

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 1 This Circular announces the provision of targeted funding to assist institutions with their preparations for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

## **BACKGROUND**

- 2 Funding is made available annually to the Council by the Assembly to help support the implementation of the *Reaching Higher* agenda, with the key priority being the support of reconfiguration and collaboration activities. In its remit letter for 2005/06, the Assembly invited the Council to develop proposals for the more strategic use of this funding. It has agreed that, whilst the primary focus of the funding will remain firmly on the promotion of reconfiguration and collaboration, the strategic uses identified by the Council can include the provision of some support for aspects of the broader *Reaching Higher* agenda.
- 3 In developing its proposals, the Council has identified the improvement of research performance as a priority area for targeted, strategic support from the *Reaching Higher* funding. The immediate priority here is the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), where the imperative is for the sector to maintain and build upon the trajectory of improvement apparent in the 2001 exercise.
- 4 Against that background, it has been just been agreed by the Assembly that £2 million of the funding available to support the *Reaching Higher* agenda can be made selectively available to provide a targeted boost to recipient institutions' preparations for the 2008 RAE. In addition, the Council has agreed to augment this amount by £500k from its Strategic Development Fund and £500k from other funds, making a total of £3 million available for distribution.

## **PURPOSE OF FUNDING**

- 5 The overall purpose of the funding is to help strengthen the sector's performance in the 2008 RAE. It will be open to recipient institutions to determine the most effective and appropriate way of deploying their allocations in the context of their individual strategies and priorities. However, examples of potential areas of expenditure could include advancing the recruitment of additional staff with strong research records or the provision of selective teaching relief for research active staff in order to facilitate improved research productivity.

## **FUNDING ALLOCATIONS**

- 6 As indicated above, the intention of this funding is to facilitate the strengthening of the sector's performance in the 2008 RAE. The Council is keen to target the funding selectively in those areas which, on the basis of the outcomes from the 2001 RAE, will be most able to achieve the minimum levels of performance to feature in the 2008 RAE. Accordingly, it has

determined that this additional funding be allocated on the basis of the Units of Assessment which were rated 4 in the 2001 RAE. Institutional allocations on this basis are set out at **Annex A**.

- 7 It will be open to institutions, in the light of their current research strategies, to determine the most appropriate way of deploying their allocations consistent with the purpose of funding identified in paragraph 5 above.

## **TERMS OF FUNDING**

- 8 Institutions in receipt of funding are asked to provide the Council with plans for the use of their allocations in the period up to the RAE. These plans should include a statement of the rationale for the areas selected for support and the anticipated benefit to RAE performance. They should also include an expenditure breakdown.
- 9 The plans should be provided by completing the pro forma attached at **Annex B**. An electronic copy of this pro forma can be downloaded from the Council's website ([www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk)) where it will be available alongside this Circular.
- 10 Subject to receipt of acceptable plans, institutions' allocations will be released in February 2006.
- 11 The Council will assess the impact and benefits of this initiative in the context of the sector's performance in the 2008 RAE. We will expect institutions' normal internal audit arrangements to provide appropriate assurance that the funding has been expended for the purpose provided.

## **RESPONSES AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

- 12 Institutions should submit their plans for the use of their allocations to the Council by **Monday, 30 January 2006**, using the pro forma provided. The completed pro formas should be addressed to Linda Tiller, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Linden Court, The Orchards, Ilex Close, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5DZ.
- 13 Any queries arising from this Circular should be directed to David Blaney, Head of Funding and Reconfiguration, 029 20682221, [david.blaney@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:david.blaney@hefcw.ac.uk).

**STRATEGIC SUPPORT FOR 2008 RAE  
ALLOCATIONS**

<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF 4-RATED SUBMISSIONS IN 2001 RAE</b>	<b>ALLOCATION £</b>
University of Glamorgan	2	157,895
University of Wales, Aberystwyth	8	631,579
University of Wales, Bangor	7	552,632
Cardiff University	7	552,632
University of Wales, Lampeter	2	157,895
University of Wales Swansea	11	868,421
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	1	78,947
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3,000,000</b>

*Note: Ratings for Cardiff University include those for the former UWCM*

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL FOR WALES  
STRATEGIC SUPPORT FOR 2008 RAE

EXPENDITURE PLANS

INSTITUTION:	
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ALLOCATION:	£
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CONTACT FOR ANY QUERIES	
Name:	
Position:	
Email address:	

**SECTION 1**

Please provide an overview of how the institution proposes to use its allocation, indicating the rationale for the areas selected for support and the anticipated benefit to RAE performance.

**SECTION 2**

Please complete the following table to show in more detail how the funding will be used. (*Continue on a separate sheet if required.*)

DEPARTMENT/ UNIT	2001 RAE RATING	NATURE OF PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	TOTAL COST FROM INITIATIVE FUNDING £