audio. Our partners include BBC Radio, BBC World Service and BBC Sounds, European broadcasters and American Public Radio as well as Audible, Spotify, Global Media and Amazon Music. We also work with Politico, The Economist, Daily Telegraph and the FT and commercial clients as diverse as Ikea and the Church of England.

Through this competition, successful applicants will be given the opportunity to discuss and develop their programme-making ideas with development producers from Lion TV and Whistledown.

Competition Details

We welcome applications from **University of Oxford researchers only** working in all areas of the arts and humanities.

Through this competition, researchers will have the opportunity to learn how to develop a pitch, understand what works and doesn't work for audiences in the radio/TV space, and get a snapshot into the overall process of turning a research-based idea into a radio or TV programme.

It is important for successful applicants to remain open to input and feedback from Lion TV and Whistledown and to be flexible with their ideas to ensure research ideas translate well for radio and TV. There is no guarantee that any idea will be taken to a broadcaster or made into a programme.

For any queries about the competition, please contact Charlotte Medland (charlotte.medland@humanities.ox.ac.uk).

Application Process

Researchers interested in this competition should first register for the training session taking place on 20 September 2023 from 12:30pm – 3:00pm. **Researchers who would like to take part in this competition but are unable to attend the training session may still participate in the competition.**

After the training, you will have four weeks to write 200 to 400 words describing how your research could provide original material for a television or radio programme. Ideas need to be accessible to a wide audience, show how your idea is linked to your research, and how the programme or series would use your unique research, access, contacts or expertise.

At this stage, do not worry about the format, length of the episodes or how many there should be. However, if you have an idea of whether your pitch idea is better suited for radio or television, do feel free to include this in your proposal.

The deadline for proposals is Friday, 20 October 2023 at 12pm - please email your proposals to the Innovation, Impact and Evaluation Facilitator, Charlotte Medland (charlotte.medland@humanities.ox.ac.uk).

Successful applicants will be contacted by 6 November 2023 and invited to a development meeting with producers from Lion TV and Whistledown.

Timeline

- **Register for training:** 8 September 2023
- **Training Session:** 20 September 2023, 12:30pm – 2:30pm
 - *During this training session, participants will have the opportunity to learn about the different ways academics can work with radio and TV, questions to consider when writing a pitch, what commissioners are looking for and more! After this, participants will have three weeks to write and submit their own proposal.*
- **Proposals due:** 20 October 2023
- **Successful applicants contacted by:** 6 November 2023
- **Development meetings with radio/TV producers:** 13th November – 1st December 2023 (exact dates TBD)