

UKCGE Workshop: Developments in Research Council Practice

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AHRC Studentship Funding

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AHRC's Strategic Aims

- To promote and support the production of world-class research in the arts and humanities
- To promote and support world-class postgraduate training designed to equip graduates for research or other professional careers
- To strengthen the impact of arts and humanities research by encouraging researchers to disseminate and transfer knowledge to other contexts where it makes a difference
- To raise the profile of arts and humanities research and to be an effective advocate for its social, cultural and economic significance

AHRC's postgraduate support 2008-09

- Open Competition: £38m
- Collaborative Doctoral Awards: £3m
- Project studentships through grants £2m
- CDAs and Project Studentships through Strategic Programmes £1m

= 40% of total Programmes (Postgraduate, Research and Knowledge Transfer) budget

Review of Postgraduate Funding

- December 2005 Council approved decision to review AHRC's mechanisms for supporting postgraduate research and training
- March – Sept 2006 specially convened Working Group met to consider a wide range of evidence and consultations
- June 2006 Consultation event for the community on proposals; meetings with individual subject associations
- Oct 2006 Final report published for consultation with the community
- Feb 2007 PG Committee agreed the recommendations
- March 2007 Council approved the recommendations of PG Committee

AHRC schemes

- Doctoral awards
- Research Preparation Master's
 - Master's course preparing the student for doctoral study or a career in research in the higher education sector
- Professional Preparation Master's
 - Master's course preparing the student for a career in professional practice
 - Certain subjects not eligible (see *Guide to Student Eligibility*)

New postgraduate funding mechanisms

For studentships to commence in October 2009:

- **Block Grant Partnerships (BGPs)**
 - Organisations with average of 8 or more AHRC postgraduate offers eligible (based on open competition 2003-07 data)
- **Studentship Competition (SC)**
 - Organisations which don't hold a BGP

Goals of the new system

- 2 competitions – equal status. Approx. 80/20 balance of award numbers (1,325 awards available across BGPs and SC 2010 academic year)
- Support strategy for producing world-class postgraduates
- Support high-quality research and training
- Maintain health and sustainability of arts and humanities disciplines
- Enable opportunities for interdisciplinarity
- Encourage integration of PG programmes with Research Organisation research and knowledge transfer strategies
- Provide studentships in Research Preparation Master's, Professional Preparation Master's and Doctoral schemes
- Aim for 50/50 balance Master's and Doctoral across both competitions

BGPs

- 5 year awards
- Criteria:
 - Strategy and vision
 - Spread of studentships
 - Training and environment
 - Management and monitoring
- Award by subject
- HEIs select students - nomination

Studentship Competition

- Capped annual competition
- To ensure students in 'pockets of excellence' have access to PG support
- To ensure AHRC PG support reaches all subject disciplines within its remit
- Likely to focus support on subjects not funded through BGPs (e.g. practice-based creative and performing arts subjects, vocational subjects such as librarianship)

Going Forward

- Building relationships
- Post award
- Research training (CRT, Vitae, framework)

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Questions?