

## Guidance for Referees

Most categories of award which are offered by the Paul Mellon Centre require applicants to nominate referees to supply references in support of their applications. References have a word limit of 500 words.

If you are asked by an individual or institution to act as a referee for an application to our awards programme **please do not try and submit a reference until prompted to do so by email from the Paul Mellon Centre**. All applications and references must be submitted via our online grants system and you will not be able to submit references by email or attachment.

## Reference Procedure

If you agree to act as a referee the applicant will submit your name and email address as part of their application process. Once they have added your name you will receive an automatic email request from the Paul Mellon Centre which includes a link for you to click in the body of the email. This will take you into the system where you will be asked to register for an account, after which you will see the details of the award being requested and the project outline.

You will be asked to submit your reference in a form. When you are ready to submit the reference you need to add an electronic signature .

## Trouble-shooting

If the link in the email fails to take you to the space to submit your reference, the website can be accessed at the following URL: <https://grants.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk>. Here you will be able to log in and access the reference task. If you are already registered with an account for our online grant system, you will be able to enter with a password. If you have not registered for an account already you will need to add a password and then confirm it. You will then be taken to a screen which asks whether you wish to apply for a grant or submit a reference. You will then proceed as above.

Please also see the general guidance notes below to give you further information about the type of reference which is required in support of both individuals and institutions.

## References:

The references which support individuals and institutions in all categories of our Fellowships and Grants programme are an extremely important aspect of the application process. The Paul Mellon Centre's Advisory Council places considerable weight on the information and opinions which referees are able to provide in their letters of support.

References should be tailored to the application being made. We do not require a generic reference.

Please read the following guidelines:

### General

**Your comments should be no longer than 500 words.**

It should be remembered that a letter of reference provides additional information to that contained in the application form itself. The reference should flesh out the application and should include a candid discussion of an applicant's weaknesses as well as strengths.

All applicants to our awards programme will have provided the PMC with an outline of their research; their specific aims within the scope of the award being sought; and a *curriculum vitae*.

### References in support of individuals

Referees should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's academic career and the subject area for which funding is being sought. Advisory Council would like to be informed of the originality of the subject matter and the applicant's suitability to pursue such research.

The reference should be focussed on the type of Fellowship or Grant being sought by the applicant and on the specific topic being pursued. We would not

expect the referee to review the whole of applicant's career as the applicant will have supplied their *curriculum vitae*.

We would like a candid appraisal from which our Advisory Council can make an informed decision.

### **References in support of institutions and publishers**

There are no hard and fast rules on who may give references in support of institutions but normally we would expect referees to have specialist knowledge of the topic and subject matter, and this may well be an academic or museum/arts professional.

We would not expect internal references from within an institution itself, although a reference from a specialist in a large museum or gallery may be appropriate.

We would like a candid appraisal from which our Advisory Council can make an informed decision.