


ESRC Good Practice Event

25 November 2011

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Content


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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ESRC Delivery Plan 2011-15 and Strategic Priorities
 - ESRC Funding Opportunities
 - Demand Management

ESRC Delivery Plan & Strategic Priorities




SHAPING SOCIETY


Funding

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- A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ ESRC budget 11/12 approx. £203m
 - ▶ A 12% cut in real terms to Programme budget over 4 years
 - ▶ Over same period a 23% cut in real terms to Administration budget
 - ▶ Important to continue to invest in the future:
 - Long-term infrastructure
 - Next generation of research leaders
 - Research areas of major national importance


Distribution of ESRC Funding 2011/12

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several colored segments: red, light blue, dark blue, grey, light blue, dark blue, red, grey, dark blue, and red.
- ▶ Responsive research – c£48m
 - ▶ Strategic and collaborative research – c£33m
 - ▶ Training and skills – c£48m
 - ▶ Knowledge exchange, impact and evaluation – c£8m
 - ▶ Methods and infrastructure (inc capital) – £29m
 - ▶ Other programmes and international – c£8m
 - ▶ Plus other external income from co-investment – currently c£23m


ESRC Delivery Plan 2011-15

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- A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Corporate strategic direction:
 - Economic and societal impact central to our activities
 - Focus on three strategic priorities
 - Streamline existing funding opportunities and focus our resources on longer, larger grants
 - Introduce demand management strategy
 - Protect core investments in the national data infrastructure
 - Expand collaborative activities with HEIs and the private sector
 - Incorporate international perspectives across the full range of ESRC's activities
 - Contribute to the RCUK interdisciplinary research programmes


Economic and Societal Impact

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- A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ ESRC does excellent research that has impact
 - ▶ Creating, assessing and communicating impact is central to all our activities
 - Pathways to impact
 - Impact toolkit
 - ▶ Research Excellence Framework (20%)


Seven Challenges to Three Priorities

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Sharpened our focus with the introduction of three strategic priorities
 - Economic Performance and Sustainable Growth
 - Influencing Behaviour and Informing Interventions
 - A Vibrant and Fair Society
 - ▶ To be delivered through:
 - Enhancing impact from existing investments
 - Encouraging investments to work together
 - And, exceptionally, new investments
 - ▶ To be refreshed annually


Economic Performance and Sustainable Growth

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ What are the determinants of economic performance and sustainable growth?
 - ▶ How to secure benefits for populations in the UK and in other countries?
 - ▶ How to improve stability and resilience of economies?

Influencing Behaviour and Informing Interventions

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ How to understand behaviour and risks at multiple levels and settings?
 - ▶ How and why do behaviours change?
 - ▶ How does the interplay of childhood, family, community and wider society influence inequalities in wellbeing?

A Vibrant and Fair Society

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several colored segments: red, light blue, dark blue, grey, light blue, dark blue, red, grey, dark blue, and red.
- ▶ What are inclusive communities and how best can we achieve them?
 - ▶ How do individuals and communities most effectively make their voices heard?
 - ▶ How mobile is our society?


Strategic Priorities – Misconceptions

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▶ Not:

- A long list of new research programmes
- A steer to research grants –commitment to vibrant, innovative response mode
- A narrowly UK-centric agenda
- A narrow, applied agenda
- All about research
- Everything we do


National Capability

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- ▶ Providing support across all stages of the career
 - ▶ Expanding training and development opportunities – building a national training infrastructure
 - ▶ Targeted initiatives:
 - National QM strategy
 - Partnership with HMT to build capacity in macroeconomics
 - ▶ Opportunities for early and mid-career through Future Research Leaders and Research Grants

Doctoral Training Centres

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Discontinue accreditation and separate competitions for studentships
 - ▶ 21 Doctoral Training Centres drawing together the best social science training
 - ▶ Concentrating studentships in strategic areas (e.g. QM and macroeconomics)
 - ▶ Developing an integrated advanced training network linking DTCs, NCRM and RDI

Data Strategy

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Strong data infrastructure is an essential core resource
 - ▶ ESRC supports some of the world's leading studies
 - ▶ Underpins research and training, and provides evidence to both academic and non-academic researchers
 - ▶ Only ESRC supports these kinds of large, long-term investments
 - ▶ The longitudinal 'jewels' appreciate in value
 - ▶ Despite cuts to capital, we will protect prioritised data infrastructure e.g. USoc, BCS

Understanding Society

▶ *Understanding Society Vision*

- an innovative and world-leading dataset with far reaching impact and the ability to engage and interest a wide community of researchers and practitioners

▶ *Key Features*

- Household Panel study – 40,000 households
- Evidence and Understanding; Interactions and Influences
- Longer-term outcomes
- Individuals and family life
- Academic researchers and policy makers
- Annual interviewing
- Innovation Panel
- Biosocial data collection



Total funding of £48.9 million



DWP Department for
Work and Pensions



DH Department
of Health

Department for
Education



Communities
and Local Government



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs



dcms
department for
culture, media
and sport



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



**FOOD
STANDARDS
AGENCY**



**The Scottish
Government**
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



Department for
Transport




**Northern Ireland
Executive**
www.northernireland.gov.uk

ESRC Funding Schemes



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Scope of Schemes 2011-12

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Focusing resources on longer and larger grants – ambitious social science
 - Phased out Small Grants scheme
 - Merged Centres and Large Grants competitions (79 Outline Proposals)
 - Research Grants Scheme (changed thresholds, re-branding scheme including new innovation funding)
 - Seminars Competition (positive evaluation Nov 11)
 - Future Research Leaders Scheme (combining First Grants and Postdoctoral Fellowships – 318 outlines)
 - Professorial Fellowships Scheme (with greater expectations)

Scope of Schemes 2011-12

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▶ International

- International Co-Investigators
- Open Research Area (100 applications involving UK, via German equivalent of JeS)
- International Partnership and Networking Scheme


▶ Knowledge Exchange

- Knowledge Exchange Opportunities Scheme (e.g. Placement Fellowships)
- Follow on Funding Scheme

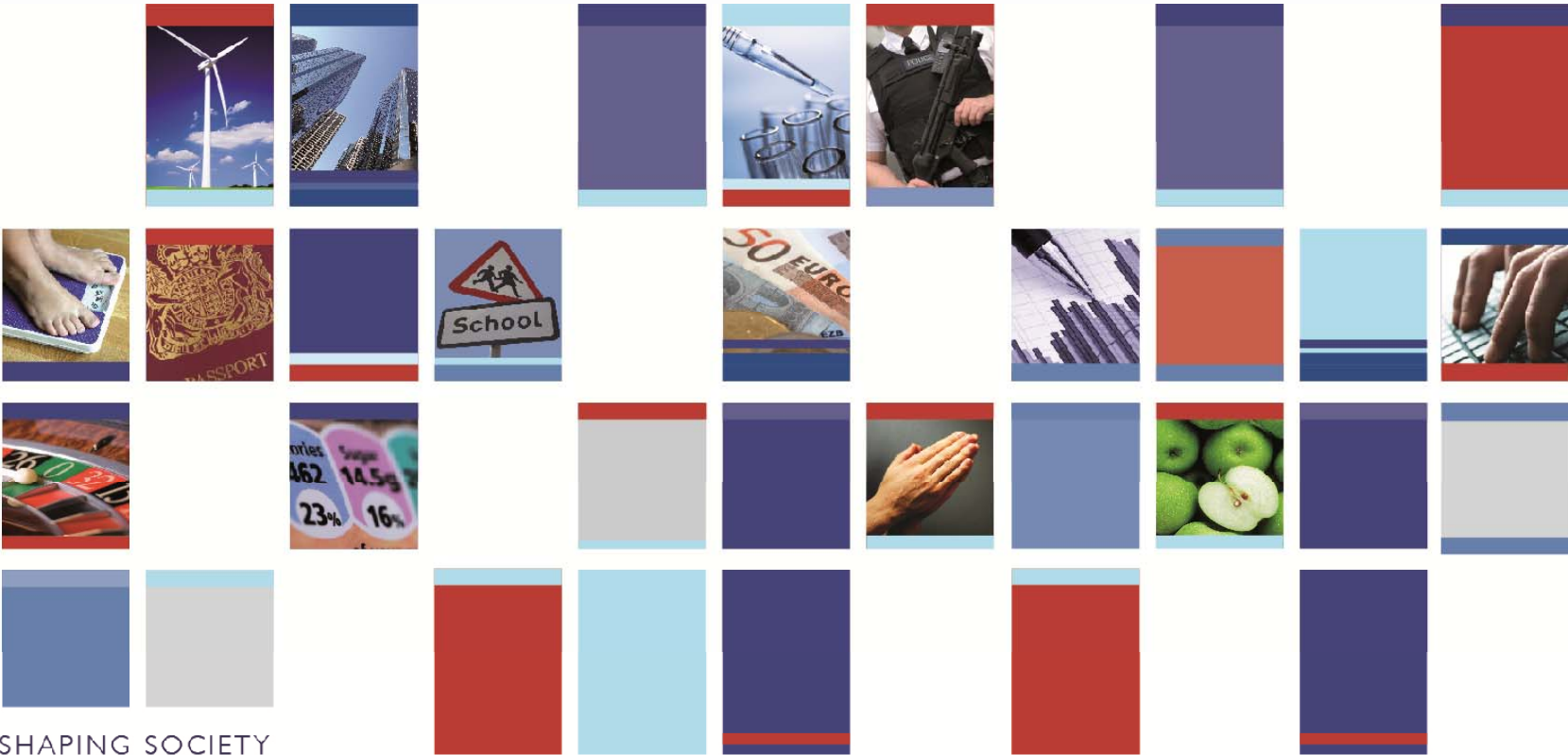
Innovation Funding

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Phased funding allowing development and testing of novel ideas and concepts
 - ▶ Application for full project with break point identified within first half of grant
 - ▶ Not all projects will proceed to second phase, but this is expected
 - ▶ But; should not all ESRC awards be innovative?
 - ▶ Views Welcome!


Secondary Data Analysis

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- ▶ Identified as a high priority from the process of refining the strategic priorities
 - ▶ Need to maximise use of world class datasets
 - ▶ Need to increase the skills in quantitative data analysis
 - ▶ Strategic investment in small awards
 - ▶ Workshop 1st December - you are most welcome!


Demand Management




Demand Management Introduction

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Last 5 years has seen a 33% increase in number of applications
 - ▶ No additional funding available leading to fall in success rates – approx 13%
 - ▶ Places burden on researchers, reviewers, universities and the ESRC
 - ▶ Delivery Plan sets an ambitious target of halving the number of Research Grant applications by 2014
 - ▶ Focus on:
 - Identifying and supporting the best social science
 - Reducing the number of applications that are uncompetitive


Initial Measures (I)

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- ▶ We expect to see individuals and HEIs demonstrate that they are improving self-regulation
 - ▶ To help meet these expectations we will:
 - Maximise transparency, including regular provision of performance data to institutions – November data release
 - Ask HEIs to share quality assurance measures with us for a good practice guide
 - Develop and disseminate good practice guidelines on grant application writing
 - Have introduced an invited-only resubmissions policy with associated guidance


Initial Measures (2)

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- Reduce the external peer review burden through revised sifting mechanisms (greater use of outline applications and earlier sifting for standard grants)
 - Simplify the RCUK JeS outline application process (e.g. Large Grants and Centres)
 - Issue more tightly specified calls on managed mode schemes which address the ESRC strategic priorities
 - Work with other RCUK partners to harmonise any demand management measures

Further Options

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- A vertical decorative bar on the left side of the slide, composed of several horizontal segments in red, blue, and grey colors.
- ▶ Review progress after 12 months and consider next steps
 - ▶ Consulted community on a range of future options – researcher sanctions; institutional sanctions; institutional quotas; charging
 - ▶ 82% favoured researcher sanctions
 - ▶ If Council decides to introduce additional measures likely to be based around a researcher sanctions model
 - ▶ However, we are confident in the initial measures but need HEIs to work with us and self-regulate

Issues for Group Discussion

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- ▶ What is current practice in the HEIs represented today in terms of quality assurance and volume control?
 - ▶ At what level and through what structures should HEIs manage the submission of funding applications?
 - ▶ What more could ESRC do to support institutions in managing demand?