

## Translating Cultures: Aims and Objectives of the Theme

As one of the AHRC's strategic themes, Translating Cultures will be delivered over four years from 2011-15. It aims to:

***Support outstanding research that creates a new body of knowledge about strategically significant areas of the world and critically engages with the process of language acquisition and representation. Findings will be disseminated across the academic community and engage non-academic partners to increase public awareness and build capacity in areas of governmental, social and business need.***

Specifically, the objectives of the scheme are:

### Academic Outputs

- To develop the breadth of languages and inter-cultural dialogue as research areas, including the exploration of more contemporary concerns such as youth language, on-line language and popular language and identity, as well as issues relating to language heritage, and language use in areas such as business, communities and security / law enforcement
- To support the development of new cross-discipline work that facilitates inter-cultural understanding by, for example, enabling language and inter-cultural researchers to work with other disciplines such as medicine, computing and engineering
- To focus the concept of 'culture' in the context of the theme, supporting research that addresses issues such as the role of religion, poverty and the environment in cultural relations
- To explore translation and interpreting as a strategically important area of academic research
- To explore the role of languages and translation in diplomatic and political relationships in the context of increased multi-polarity, including those within and between established and emerging powers such as China, India, Brazil and Russia
- To develop new work on inter-cultural dialogue that is global in its focus, ensuring that it is not concentrated exclusively on European languages
- To encourage greater collaboration between individual language disciplines, and the development of shared collaborative research opportunities and priorities, in order to address issues from broader perspectives and promote efficiency through the concentration of excellence
- To support, but not duplicate, associated AHRC research programmes such as Religion and Society and Diasporas, Migration and Identity, as well as associated cross-council programmes such as Global Uncertainties

- To support the development of Early Career Researchers as the next generation of research leaders in languages and cultural dialogue, enabling them to demonstrate the importance of the research area across the academic sector, to external partners, and publicly

### **Partnerships**

- To engage non-academic partners in the scheme, helping to address knowledge gaps and areas of political, social and economic need with partners in government, the third sector and business communities
- To nurture new partnerships and collaborations – across institutions, across disciplines, across sectors and internationally - that are sustainable over time and create a greater range of impacts
- To develop partnerships with a range of academic and non-academic bodies internationally, supporting translation flows and, where possible, creating new collaborations and providing access to other sources of funding
- Through engagement with appropriate partners, to explore the impact of limited language provision across the academic sector, including at school level, and to share knowledge and expertise in developing an understanding of the demand for such skills and knowledge
- To build capacity in key areas encompassed by the theme, paying particular attention to language needs and cultural understanding across government departments and to build enhanced, sustainable relations between government and the academic community
- To provide opportunities for postgraduates and researchers to spend a short period of time working outside of academia, including the provision of internships and placements, in order to enhance their perspectives, develop their research skills, and contribute to their future career options
- To engage fully with stakeholders within the UK that have an interest in language capacity, using their expertise to identify demand and skills gaps, and to involve them in the scoping of aims and outputs
- To work with other funding partners, notably the ESRC, BA, and HEFCE, to ensure that there is an integrated and collaborative approach to research in this area across the research funding community

### **Delivery**

- To support research through a range of funding routes that fully develops the cross-disciplinary and cross-sector potential of the theme including, where appropriate, the use of more innovative and collaborative funding mechanisms such as workshops, networks, ‘sandpits’ and ‘speed-dating’ style events, leading to targeted and collaborative funding calls
- To ensure that outputs are international in scope

- To deliver sustainable outputs that lead to continued and follow-up research activity and which leverage new partnerships and funding
- To fund research through appropriate forms of peer review that reflect the breadth of the theme, including the use of international and non-HEI reviewers
- To provide opportunities for researchers to address the issues in the theme on a broad scale and to work with partners in other disciplines and outside HE, through the provision of longer, larger grants