



The Association of Social Anthropologists
of the UK and Commonwealth

CALL FOR ASA CONFERENCE 2018

The ASA invites Anthropology Departments to submit bids to host its 2018 Annual Conference. Such bids may propose a standard ASA annual conference, or the joint 'pan-anthropology' conference agreed at the 2016 AGM, to establish a UK Anthropology Network (UKAN). See below for information on the latter.

Proponents should consider the ASA's conference guidelines prior to submission, and should send an outline proposal/expression of interest to the Committee by October 31st 2016.

UK ANTHROPOLOGY NETWORK (UKAN)

Following discussions at the ASA's July AGM, its Executive Committee is taking forward efforts to forge closer collaborative links with other Anthropology/related organisations in the UK, with a view to (a) composing more strategic and effective liaison between our disciplinary areas and key policy and decision makers and (b) enabling a fuller exchange of ideas with our sister disciplines. Below is a list of organisations approached to date: the Committee would welcome suggested additions to these. It was agreed that the proposed network should be inclusive of all Anthropology-related areas, with all retaining their specific identities within it.

Correspondence and a meeting with representatives of a few organisations on July 5th suggested that an initial idea for Federation of Anthropologists in Britain was a step too far at present, but there was real enthusiasm for creating a strong collaborative network. This view was also reflected at the ASA's 2016 HoDs meeting and at its AGM. A favoured name for the proposed network is UK Anthropology Network (UKAN).

***Associations contacted prior to ASA AGM 2016**

Suggested additions

BioSocial Society

*British Association for Biological Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology (BABAO)

*British Association for Forensic Anthropology (BAFA)

European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association

*Museum Ethnographers Group (MEG)

*Museums Association

*British Archaeology Association

Primate Society of Great Britain
*Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI)
*Royal Archaeological Institute
*Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
*Council for British Archaeology
*Society for Museum Archaeology
Society for the Study of Human Biology
*European Association of Social Anthropologists

At the ASA AGM, and at the joint meeting with other associations, there was consensus that the best way to initiate the proposed UK Anthropology Network would be to have a joint conference of all such organisations, which would enable discussion of the networking and collaborative possibilities, as well as an opportunity for exchanges of ideas. It was felt that, ideally, this should be hosted by a large interdisciplinary department (or one connecting a constellation of Anthropology related departments) in conjunction with a major museum. As the ASA is about to put a call out for bids for its 2018 conference, it is possible for a UK Anthropology department to propose hosting such a conference at that time.

A PAN-ANTHROPOLOGY CONFERENCE IN THE UK

What is envisaged is a joint conference bringing together all Anthropology associations in the UK. It will require a common intellectual theme. This could be 'interdisciplinarity', or any theme genuinely inclusive of all areas of Anthropology and Archaeology. The conference will bring a diverse range of sub-disciplinary perspectives to bear on this theme, thus enabling a fruitful intellectual exchange, taking theoretical debates forward, and generating new ideas and practices. It would also provide a forum in which the participating associations could consider the practical issues of establishing a UK-wide collaborative network that would strengthen Anthropology's 'voice' in debates about policy, and enable mutually beneficial collaborations between different areas.

The conference committee will be composed of representatives from each of the participating Anthropology associations. Ideally the lead conveners will also represent diversity in this regard.

It has also been proposed that the joint conference should possibly entail some financial commitment from participating organisations, reflecting their membership numbers (pro rata), with the profits to be distributed according to the same formula. This would give support to a bid to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for funding to support the conference and to pay (perhaps with 50% FTE teaching buyout) for a project leader to bring the associations together in this event and – crucially – to prepare the ground for a longer-term network. There may be other sources of support, for example the British Academy.

The ASA Committee will undertake the following next steps:

- It will put out a call for bids for the ASA 2018 conference, highlighting the possibility that this could be the proposed joint UKAN conference.
- It will follow up with the Associations as conference plans emerge.
- It will work with the conference host department(s) to compose a bid to the Wenner-Gren Foundation and potentially other sources for conference/project leader funding.

Veronica Strang, ASA Chair
September 20th 2016