



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

## **AHRC Delivery Plan Report 2007 - 2008 SR2004 Changes and Key highlights**

### **SUMMARY OF THE YEAR**

Our SR2004 settlement coincided with the introduction of a new Strategy (set out in our Strategy 2007-12). The settlement has enabled AHRC to implement that strategy and effect a major change in the way that Arts and Humanities research contributes to the UK and international knowledge landscape. Our priorities for the SR 04 period as set out in our Delivery Plan were:

- sustaining and promoting high quality and innovative research
- developing research capacity and capability
- extending interdisciplinary work within the A&H and with other disciplines
- enhancing interaction across the research community with the creative, cultural and heritage sectors.

We've delivered these ambitions through sustained momentum for collaborative and team based research activities, new collaborations with museums and galleries and the creative industries so they benefit from Arts and Humanities research and research capability, increasing capability in language based studies, and delivering strategic research in a wide range of areas from identities and culture, to grid technologies, to landscape and environment.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR**

#### **Increasing collaborative & interdisciplinary research**

One mode of supporting collaboration is through our strategic research programmes which address issues of intellectual and wider cultural, social or economic urgency, and provide one source of collaboration with other Research Councils. Strategic or directed research accounted for only 8% of research expenditure in 2004-05. In 2006-07 it rose to 23% and remained at 23% in 2007-08.

In 2007-08 we launched 3 new strategic programmes: **Religion and Society** (with ESRC), aims to explore the current developments in the arts and humanities and social sciences communities, concerning questions of belief, identity, human culture, society and religion and the **Science and Heritage** Programme (with EPSRC) which came to fruition after a report by the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee in 2006 which called for greater coordination of the heritage and conservation sector to be led the AHRC. One of the core aims of the programme will be to build greater capacity across a research field that encompasses very diverse disciplines. So far 10 collaborative studentship awards have been made by March 08. The **Beyond Text** programme will stimulate research across the arts and humanities in order to foster understanding of the significance of communication and realisation through media other than written text. Promoting collaboration between academics and colleagues from the creative industries, performers, museums and galleries as well from other industries and enterprises. To date we have run calls for Collaborative Doctoral Awards, Networks and Workshops and Large Research Grants.

Through the **e-Science** programme, and in conjunction with the EPSRC and JISC, the AHRC funded 7 e-Science Research Grants in 2007 totaling £2.3m. These projects are for period of up to 4 years and are intended to develop the use and research the benefits of e-Science in arts and humanities research. They involved a diverse range of researchers from dance and music to museum studies, archaeology, classics and Byzantine history, working alongside computer scientists to incorporate a wide range of e-Science technologies. Four of the projects also include postgraduate studentships to train young researchers in this field of work.

In addition, The AHRC Research Centre for **Studies in Intellectual Property and Technology Law** began its 5 year Phase Two award in April 2007. The Centre explores the relationship between law and new technologies, including policy and practical developments, in science, medicine, culture and innovation.

During the SR period we've put support into many new areas:

- New - **Landscape and Environment** Programme, to explore our relationship with the natural and built environment £5.5m over 5 years.
- New - **Religion and Society** programme, to address questions of belief, human culture, society and religion, £8.3 over 5.5 years (£2.8m of which is supported by ESRC). & £5m extension on **Youth**.
- New - **Language Based Area Studies** programme – 5 new centres of excellence established in association with HEFCE and ESRC.
- New - **Beyond Text** a programme to explore new means of communication, £5.5m over 5 years.
- New - **Museums and Galleries** Programme. In 2007 we reported some 70% of our collaborative doctoral awards, and 4 of our 8 KT fellowships are in partnership with museums, galleries and archives. Impact studies are already showing the potential economic contribution of such collaboration.
- New – **Science and Heritage** programme in collaboration with EPSRC which seeks to overcome a fragmented research base by developing the hybrid heritage science research discipline drawing on a wide range of discipline based knowledge, resources and skills and encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration among and beyond universities
- New - **New Security Challenges** with EPSRC and ESRC using a new rapid response mechanism
- **New Dynamics of Aging** with ESRC, EPSRC, MRC and BBSRC to contribute towards greater understanding and enrichment of older peoples lives – launched in November 2006.
- The final awards in our **ICT** programme and our **Diasporas, Migrations and Identities** Programme (DMI) which has generated engagement with UK policy-makers, notably the Home Office.
- By 2007, 19 awards were made under the programme **Design for the 21st Century** in areas including future of UK design consultancy, fashion design, branding, and service and office design for elderly workers.

The significant growth of expenditure on strategic programmes is shown overleaf.

### The growth of expenditure on Strategic Programmes during SR04

Programme	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08	
	£	% of total	£	% of total	£	% of total
Cultures of Consumption	200,000	12.1	200,000	7.8	200,000	2.5
Designing for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	40,448	2.5	192,019	7.5	1,665,319	20.6
Diasporas, Migration and Identities Programme	337,061	20.5	636,769	24.9	2,314,262	28.6
Landscape and Environment Programme	59,752	3.6	491,629	19.2	1,915,472	23.7
Museums and Galleries Research Programme	-	-	112,060	4.4	167,476	2.1
Religion and Society	-	-	6,061	0.2	473,866	5.9
Beyond Text	-	-	-	-	131,470	1.6
Heritage Science	-	-	-	-	234,800	2.9
ICT in the Arts and Humanities	1,010,488	61.3	922,145	36.0	988,431	12.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,647,749</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,560,683</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,091,096</b>	<b>-</b>

Team based research also now accounts for 85% of our **responsive mode** research funding, and an increasing percentage of our **postgraduate** awards are collaborative:

- Collaborative PG awards – in 2007 58 new research partnerships were generated with organisations such as national museums and galleries, national theatres, the National Trust, and the BBC.
- Our Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme continues to grow in terms of both the numbers of applications received and awards made, and the quality and range of the partnerships supported. 41 awards in 2005 increased to 66 awards in 2007. This was very slightly below our target of 70 due to reprioritization. However, exciting projects that we were able to support involve organisations ranging from major national cultural and heritage institutions, to museums, galleries and theatres in major UK cities, and smaller-scale specialist projects including the history of communication (University of Exeter/Porthcurno Telegraph Museum), applied theatre and inner city youth (CSSD/Kids Company), and Orkney’s agricultural history (University of Bradford/Orkney Islands Council).
- International postgraduate collaborative opportunities include Language Based Area Studies, LOCI, new Japanese Studentships.

## Placing UK arts and humanities research in an international context.

AHRC's international activities encourage UK academics to take part in an expanding range of international research opportunities.

In SR04 AHRC provided support for interdisciplinary research at the international level and improved the co-ordination of arts and humanities research at the European level by ensuring that arts and humanities researchers have access to funds to collaborate with international counterparts while also removing bureaucratic obstacles such as double jeopardy.

During 2007-08 AHRC did this through **memoranda** agreements with the following:

- USA
- Chinese Association of Science and Technology
- National Science Council, Taiwan
- National Institute for the Humanities (NIHU), Japan
- DFG, Germany (signed in December 2007).

As a result of these agreements we have launched **3 new internationally collaborative calls** including scholarships for doctoral students to spend time at NIHU institutes in **Japan**, and research grants calls with **Taiwan and Germany**.

Our 2007 round of **Library of Congress Scholarships** scheme was subject to increased publicity and as a result we welcomed nearly a threefold increase in the number of applications – and subsequently 20 new scholarships have been awarded.

AHRC also contributed to the **UK-Brazil year of Science** in 2007 by organising and co-funding with FCO a workshop on the theme of innovation and creativity in Sao Paulo in December 2007.

AHRC is committed to playing a key role in firmly establishing the Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) and in determining an appropriate and dynamic position for the humanities within the European Commission Framework Programmes.

Following the 2007 HERA Conference “*New Technologies for Humanities Research*” in Estonia in September, work continued on the formation of a Joint Research Programme (JRP) for researchers in the Humanities. AHRC has played a leading role on the development of the two themes selected for the JRP - **Cultural Dynamics: inheritance and identity** and **Humanities as a source of creativity and innovation** and in contributing to workshops to inform the development of two programme specifications one of which is written by one of AHRC’s own Council members. The JRP Call for Proposals, which will be launched in early 2009.

AHRC remains engaged with the development of the European Commission 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme. In July 2007, the AHRC along with fourteen other European partners submitted a bid to the European Commission ERA-NET scheme under the area of **Protection of Tangible Cultural Heritage**. If the bid is successful, AHRC will lead a work package to implement a European Observatory on cultural heritage research for information exchange.

At cross-Council level, the AHRC has also been involved in supporting the opening of new Research Councils **UK (RCUK) research offices** in Washington DC, Beijing, and later in 2008, Delhi.

**Supporting entrepreneurship amongst researchers in the Arts and Humanities by introducing KT to the A&H community and growing a new relationship between researchers and SMEs.**

A wide portfolio of KT schemes has been introduced and is receiving an enthusiastic welcome while developing important partnerships between the research community and non-academic partners. A demonstration of the growth of funding and partnership organizations is provided in the table below. Examples include:

- A Knowledge Catalyst Scheme targeted at SMEs has engendered an appetite for research-based innovation in previously hard to reach SMEs;
- A BBC Future Media and Technology collaborative R&D partnership scheme – teams from BBC Research and Innovation, BBC Learning and Interactive, and BBC Children’s television among others are working alongside academics from universities including Bristol, Westminster, Cardiff and Manchester, on projects which aim to generate policy recommendations in areas ranging from

- archive usage, to audience engagement from childhood to older audiences, to user generated content,;
- Knowledge Transfer Fellowships enable researchers and organisations beyond the HEI sector (e.g. commercial partners, national museums, local authorities and prisons) to collaborate to realise KT benefits of research outputs;
  - A Research Exchange Network to promote KT among Arts and Humanities Researchers and potential users;
  - 13 awards through a Nature of Creativity Programme

**Awards and expenditure in AHRC schemes to promote commercialisation and enterprise (A – number of awards made, PO – number of partnership organisations, £ – AHRC expenditure)**

Scheme	2005/06			2006/07			2007/08		
	A	PO	£	A	PO	£	A	PO	£
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	4	4	†	11	11	25,196	5	5	203,406
Knowledge Catalyst Scheme	-	-	-	2	2	†	13	13	89,171
Knowledge Transfer Fellowships	-	-	-	8*	-	-	7	-	575,779
AHRC/BBC Knowledge Exchange Programme	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	8‡	145,281††
Collaborative Doctoral Awards	41	32	318,996	54**	43	1,143,680	66**	53	2,289,456
Professional Preparation Masters Scheme	348	-	3,516,345	349	-	3,516,101	327	-	3,888,172
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>£3,835,341</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>£4,684,977</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>£7,191,256</b>

\*the AHRC made 8 awards in this scheme during 2006/07 which commenced in 2007/08

\*\*including 5 awards in the Landscape and Environment strategic programme (2006/07) and 8 awards in the Religion and Society strategic programme (2007/08)

†awards were made in the stated year with funding starting in the next year

††this funding is matched by the BBC

‡these were 8 different partners within the BBC

## Maintaining momentum for high quality research

During the SR period we have balanced diversification into areas of interdisciplinary collaboration, international engagement, and knowledge transfer, while maintaining core support for high quality research.

In addition to the strategic programmes already discussed, the AHRC continued to fund researchers through a variety of responsive mode routes, including £6.5m for Research Leave, £28.1m on Research Grants (which enables collaborative research) including £383k on practice-led research in the creative and performing arts. Responsive mode funding accounts for some 73% of our research budget. Some 85% of this research is team based. AHRC has initiated a review of its support for individual scholars.

Measures taken to maintain capacity within the Arts and humanities research base include:

- In 2003 and earlier, 66% of AHRC's PG funding was directed at Master's students. By 2004-05 40% of our PG awards were doctoral. Now 50% of our annual open PG competition supports PhDs and 90% of the total £41m postgraduate programme budget for 2007-08 has been devoted to supporting students undertaking, or preparing to undertake, doctoral research, through our doctoral awards and research preparation Master's awards through the annual open competition and our Collaborative Doctoral Awards scheme.
- 1,472 new students were supported through our open PG competition.
- Ring-fenced Doctoral awards in 5 priority disciplinary areas. In 2007 we reported support for 163 new PhD students over the past 3 years at £6.14m.
- New early career grants scheme introduced and first 7 awards made in November 07.
- We have worked with other Councils to support the development of a new concordat for the career development of researchers, to be launched in June 2008, and to broaden the remit of the UK GRAD Programme, funded by all Councils, ensuring its new researcher development programme provides support and training for research staff as well as postgraduates.
- In addition to providing 'Roberts' funding to institutions for generic and employment-related skills training, we continue to offer pump-priming

funding to institutions to provide subject-specific research training for arts and humanities doctoral students. In the 2007-08 round of our Collaborative Research Training scheme we allocated just under £300,000 to new projects to provide research training across the full spectrum of arts and humanities subjects, on a national scale and through regional or specialist collaborations, as well as to students organising their own conferences. In response to the demand for exciting and innovative projects, this latter category has now been expanded to support a broader range of student-led initiatives, such as career development activities; networks, roundtables and research forums; journals and online resources; showcase and demonstration events; and knowledge transfer activities.

### **Increasing the use of arts and humanities research to inform policy.**

Examples of participation in government policy increased during SR04 including: Kim Knott's work with the Home Office on Diasporas, informing the House of Lords review of heritage science, and participation in a range of Science and Technology Committee reviews. In 2007 AHRC appointed a public affairs officer to develop this work further. As a result AHRC inputted into the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's (RCEP's) review "Adapting the UK to Climate Change", the Ministry of Justice's consultation on "Data Sharing", the House of Lords' Science and Technology Committee's review of "Systematics & Taxonomy", and an IUS consultation on copyright in the digital age.

February 2008 saw the publication of the first comprehensive plan for Government support for the Creative Industries. AHRC has been a key contributor to the strategy which brings the UK creative industries into the mainstream of economic and policy thinking. Some 26 recommendations are included in the document called "Creative Britain: New talents for the New economy".

The AHRC/EPSRC Science and Heritage programme was established in director response to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry on Science and Heritage which recommended that AHRC lead a co-ordinated approach to UK support for this important area of research.

In early February 2008 the first of three Religion and Society workshop events was held in Windsor on the topic of 'Urban Islam in Russia and the UK, with a special emphasis on Islamic youth', co-sponsored by the New Eurasian Foundation, a Russian NGO.

## **MANAGEMENT**

The introduction of a new strategy in 2007-08 followed consultation with the academic community. The strategy develops some of the changes introduced during the SR period. It also provides a rationale for a major change programme designed to transform the way AHRC operates in the future. Overseen by the 'Forging Our Future' programme, the following projects were underway: The RCUK Shared Services Centre (SSC); the RCUK Je-S Project; the Review of Decision-Making Structures; the restructuring of the Research and Postgraduate Divisions, and the Senior Management Team. The result is designed to facilitate stronger partnerships with key stakeholders while delivering increased value, effectiveness and service benefits.

In December 2007 AHRC reviewed its key risks identifying as the 2 main ones: That AHRC fails to be an effective advocate to DIUS for arts and humanities research, and that AHRC does not successfully take account of the needs of the academic community when providing leadership to it. Paramount in managing these relationships risks is an open and honest approach to business, activities that focus on relationship building – particularly with the academic community, and the construction of effective arguments for why arts and humanities research is important and worthy of continued support.

## **PROGRESS IN MEETING MILESTONES**

We met all of our milestones as planned with the exception of the following:

We exceeded our target for increasing support for **team based research**. Team based research now accounts for 85% of our responsive mode research funding. Our 75% target was met in 2006. So we've been more than successful. In 2008-09 we'll

review whether this balance is right and whether our support for individual researchers is adequate and appropriate.

**Maintaining momentum:** in 2007 we were able to increase responsive mode success rates from 16% to 30% however in 2007-08 this declined to 24%. AHRC recognises this is likely to decline further following the outcome of the 2007 spending review and is monitoring and managing success rates under its competitions closely so that as far as is possible within budgetary constraints these are kept at an appropriate level which maintains the long-term sustainability of the schemes and commitment of the arts and humanities research community. .

Although the development of an AHRC **strategy for Research Careers** did not commence until the first quarter of 2008-09, it is now underway, and in the meantime AHRC has introduced a route for early career researchers within its research grants scheme (7 awards made in November 2007), and participated in the Research Council's collective activities (see section above).

We aimed to deliver "**the first-ever integrated strategy for research support in Museums and Galleries**", and during SR04 AHRC succeeded in increasing significantly the number and range of partnerships between HEIs and UK museums and galleries. The delayed final programme of awards to underpin exhibitions were awarded in Q1 of 2008-09. In addition, AHRC's Science and Heritage programme launched in February and has already announced funding for 10 collaborative studentships.

#### **PRIORITIES FOR 2008-09**

In addition to managing management changes such as the introduction of a shared services centre and organisational redesign AHRC will continue activities that aim to:

- sustain the research base;
- build research partnerships that are strategic, cross-disciplinary, international, and create links outside of HEI;
- enable Arts and Humanities specialists to contribute to cross-Council programmes and initiatives offered by the new Technology Strategy Board;

- and, most importantly, improve working relationships with our academic community and with government

AHRC will do this by working with the other Council's on major cross-disciplinary programmes including Living with Environmental Change, Ageing and Lifelong Health and Wellbeing, Digital Economy and Global Uncertainties: Threats to Security in a changing world; sustaining the research base through postgraduate and early career provision and support; stimulating innovation in the knowledge economy given a boost by the Government's 2008 White Paper on Innovation, which accepts the AHRC's position in recognising that innovation is not just technology-driven; developing heritage science; further embedding of Knowledge Transfer activities; and developing a strong international presence in order to leverage further opportunities for the arts and humanities research community.

We will also be identifying how research from both responsive schemes and programmes contribute to key thematic areas to demonstrate the contribution of both to emerging issues; introducing BGPs as a way of building capacity in a more strategic way; seeking ways to demonstrate where we are making a difference and establishing a compelling argument for future funding; and maintaining a good level of service throughout the introduction of the Research Councils' Shared Service Centre.

## **GERSHON**

AHRC has embedded a rather successful culture of saving and value for money. Staff are rewarded for their commitment to delivering savings. As a result AHRC has provided its contribution to the agreed cumulative Gershon savings offered by the Research Councils:

In 2007-08 we committed to deliver administration savings of £0.10M and achieved £0.09M, and fared even better with reprioritisation of £9.12M (target £8.25), and Co-funding increased by £0.58M (target £0.05M).

In total, during the SR period we have made savings of some £14.8M.

In addition we have been full and active participants in the development of the research councils' shared services centre. This offers a great opportunity for the AHRC to realign its organizational structure along more strategic lines, but also challenges AHRC with some of its greatest operational risks.

## **RESEARCH IN SOCIETY**

AHRC researchers have been communicating their research as widely as possible and seeking opportunities to engage beyond the academic realm in a number of ways: through taking part in the Researchers in Residence scheme (which places researchers in schools to work with children and teachers); through participating in festivals and events (over the last year AHRC researchers were involved in the BA Festival of Science, the Cheltenham Science Festival; with media appearances – broadcast and print – on a wide number of issues; and through public events – such as lectures and conferences).

Awards made in AHRC strategic programmes represent unique opportunities for public engagement. Many projects within the Diasporas, Migration and Identity programme have developed innovative collaborations with the communities that are subject of their research. Some examples are below:

- *Devolving Diasporas: Migration and Reception in Central Scotland, 1980 to present* – activities include the establishment of international reading groups, with participants from the UK, India and Nigeria discussing novels with themes related to diaspora, and development of a theatrical adaptation of a novel with performances at a leading youth arts centre and on BBC Radio 4.
- *Making the Connections* – work is being undertaken with a self-organised African women's group to develop an arts/research project focussing on women's health, and a public online database of artists, with experience of working with refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, is being created.
- *From Diaspora to Multi-Locality: Writing British Asian Cities* – two city events in Manchester and Leicester were organised and held, not in academic institutions, but in a British-Asian business and community centre

respectively. The events featured representatives from local educational, race equality, religious, business and media organisations and local people involved in sports, dance, poetry and business.

AHRC supports the RCUK's Science and Society unit, through which we have been part of a group investment of £9.2m in Beacons of Public Engagement, with HEFCE and the Wellcome Trust. The Beacons were launched in 2007, with a national coordinating centre based at the University of Bristol, the University of the West of England and other partners. There are other centres coordinated by the Universities of Durham and Newcastle, Manchester, Edinburgh, Cardiff, University of East Anglia and University College London – all with partner institutions as diverse as the British Museum and Southbank Centre. The purpose of the Beacons is in some cases to work on a specific public engagement issue (such as ageing or the environment), but also to share best practice amongst Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in ways to engage with, and promote research to, the public.

**SUMMARY OF AHRC's DELIVERABLES FOR SPENDING REVIEW 2004**

SR deliverable	Healthy UK Research Base	Better Exploitation	Management
1. Sustain support for team-based and collaborative research	√		
2. Sustain support for individual researchers	√		
3. Research programme development informed by a regular series of subject reviews	√		
4. Support entrepreneurship amongst researchers in the Arts and Humanities		√	
5. The establishment of strategic research programmes	√	√	
6. Sustain the health of strategically important subjects (including language-based area studies)	√		
7. Enhance the ICT infrastructure and facilities to support research in the Arts and Humanities	√		
8. Enhance opportunities for interdisciplinary research	√		
9. Establish the first-ever integrated strategy for research support in Museums and Galleries	√	√	
10. Research and Knowledge Transfer programme development informed by a regular series of sector interaction studies (SIS)		√	
11. Enhance links between the HE and private and public sectors through Collaborative Doctoral Awards		√	

12. Shift resources within the postgraduate budget to focus support on students preparing for and undertaking Doctoral research.	√		
13. Support the development of career paths for academic researchers in the arts and humanities	√		
14. Strengthen links between the creative industries (CIs) and the arts and humanities research base		√	
15. Provide support for interdisciplinary research at the international level and improve the co-ordination of arts and humanities research at the European level.	√	√	
16. Enhance activities for public engagement in the context of our interpretation of Science and Society			√
17. Enhance our stakeholder engagement programme to ensure that key non-academic stakeholders are covered as well as the academic community			√
18. To work towards the agreed cross-Council efficiency targets for 2007-08			√
19. New for 2007-08: Manage a period of significant organisational change			√

**SUMMARY FINANCIAL TABLE**

**AHRC - DEL Outturn 2007-08**

COINS SCOA CODE		Actual 2007- 08  £ 000
	<b>RESOURCE DEL - NEAR CASH</b>	
41212000	Pay Related Receipts	-227
41203000	Receipts For Goods & Services	-6
51111100	Pay Costs	3,884
51403000	Current Expenditure On Goods & Services	2,758
51620400	Current Grants	98,143
	<b>RESOURCE DEL - NON CASH</b>	
51410130	Cost Of Capital Charges	189
51411600	Movement In Provisions	51
51311000	Depreciation On Tangibles	141
51313000	Amortisation On Intangibles	1
	<b>DEL CAPITAL</b>	
13812000	Additions-Other Assets	319
51414116	Profit/Loss On Disposals	34
	<b>TOTAL DEL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>105,287</b>
	<b>TOTAL DEL BUDGET</b>	<b>106,343</b>
	<b>TOTAL UNDERSPEND</b>	<b>1,056</b>

**AHRC - Expenditure in summary 2007-08**

Expenditure	Planned	£000	Actual	£000
Research Responsive Mode Schemes	46,213		44,138	
Research Strategic Initiatives	15,674		15,764	
Postgraduate Awards	41,329		40,726	
Non-Programme Costs	7,397		6,795	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110,613</b>		<b>107,423</b>	