





# ESRC DELIVERY PLAN 2006

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 ESRC IN CONTEXT

Social Science is the scientific study of economies and societies. For the UK science base to contribute fully to economic development, quality of life and public services, social science research is critical. This is because human progress depends not only on natural science, engineering and technology but on the social and economic conditions that shape them and their subsequent implementation. Interaction and collaboration between social science and other areas of research is essential for the impact of such research to be optimally utilised for the good of society. The RCUK framework has enabled the mobilisation of scientific excellence across all areas of knowledge through Research Councils working together. The interaction is impressive and this delivery plan includes joint initiatives between ESRC and five of the other Research Councils.

The ESRC is the largest Research Council in terms of the community it serves, accounting for over 25 per cent of those staff returned in the last Research Assessment Exercise across a wide range of disciplines. As such, the work supported by the ESRC contributes in many ways to the social, political, economic and intellectual life of the UK and beyond. It directly informs public policy and professional practice across all sectors of the economy. It strengthens our knowledge of and our ability to address a wide range of complex issues central to our development as an advanced and civilised society. It contributes to the teaching of large numbers of undergraduate and postgraduate students. And, it enhances the wider public's understanding of the world in which we all live.

On almost all of the available indicators, the strength of the UK social science research base globally is highly impressive. It is second only to the US in most areas and in some areas ahead of it. The maintenance of international standards of excellence will require continued investment in areas of the highest level of performance, whilst also addressing those areas in which there is scope for further improvement.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

In 2004-5 ESRC implemented a new strategic framework. This divided our work into the following areas: Research, Capacity, Engagement, and Performance. It was then necessary to identify what Council's priorities should be within that framework. To assist with this, a major consultation exercise was held in the spring and summer of 2004. This involved universities, learned societies, government departments, organisations in the business, public and voluntary sectors, and other key stakeholders. Since then, Council has asked its Boards and Committees to produce annual Strategic Plans. In April 2005, Council decided on its future priorities and specific spending plans for most of the 2004 Spending Review allocation. In April 2006, Council allocated the remainder of available funds from the last spending review and began the process of identifying priorities for the next period against the background of the broad priorities for 2005-10 and the longer-term impacts of these as set out in the *ESRC Strategic Plan* published in 2005.

The ESRC's final allocation from the Spending Review 2004 was: 2005-6 £123.265 million; 2006-7 £142.268 million; 2007-8 £150.136 million. This includes the allocations made for the introduction of full economic costing (FEC) as set out in Appendix I.

This Delivery Plan is an updated version of the Plan prepared in 2005-06. It sets out the key priorities for 2005-8, although the main focus is on 2006-7 as an updated Plan will be produced in 2007. The key priorities can be summarised in terms of seven strategic objectives:

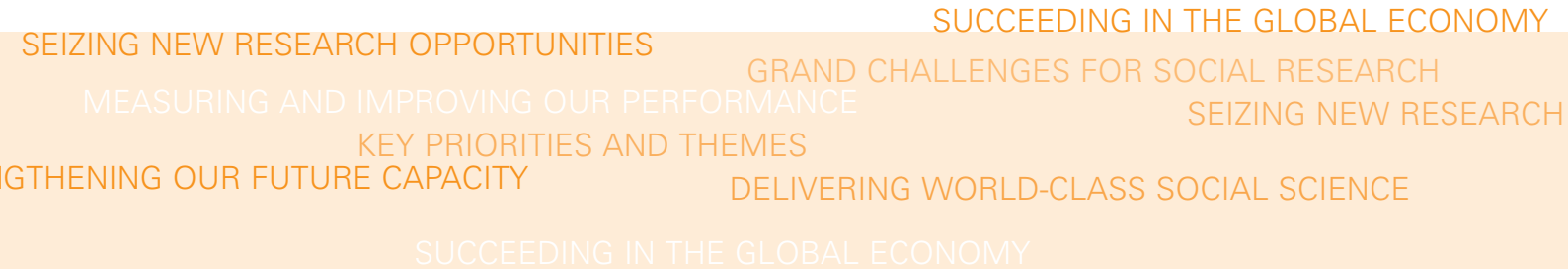
- Seizing opportunities in research
- Creating opportunities in research

- Strengthening our capacity – people and disciplines
- Providing capacity in data and ensuring methods development
- Engagement with stakeholders and the public
- International benchmarking of performance
- Maximising international presence and opportunities.

Each of these relate to at least one of the broad objectives set out in the OSI’s strategy for delivering the science budget.

The plan has been divided into the four areas of Research, Capacity, Engagement and Performance. The objective of maximising international presence and opportunities cuts across all these areas. For instance, applications under ESRC’s new international agreements are considered via the responsive mode. As part of Capacity, the Research Resources Board has commissioned a review of international data resources and is commissioning work on comparative methodologies. The scheme which is being commissioned with the Department for International Development will help to increase the global scope of UK social science. In addition, the Research Evaluation Committee is assessing the quality of UK social science in a global context through a series of international benchmarking reviews.

Appendix 2 sets out the performance management outputs framework and scorecard, with specific aims for the year, together with the milestones by which we will be able to judge progress. Appendix 3 lists our current strategic research and infrastructure investments.



## 2. DELIVERING WORLD-CLASS SOCIAL SCIENCE

### 2.1 SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES IN RESEARCH

*Increase the proportion of research in responsive mode and start to raise success rates*

Responsive mode funding is vital to support the best research ideas emerging from our community. This is not restricted to basic or theoretical research. Much of the work supported by our Research Grants Board is directly relevant to policy and practice. The overriding criterion for funding is academic excellence and within this significant work is supported across the social sciences.

Demand for ESRC funding is high and there has been a significant increase in grant and fellowship applications in recent years. The number of alpha (i.e. fundable) rated applications has also increased. The significant increase in demand for grants and fellowships, together with the outcome of the recent national consultation, has led the Council to increase funding for standard awards, as well as introduce new schemes to broaden the responsive mode portfolio. These include a new first grants scheme. Within the standard grants scheme 'highlight notices' are being issued, welcoming applications in emerging trans-disciplinary, cross-Council areas – the first highlight notice has been issued in the area of social cognitive neuroscience with the Medical Research Council. Further rounds of the Professorial Fellowships and seminar schemes will be held in 2006-7. The development of the former will be critical in helping to support major theoretical advances within the social sciences and to ensure that high quality empirical work is linked to theoretical development.

The ESRC has signed bi-lateral research agreements with eight countries, namely Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden, covering responsive mode collaborations across ESRC's remit and overcoming the current bureaucratic hurdles. In 2006-7 we will seek to add similar agreements with Norway, South Korea, Hong Kong and Turkey. Applications arising from these, as with the European Collaborative Research Projects scheme, will be considered by the Research Grants Board alongside standard applications, ensuring that the highest quality in research is maintained. In addition, agreements covering more limited bilateral collaborative activities, such as research seminars, have been signed with France and the United States; and further similar agreements are expected to be signed during 2006-7 with China, Japan, Denmark and Quebec Province.

The need had been identified for a new funding scheme to address a gap in our provision between the standard grant maximum level of £1.5 million (100% in full economic cost) and research centres (typically £0.75 million annually, post-FEC). A new Large Grants Scheme has now been launched for applications above £1.5 million and up to £5 million (in 100% FEC) and awards from the first competition will be decided in July 2006.

The Strategic Research Board has instituted a regular cycle of open centres competitions, in which proposals will be invited in any area of social science. This began with an open centres competition in 2005-6, alongside a highlight notice in the area of the environment and sustainability. Two new Centres from this competition will be launched in 2006-7, one in the area of the highlight notice and one in research methods. In 2006-7 the competition will have an open strand and will also highlight selected issues on education.

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## 2.2 CREATING OPPORTUNITIES IN RESEARCH

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### *Fund research that addresses Council's key research challenges*

ESRC's directed research portfolio falls into broad areas based on cognate disciplines. Current and future activities (including responsive mode support) within these areas are described below and a list of all current centres and programmes is provided at Appendix 3.

Following the consultation process described above, Council identified seven key research challenges and a number of possible mechanisms for taking each of these forward in the spending review period. In summary, these are:

- a) **Succeeding in the global economy**
- b) **Individual behaviour and its relationship to biological and social determinants**
- c) **Education for life**
- d) **Environmental change**
- e) **Security and international relations**
- f) **Religion and society**
- g) **Population change.**

Some of these challenges will be addressed by partnerships supported through the Ventures Fund, a new mechanism introduced by the Council in 2004 to facilitate collaborative research funding. This is described in more detail in the section on knowledge transfer.

## OUR CURRENT PORTFOLIO AND NEW PRIORITY AREAS

### ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### **Current Activities**

ESRC's major investments in this area include the internationally renowned centres on economic performance; fiscal policy; economic learning; innovation; knowledge, skills and business relationships; competition policy; and risk and regulation. Alongside these is a major new research programme on the world economy and finance and a major commitment to the Advanced Institute of Management research (AIM), which is supporting research to enhance the UK's international competitiveness as well as raising both the quality and capacity of the UK's research base on management. There is also a programme on the evolution of business knowledge. £6 million is spent annually on responsive mode support through grants and fellowships.

The sound management of the UK economy over recent years has been underpinned by economics research conducted in past decades. There are now ever greater challenges both for the UK's position in an increasingly global economy and, more broadly, for those managing the economies of the world.

#### **Relevant Priority Research Challenges:**

##### **Succeeding in the global economy**

This has three important components to add value to the Council's current portfolio through new investments: the future success of the UK in the global economy with regard to technologies and new business models; the needs of developing countries; and effectiveness of public services.

### **Succeeding in the global economy – Technologies and new business models (a1)**

The Council currently has three Innovation Research Centres which reach the end of their normal period of ESRC Centre support in 2006 and 'Sustaining Innovation to Achieve Competitive Advantage' is a theme within AIM which completes its Senior Fellowships programme in 2007. Given that innovation remains a scientific priority and a high priority for key ESRC stakeholders, notably the DTI and RCUK partners, we have decided to commission a targeted initiative on innovation, as well as further AIM mid-career fellows. This has the advantage of building on AIM's existing collaboration with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and connectivity with DTI. Specific issues include the role of services and technologies, and how best to capture value, sustainably, for the UK in the emerging global innovation system. The ESRC is also taking forward collaboration with partners on: the risks and opportunities of nanotechnologies following the Royal Society/Royal Academy of Engineering report commissioned by OSI; the relationship between new forms of corporate governance and performance and the role of Higher Education Institutions; and creativity and prosperity.

Priority research questions include, generally and for particular technologies: How can the rate of innovation be enhanced while simultaneously addressing sustainability? What will determine the future global distribution of high value added, highly innovative activities? What will replace the familiar but increasingly dated concept of national systems of innovation with global sourcing of technologies? How best to measure innovative performance in an increasingly service orientated global economy?

Specific actions in 2006-7 will therefore include the commissioning of the targeted initiative on Innovation, AIM early career fellowships and Ventures partnerships with RCUK, Funding Councils and Government. In addition a joint Centre on Spatial Economics will be commissioned with the DTI, ODPM and other partners.

### **Succeeding in the global economy – Development (a2)**

Priority research questions on development include: Why are some developing countries succeeding in an increasingly global economy and others are not? What feasible policy options are there for escape from poverty for relevant countries?

The UK's social science base in this area, not just within economics but also in political science and development studies, is recognised internationally to be of the first rank. The ESRC is already supporting two Research Groups and will launch in 2006-7 nine new large projects funded in a major strategic collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID) to enhance the global impact of social science research on development through new work on these issues. Further projects will be commissioned in 2006-7. The new Centre on sustainability in developing countries (see below) will also contribute to this challenge.

### **Succeeding in the global economy – Public services (a3)**

Priority research questions on public services include: What is the relationship between choice, equity and performance improvement? How and why do targets affect delivery? What explains the international comparative performance of our public services?

The Council has created the most comprehensive and interdisciplinary research effort of any major country to address issues of this kind. 2006-7 is the first full year when both the Centre for Market and Public Organisation and the Public Services: Quality, Performance and Delivery Research Programme will be fully commissioned and thus working in tandem to address these issues. No new investments are planned, but the highlight notice on education in the 2006-7 centres competition is obviously relevant (see next page).

## EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY, COGNITION, AND LINGUISTICS

### Current Activities

ESRC's major investments include the programmes on Teaching and Learning (TLRP) and People at the Centre of Communication and Information Technologies. The TLRP is making significant contributions to the development of research-based practice in teaching and learning across all ages and at all stages of the learning process. In 2005-6 a new phase of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme, focused on widening participation in Higher Education, was commissioned.

The centre on Deafness, Cognition and Language at UCL, launched in March 2006, has also enhanced our portfolio in this area. £10 million is spent annually on responsive mode support through grants and fellowships and Psychology received the largest number of research grant awards by discipline in 2005-6.

### Relevant Priority Research Challenges:

#### Individual behaviour and its relationship to biological and social determinants (b)

Many of the major challenges facing UK society depend on improving understanding of how to maximise the effectiveness with which individuals can take control of their own lives. These include understanding the interaction between genetic endowment, early childhood development, adolescent and adult brain functioning, individual emotions, interactions with others and the role of institutions and culture.

This will be a major, long term challenge, which will require interdisciplinary work across the science base and especially between social science and medical science. A start to such interdisciplinary collaborations has already been made in partnership with the Medical Research Council (MRC), and ten other organisations in the National Prevention Research Initiative, with the ESRC contribution funded through Ventures. This is focussed on the primary prevention of cancer, coronary heart disease and diabetes through understanding health behaviours. The Council is in discussion with the partners about commissioning a second phase in 2006-7.

The next step in tackling this ambitious agenda is a need for interdisciplinary work with medical scientists in social neuroscience. Functional neuro-magnetic imaging and other technologies are now for the first time mapping what happens inside the brain when social and economic stimuli are applied and human beings respond. The UK already has a well developed infrastructure of brain imaging machines in place and a strong community in psychology and other relevant disciplines. We held an international workshop to explore the leading edge research agenda for social science in 2005, a joint highlight notice for the responsive mode was introduced with MRC early in 2006-7 and the ESRC will commission a capacity building cluster of studentships in 2006-7. There will also be a Ventures investment on financial services and decision making with industry.

#### Education for life (c)

During 2006-7 further work will be commissioned to synthesise research outcomes from the Teaching and Learning Research Programme and ensure that the outcomes inform future policy and practice development.

Outstanding research issues are: inter-disciplinary research on technology enhanced learning; improvements in UK science and maths education; skills for succeeding in the global economy and education, life chances and social inclusion. Each of these issues will be addressed in 2006-7 by, respectively, a new Ventures partnership with EPSRC, a new targeted research programme and a highlight notice within the 2006-7 Centres competition.

## GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, URBAN/RURAL AND TRANSPORT STUDIES, AREA STUDIES

### Current Activities

Current funding includes the Research Councils Energy Programme and the Rural Economy and Land Use Programme, the joint Council Tyndall Centre on climate change research, a programme on sustainable technologies and the Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment. Over £2 million is spent annually on responsive mode support through grants and fellowships. Opportunities for research on environment and sustainability were highlighted in the 2005-6 open research centres competition and a new Centre is being launched in 2006-7 as a result.

### Relevant Priority Research Challenges

#### Environmental change (d)

##### Research Councils Energy Programme

In order to achieve secure, competitively priced, low carbon energy supply and efficient, sustainable future consumption of that energy, there is a need for social science research that identifies the key levers that can help bring this about. The ESRC has worked with the NERC and EPSRC on this major cross-Council commitment. As well as contributing over £3million to the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC), the ESRC is also funding a Research Group on Transitions to a Sustainable Energy Economy (TSEC) established under SR2002.

As a part of cross-Council activities under SR2004 ESRC has led in the establishment of two new inter-disciplinary research groups which will provide a focus for UK research on energy consumption and energy markets as well as a collaborative network exploring attitudes to renewable energy developments.

Working with the other Councils the ESRC will seek to build social science research capacity in energy research and ensure that the social sciences make a central contribution to other parts of the TSEC Programme, including work on Keeping the Nuclear Option Open and energy and equity enhancing the international dimensions to the Programme's work, energy security issues and networking with business and industry.

##### Climate Change

The EPSRC/ESRC/NERC Tyndall Centre focuses attention on effective responses to the challenges posed by climate change and what this might mean for management of the environment and economy. Following on from the positive international evaluation of the Centre's first period of funding, which noted that the social sciences have been especially prominent in the high quality work of the Centre, we have provided three further years of support for a second term of funding to build on the success to date.

##### Rural Economy and Land Use

The cross-Council Rural Economy and Land Use Programme is led by the ESRC with NERC, BBSRC, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Scottish Executive. The programme is already addressing key challenges in sustainable rural development around the themes of the integration of land and water use; the environmental basis of rural development; sustainable food chains; and economic and social interactions with the rural environment. Commissioning of a third phase will be completed in 2006-7 and will build on the capacity created under the first phase of the Programme as well as undertaking novel inter-disciplinary research on plant and animal disease management.

##### Sustainable Water Management

Sustainable water management is a global challenge and has been identified by the Environmental Research Funders Forum as a key area for UK investment. Inter-disciplinary research involving social and natural scientists and engineers is required to model and understand changing water systems and their interactions with human activities. Further research on water management will be considered in 2006-7 under the third phase of the Rural Economy and Land Use Programme and new partnerships will be taken forward with DEFRA on valuation of water assets and with business on resilience of supply.

### Environment and Human Health

Both natural and anthropogenic environments provide a range of challenges for society and can affect human well-being both positively and negatively. The environmental changes wrought by the rising scale and diversity of human activities stiffen those challenges. Social and economic factors such as inequalities in health, differential exposure to the environment and differences in human understanding and behaviour all influence the ways in which the environment affects human health. Research is needed on the organisational and individual responses to these that can have beneficial effects at a global and national level. ESRC will contribute to a NERC led capacity building partnership programme in this area through the commissioning of inter-disciplinary fellowships and co-funding of developmental awards in 2006-7.

### Environment and Development

A major new Centre on Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability will be launched in 2006-7 at the University of Sussex.

### Transport Policy

A second round of joint studentships with the Department for Transport will be commissioned in 2006-7 for research into improving transport and in particular tackling congestion, respecting the environment and the costs and benefits of road pricing. In 2006-7 we will commission a joint transport research and evidence centre with the Department. The Council is using the recently completed evaluation of its Transport Studies Unit to inform discussions on future research priorities.

## GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND LAW

### Current Activities

Current and continuing activity includes the 2005 British Election Study and major investments in evidence based policy, devolution, new security challenges and the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR) which ends its normal period of ESRC Centre funding in 2007. £1.8 million is spent annually on responsive mode support through grants and fellowships.

### Relevant Priority Research Challenges:

#### Security and international relations (e)

It should be noted that issues of global security and relations between communities and nations across the globe cross almost all of the research challenges described here. Research partnerships with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on radicalisation and with the Home Office on security will be commissioned in 2006-7. Major new opportunities arise in technologies to enhance security (with Home Office, EPSRC, AHRC, MRC and BBSRC); and the details of a major new initiative will be developed in 2006-7. In addition, researchers in politics and law will contribute to the full range of research challenges described in this plan, for example: Succeeding in the global economy – governance in developing countries; regulation and the emergence of new business models and technologies; individual behaviour and political choice; public policy on education and welfare; effective and sustainable regulation of the environment; causes and consequences of population change; and interactions between religion, ethnicity and identity.

## SOCIOLOGY, SOCIAL POLICY, SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

### Current Activities

This area of work currently includes programmes on cultures of consumption (in partnership with AHRC), the e-society, non-governmental organisations, stem cells, science in society and social identities. We also have centres and groups at the forefront of the UK's work on genomics, micro-social change, families, social exclusion and socio-cultural change. £5.1 million is spent annually on responsive mode support through grants and fellowships.

## Relevant Priority Research Challenges

### Religion and society (f)

In 2006-7 the Council will join with AHRC in commissioning a major new interdisciplinary programme on religion and society. This will build on existing investments such as those by ESRC in Identities and Social Action and the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) and by AHRC in Diasporas, Migration and Identities.

## STATISTICS, COMPUTING, INFRASTRUCTURE, DEMOGRAPHY AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Current Activities

The current commitments here include the majority of our large-scale and long-term investment in the infrastructure for data resources and longitudinal surveys. These are described in further detail in the section on resources. In addition, we fund a major research centre on migration, policy and society. The new cross-Council New Dynamics of Ageing Programme, funded by the ESRC, EPSRC, BBSRC, AHRC and MRC, and building on ESRC's earlier Growing Older Programme will complete commissioning in 2006. The ESRC is already supporting a modest, £300,000, collaboration through our Ventures Fund with the Scottish Executive on Scotland's population. £0.5 million is spent annually on responsive mode support through grants and fellowships.

## Relevant Priority Research Challenges

### Population change (g)

There are seismic changes occurring in the demography of much of the world including changing childbearing patterns and household structures, increased longevity and internal and external migration. Areas requiring new work include:

#### Childbearing

Research questions include: What are the explanations for below population replacement fertility levels in much of Europe? What are the long run consequences of the contrast with continued high fertility in many parts of the less developed world and a US population sustained largely through migration? What are the best adaptation strategies to manage the enormous economic and social consequences in the absence of effective intervention?

#### The changing dynamics of the family

Past childbearing, reproductive technologies, education, migration, family formation and dissolution and longer life expectancy are rapidly transforming family relationships. These changes impact on critical areas such as productivity, labour supply and the persistence of disadvantage. These changes need to be mapped and causality distinguished from co-incidence to underpin the development of effective policies. Research questions include: Are fiscal policies from inheritance tax to child credit fit for purpose? Who will care for older people?

Some of these questions will be addressed through the Understanding Population Trends and Processes (UPTAP) Programme commissioned in 2005-6. In addition, proposals for a targeted initiative on childbearing and on family dynamics will be developed for consideration by both the Strategic Research Board and Research Resources Board in February 2007. This is an area where exploitation of enhanced national and international datasets will require collaboration between both boards. International comparative research will be emphasised in the development of the targeted initiative.

### 3. STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE CAPACITY – PEOPLE AND DISCIPLINES

*To contribute to the health of social science disciplines*

The continuing health of disciplines has been emphasised as a key priority by both Council and the Office of Science and Innovation. The future health of the social science community rests upon:

- Maintaining research capacity where the UK is already a centre of excellence
- Strengthening the UK social science base where there is a shortage of high quality research capacity
- Fostering new capacity in areas which will address emerging research challenges.

Maintaining a healthy social science research base requires urgent action. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the UK social science workforce is ageing. In many disciplines this cohort will not be replaced by a new generation of researchers. Secondly, there are serious recruitment and retention problems in some key disciplines which are threatening to inhibit the regeneration of the academic workforce.

These trends threaten to undermine the UK's position as a world leader in social scientific research. It has therefore been decided to introduce a number of initiatives to arrest this threat and provide a structured career path for the next generation of researchers. These are:

- Studentships and fellowships in priority areas
- Postdoctoral fellowships in priority areas
- An innovation pool to encourage the development of innovative training provision
- A joint language initiative with AHRC and HEFCE
- A new first grants scheme
- Research grant linked studentships.

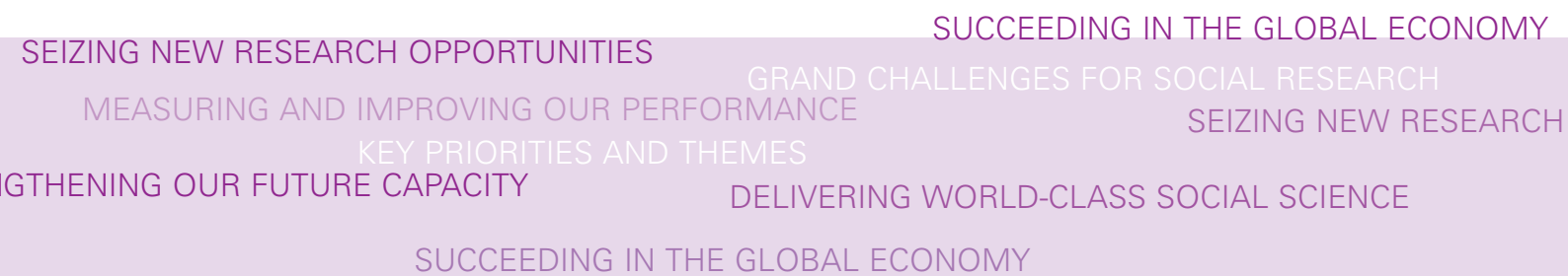
The Council can exercise the most far reaching impact upon the future health of the social science base through strategic intervention. Its Training and Development Board has recently completed a major Demographic Review of the social science community which identified particular strengths and weaknesses in the social science research base. The review has been used to pursue a targeted strategy, focussing on disciplines where the most pressing capacity problems exist. This has involved hard choices, with the reallocation of studentships and postdoctoral fellowships between subject areas. We have introduced higher salaries for postdoctoral fellows in Economics, and we are also introducing higher stipends for postgraduate students in Economics and Advanced Quantitative Methods, starting with 2006 entrants.

Using the analysis from the Demographic Review, six initial priority areas have been identified. In economics the major problems are recruitment and retention, which threaten to erode the UK's role as a world leader in this discipline. Similar recruitment problems exist in Management and Business Studies, where there is a general need to improve research quality. Here the strategy is to develop a range of studentship and fellowship schemes over the next year in partnership with the academic community, particularly through AIM, to strengthen research capacity. The lack of quantitative skills is endemic to many areas of social science and again there is an urgent need to enhance research quality. The ESRC will be working with the Funding Councils to improve undergraduate and masters provision in this area as well as expanding doctoral provision and opportunities for mid career reskilling. The UK has a strong reputation for good quality research in socio-legal studies and area studies, yet these disciplines have fragile research bases which need to be revitalised as the current generation of academics retires. In addition, social work is an emerging research area which we will seek to foster:

In conjunction with the AHRC and funding councils, we will complete commissioning in 2006-7 of a programme to build capacity in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and East European Studies. This will involve a number of measures, such as funding studentships and tailored training for academic staff at more advanced stages of their research careers. Research training will integrate social and cultural aspects with dedicated language training.

These varying approaches highlight the need to provide flexible capacity building strategies that meet the specific needs of individual disciplines. Over the course of 2006-7 the Council will gather further evidence to develop this more flexible portfolio of training and development strategies. This will include a major review of the Council's standard 1+3 (integrated research Masters and doctoral training) scheme.

A new scheme has been introduced for studentships linked to larger research grants. This provides an additional capacity building resource within the responsive mode. A dedicated responsive mode scheme for junior applicants will aid new researchers at a crucial early stage of their academic careers, providing a bridge to longer term research development. The first awards under both of these initiatives will commence in 2006-7. We are also providing support for researchers at all stages of their careers through the Researcher Development Initiative and through active support for the work of the RCUK Research Careers and Diversity Unit.



## 4. STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE CAPACITY – RESEARCH RESOURCES

*To ensure that ESRC leads on the development of a core set of social science datasets with secure long term funding and on the development of methodology in the social sciences*

### 4.1 INFRASTRUCTURE

The continued development of a national social science infrastructure is essential if the UK is to retain its leading position in social and economic research. The ESRC has a unique role to play in achieving this objective, by both taking the lead in developing a coherent and comprehensive data infrastructure and by fostering methodological innovation to ensure that it is fully exploited. The Council has developed a national datasets strategy to help achieve this.

The Council has already made major strides in developing a world-class data infrastructure. The UK has, for example, an internationally renowned collection of longitudinal studies including the National Child Development Study, British Household Panel Study and Millennium Cohort. In April 2004, the Council committed a further £23m over the next six years to fund the future development of its longitudinal studies.

The maintenance and development of access to the Census datasets is vital in underpinning many areas of UK social science. We will be providing additional resources for this in 2006-7 and 2007-8. The European Social Survey is a major survey, currently funded by over 20 European countries, designed to compare, chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions, its political and economic structures and the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of its populations. It provides an unparalleled data resource in enabling comparative research across Europe. Council has agreed to fund a further two sweeps of this survey and is committed to its support in the long term.

An initiative to deepen our portfolio of international data resources would assist the global and comparative aspects of UK social science research. Funding has been committed for 2006-7 and 2007-8 to carry this out.

If the UK is to maintain its leading international position it must commit to the long term support of existing datasets and radically extend its current data infrastructure. For example, resources must be found to create bigger and better datasets with large enough sample sizes to enable social scientists adequately to answer a range of increasingly detailed and complex questions. The importance of this was emphasised by the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee in its scrutiny of ESRC in 2004. The Committee also noted the value of securing additional funding from government departments and other partners for this work. These issues are being addressed by the UK Data Forum, which was set up by the ESRC last year to co-ordinate work across all key stakeholders in this area.

The Forum has produced a National Datasets Strategy which has identified a common set of future priority data needs. Key amongst these has been a new, larger Household Panel Study. The provision of funding from the OSI Large Facilities Fund to launch such a study will greatly enhance the resources for UK social science research and policy makers. It will be the world's leading research resource in the social sciences, covering some 40,000 households. Preparation for the field work in 2007-8 will take place in the coming year. The principal mechanism through which a partner engagement strategy will be developed is the UK Data Forum. It is planned that the Forum will discuss the Panel Study at its next meeting in September 2006, when the focus will be upon refining the substantive topics and design strategy for the Study. The Study will be a standing item on the Forum's agenda from then on.

As well as new data collection, the National Datasets Strategy also highlights the importance of developing and opening up access to existing data resources. There are particularly exciting opportunities to link social, economic and biomedical data and the Council will work closely with the Medical Research Council and Wellcome Trust over 2006-7 to strengthen access to a number of key bio-medical datasets. We will also collaborate with a range of government departments to improve access arrangements to a vast and invaluable range of administrative data sources. This will include supporting pilot work to explore the potential for integration of administrative data to greatly enhance its capacity for social and economic research and policy analysis.

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## 4.2 METHODOLOGY

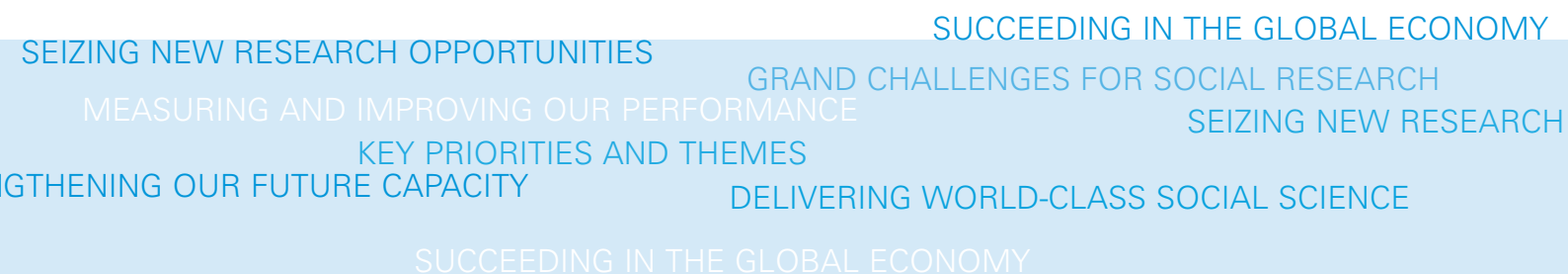
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It is of vital importance that the most advanced tools and techniques are available to the social science community both to collect and effectively analyse increasingly multi-layered and multi-textured social science data resources.

The Council is at the forefront of improving the methodological skills base of the UK, and has pioneered world leading developments in advanced quantitative methods. It currently supports a number of initiatives, such as the investment of over £15 million in a Research Methods Programme and two major facilities: the National Centres for Research Methods and E-Social Science.

One of the two centres funded through the 2005-6 Centres Competition, the Centre for Microdata Methods and Practice, to be based at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, will advance knowledge in economic and social science by developing and applying tools to extract information about human behaviour from non-experimental data. The Centre will start work in 2007.

It is important that further methodological work is carried out. Funding has been committed to an initiative on survey data collection and measurement for 2006-7 and 2007-8. Work will also commence on a programme on the methodological challenges of undertaking comparative research.



## 5. ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

*To ensure ESRC communicates effectively with its stakeholder communities and increases the impact of its research.*

A large number of successful communications and knowledge transfer activities already take place, and these will be maintained. They include corporate publications and events, training for award-holders, seminar series, knowledge transfer schemes such as the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, and engagement with stakeholders through mechanisms such as concordats with government departments. However, the active promotion of social science and the maximisation of its impact on policy and practice require an extension of these activities in a strategic way.

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### 5.1 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

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In April 2004, the ESRC Council approved the organisation's Knowledge Transfer Strategy that identified key strategic actions. These will be further developed during the Spending Review period. In particular, the ESRC will engage with Government departments and devolved administrations through strategic partnership agreements. ESRC will collaborate to provide a research evidence base that can be drawn on in the policy formulation process. For example, it is planned that eight public policy seminars will be offered on topics identified by Government departments.

The ESRC plans to respond positively to the imperatives of the 'Science and innovation investment framework' and its follow-up 'Next Steps' document, produced in conjunction with the 2006 Budget by increasing its rate of knowledge transfer, rate of interaction with business, and the amount of collaborative research that it undertakes. The resources available to deliver on these challenges are enhanced by utilising the allocation to ESRC from the OSI knowledge transfer fund. In addition, the ESRC will respond to research challenges identified by specific sectors, large corporates and SMEs by drawing on ESRC Centres and Programmes as well as funded researchers.

Interaction with business will also be enhanced through cooperative education and training schemes, particularly Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering (CASE) and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. The expansion of these schemes will contribute to the generation of new knowledge, enhance interactions between HEIs and business, and expand communities of practice. An Impact Grants Scheme has been introduced to assist these processes.

Similar principles underlie the ESRC's placement schemes that allow researchers to spend time in Government departments working on identified projects and developing the research skills of other employees. It is also intended to apply this scheme to business. Conversely, it is planned that Government and business employees will be supported to spend time in research units working on joint projects.

The ESRC's role in building capacity through training and development will also be fulfilled by offering 'Getting Research into policy/practice' workshops for social science researchers. The resources of ESRC methods researchers will be drawn on to meet training needs in Government departments and among business.

The ESRC Ventures Fund will be used to engage with strategic partners on new jointly-funded research. The current plans include initiatives on spatial economics, transport, water management, aerospace technologies and ethnicity and youth justice.

With this scheme and other research initiatives, attention will be given to maximising the impact of the research investment. Drawing on the evidence that is already available, stakeholder involvement throughout all stages of the research enterprise will be encouraged and supported.

In all of these activities, the ESRC will continue to play an active role in the RCUK Knowledge Transfer Group to share and combine resources for the benefit of users across all sectors.

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## 5.2 SCIENCE IN SOCIETY

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ESRC is committed to promoting social science to a variety of audiences and to demonstrating its valuable contribution to the UK knowledge base. In 2006-7 we will be developing further the ESRC's Science and Society strategy. This will enable us to take forward a public engagement programme which is evidence-based and which increases public involvement in the conduct of and outcomes from social science research. The strategy will also complement the work of the RCUK Science in Society Unit and the RCUK science in society strategy which was published in March 2006. There will be a particular emphasis on increasing public dialogue and consultation around our future priorities, on ensuring that the findings of ESRC-funded research inform our activities in this area and that we have more focused interaction with schools and young people.

The creation and ongoing development of an ESRC Information Centre was approved by Council in October 2003 to provide an integrated online presence for the ESRC and its investments and for social science research more generally. 'ESRC Society Today' is now a running service. The content and functional aspects of the portal will be actively developed over the next few years, addressing for example the needs of specific communities (e.g. postgraduate students) as well as supporting ESRC strategic initiatives (e.g. the national datasets strategy).

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## 5.3 EVIDENCE FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

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Communication and dissemination of evidence for policy and practice will be addressed through two key areas: (1) providing access to the social science information/knowledge pool and (2) intermediation. The first area will be provided for through the development of web-based resources for evidence-based policy and practice. The second area will extend the concept of media fellows to pilot a new scheme for 'research brokers'. These will act as intermediaries between researchers and research users by performing a variety of communication and knowledge transfer activities. A research broker for public services will be appointed in May 2006.

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## 5.4 INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

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We will be maintaining a variety of activities which enhance the UK's international position. This includes preparations for promoting UK research participation in the European Union's 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme and the associated European Research Council. It also entails full involvement in the development of the European Research Area (ERA) and our central role in the ERA network of twelve social science research funding agencies (NORFACE). Along with other UK member organisations we continue to take a strong interest in the efficient operation of the European Science Foundation, including the European Collaborative Research Projects scheme (ECRP), to make it more amenable to supporting the highest quality collaborative research.

Arising from this we have taken the chair, from April 2005, of the Technical Committee on Social Sciences and Humanities of the Inter-Governmental group for Co-operation on Science and Technology (COST). This will enable the ESRC to contribute strongly to the reforms of COST which will take effect from 1 June 2007, and provides ESRC an opportunity to influence the development of the European policy agenda and to encourage the dissemination of good practice in the funding of social science research.

In order to promote and develop international collaboration, we shall continue our strategy of removing unnecessary barriers and identifying opportunities to stimulate interaction between UK and overseas social scientists. We will be extending our international networking activities, including those now being led pivotally by the expanded NORFACE network. This will include conferences and workshops to stimulate collaborative research. We shall review the pilot visiting fellowship scheme with the United States to consider the feasibility of a more general visits programme. We shall evaluate the outcomes of the exercise, co-funded with the US National Science Foundation Social, Behavioural and Economics directorate to review collaborative funding between social science agencies at a global level. These developments will be central to the development of the quality, influence and international status of UK social science research.

## 6. MEASURING AND IMPROVING OUR PERFORMANCE

### 6.1 ENSURING QUALITY IN RESEARCH

*To establish a robust method of international benchmarking*

It is essential that we should be able to assess appropriately the quality of ESRC's research and that of UK social science as a whole. This not only feeds into our own decision-making, but is also a part of the new performance management framework. The Research Evaluation Committee (REC) has a well established system for evaluating the academic quality of individual investments and projects, and is now extending its work to include a greater emphasis on impact assessment and additional policy reviews.

The extended impact assessment portfolio includes the REC's work to develop robust bibliometric data for measuring the comparative performance of UK social science. In addition, work has also started on a series of reviews to benchmark the international standing of UK social science disciplines; the reviews will add an international perspective to the assessment of academic impact, and will increase the evidence base for capacity building and monitoring the health of disciplines. A study of the current level of international activity in ESRC awards will be commissioned to provide a baseline measure, so that the impact of our international strategy can be better monitored. The Committee has also instituted a series of case studies to provide more evidence of the impact of ESRC's research on policy and practice, and to test methods of assessment in this challenging area of evaluation practice.

### 6.2 DELIVERING VALUE FOR MONEY

The Council is committed to improving the administrative efficiency with which the science budget is managed and delivered. Much of this work is being taken forward on a cross-Council basis in the context of the recent Gershon Review. This includes the continuing reduction of the proportion of our budget spent on administration; the reprioritisation of spend towards new priority investments; adding value to the science budget by leveraging additional resources from outside the public sector; and participation in key cross-Council initiatives through the research administration programme. These initiatives are described in more detail in the RCUK Delivery Plan.



## ESRC DELIVERY PLAN 2006

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## APPENDIX I – FINANCIAL DATA

TABLE I: 2005 DELIVERY PLAN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

<b>£K</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Science budget – resource and capital (incl. FEC)	141,450	151,215
Other Income	18,673	15,550
EYF Brought Forward	8,519	6,342
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>168,642</b>	<b>173,107</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Supporting World Class Research	90,138	90,811
Future Sustainability: Trained People and Building Capacity	46,399	48,419
Underpinning Research Excellence: Facilities and Infrastructure	17,364	18,508
Engagement and Partnership	4,659	5,054
Measuring our Performance: Evaluation and Efficient Administration	9,102	9,235
International	980	1,080
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>168,642</b>	<b>173,107</b>

## APPENDIX 2a – OUTPUTS FRAMEWORK

<b>OUTPUT ONE A HEALTHY UK SCIENCE &amp; ENGINEERING BASE</b>	<b>METRICS TO BE COLLECTED</b>
<b>Overview</b>	
Quality	1. The ESRC is working to develop robust bibliometric indicators for the social sciences. As an interim performance measure, the Council will report evaluation grades for the work it funds.
Sustainability	1. The age profile of academics, by discipline.
Scale	1. ESRC's annual budget.
Agility	1. The amount spent on new initiatives and schemes in the first full year of expenditure. 2. The number and value of interdisciplinary awards within ESRC's domain. 3. The number and value of research contracts involving other research councils and other non-social science funders.
Productivity & Efficiency	1. The percentage of ESRC's budget spent on administration.
User Focus (science base)	1. The ESRC will collaborate in surveys operated on a cross research-council basis.
<b>UK Contribution to Global Knowledge Pool</b>	
Quality	1. The ESRC is working to develop robust bibliometric indicators for the social sciences. As an interim performance measure, the Council will report evaluation grades for the work it funds.
Scale	1. The number of publications arising each year from ESRC research.
Agility	1. The rate of change in publications per annum in relation to ESRC's priorities.
Productivity & Efficiency	1. The number of publications per £M of ESRC funding.
<b>UK Newly Trained People</b>	
Quality	1. The number of ESRC trained research students recorded as unemployed by the Joint Council first destination survey. 2. The proportion of ESRC funded PhD theses submitted within four years.
Sustainability	1. The proportion of ESRC funded students recorded as in permanent and temporary academic posts by the Joint Council first destination survey. 2. ESRC studentship awards by gender and ethnic origin.

<b>OUTPUT ONE (continued) A HEALTHY UK SCIENCE &amp; ENGINEERING BASE</b>	<b>METRICS TO BE COLLECTED</b>
<b>Overview</b>	
Scale	1. The annual number of new ESRC studentship awards.
Agility	1. The rate of change in the number of PhD awarded in ESRC's priority areas.
Productivity and Efficiency	1. The average cost of an ESRC studentship award.
User Focus (business and public services)	1. The proportion of ESRC funded students recorded to be employed in the business and public service sectors by the Joint Council first destination survey.
<b>UK Trained People Pool</b>	
Scale	1. The number of academic staff in UK social science departments.
Sustainability	1. Age profiles of academics in leading research departments by discipline. 2. The number of academic staff in HEIs in each social science discipline. 3. The ESRC will collaborate on a cross research-council survey to capture data on recruitment difficulties.
<b>Facilities and Infrastructure</b>	
Quality	1. Qualitative assessments of the quality of ESRC research resource investments.
Scale	1. The value of ESRC support for new research resources.
Agility	1. The change in the proportion of ESRC expenditure dedicated to research resources.
User Focus (science base)	1. The level of usage of ESRC research resources.
User Focus (business and public services)	1. The level of co-funding by business and government agencies of ESRC's research resources.
<b>Positioning and Relationships (including Science in Society)</b>	
Sustainability	1. The ESRC will collaborate in surveys operated on a cross research-council basis.
Scale	1. The level of co-funding of ESRC research by external bodies. 2. The number of ESRC interactions focused on public participation and engagement.
User Focus (science base)	1. The proportion of non-academic members of ESRC's Council and Boards. 2. The number of researchers trained in media and public engagement skills.
Quality	1. Evaluate the quality of interaction focused on public participation and engagement.

## OUTPUT TWO

### BETTER EXPLOITATION

#### Scale

Interaction with business and public services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of ESRC concordat agreements with strategic partners.</li> <li>2. The number of ESRC public policy and business-orientated seminars and workshops.</li> </ol>
Collaborative research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of collaborative ESRC research projects.</li> <li>2. The amount of external funding for joint research (excluding joint Research Council projects).</li> </ol>
Commercialisation of research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of ESRC workshops and seminars to help develop entrepreneurial and commercialisation skills.</li> <li>2. The number of research projects on spinouts and other commercialisation processes.</li> </ol>
Cooperative training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Number of collaborative studentships by type (CASE, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Government departments and agencies etc).</li> </ol>
People exchanges between the science base and organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of users placed in HEIs or ESRC research user investments.</li> <li>2. The number of academics placed in user organisations.</li> </ol>

#### Quality

Interaction with business and public services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Surveys of concordat partner satisfaction.</li> <li>2. Evaluations of seminars and workshops to assess benefits and application of research findings.</li> <li>3. Feedback reports from user representatives on ESRC boards.</li> </ol>
Collaborative research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluations of joint projects over £50,000 in value.</li> </ol>
Commercialisation of research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Systematic surveys obtaining feedback from seminar attendees on learning application.</li> <li>2. Follow up studies to track seminar impact.</li> </ol>
Cooperative training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. End of placement reports from students in receipt of collaborative funding.</li> <li>2. A survey of a sample of employers providing work experience for students.</li> <li>3. A survey of a sample of academic supervisors.</li> </ol>
People exchanges between the science base and user organisations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. End of placement reports from award-holders and their hosts.</li> </ol>

## APPENDIX 2b – ESRC SCORECARD 2006-7 – DELIVERABLES, TARGETS AND MILESTONES

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
1. To increase funding for standard responsive grants and fellowships.	To fund more of the best quality social science research in the UK and to increase standard responsive grant success rates to 25% by 2010, based on the level of demand in 2004-5.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To support a minimum of 220 new responsive awards a year through the SR period.</li> <li>2. To achieve and maintain a standard grant success rate of 22 per cent from 2005-6, based on the level of demand in 2004-5.</li> </ol>
2. To extend our international collaborative funding.	To enable the UK's leading social scientists to undertake collaborative research with colleagues from across the globe.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have concluded general bilateral agreements with at least five further partner countries by September 2006.</li> <li>2. To agree, in January 2007, to fund all ECRP06 cases scoring highly enough in competition within the Research Grants Scheme.</li> <li>3. To monitor practical and policy issues arising from the first applications under bilateral agreements, and develop improved procedures and guidance by December 2006.</li> </ol>
3. To introduce a new responsive scheme for groups, networks and projects for funding between £1.5m and £5m (post FEC) and to hold, at least biennially, open competitions for new research centres in any area within our remit.	To provide additional opportunities for long-term and large-scale funding for the UK's best social science research teams.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To announce the 2006-7 centres competition by June 2006.</li> <li>2. To agree funding recommendations for new and continuing centres by March 2007.</li> <li>3. To have agreed funding for at least three new investments under the new large grants scheme in July 2006 and in 2007.</li> </ol>
4. To support research that addresses the key research challenges set out in our Strategic Plan.	To fund a number of new initiatives each year in priority areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To issue a call for a targeted initiative on innovation by June 2006 and to have completed commissioning by March 2007.</li> <li>2. To issue a call for a targeted initiative on science and maths education by June 2006 and to have completed commissioning by January 2007.</li> <li>3. To prepare a capacity building investment in the area of 'Society, social behaviour and the neurosciences' by March 2007, which takes account of responses to the joint ESRC-MRC highlight notice for responsive mode application in the area.</li> </ol>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To commission up to three initiatives on security and terrorism with appropriate co-funding bodies by December 2006.</li> <li>5. To complete a series of seminars on demographic change with the Office for National Statistics to identify future research areas by July 2006, and to prepare for a new major investment by February 2007.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To establish a major strategic collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID).</li> </ul>	<p>To enhance the global impact of UK social science research on development through new work on these issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To invite applications by the end of May 2006 under the second call of the joint DfID-ESRC research scheme.</li> <li>2. To agree the second tranche of awards under the scheme by October 2006, and the third tranche of awards by March 2007.</li> <li>3. To undertake a series of workshops from mid-May to mid-June and again in the autumn (both UK and overseas) to highlight the standard of applications required, to encourage the best to apply, and to increase the international interest in the scheme.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. To continue to support the major, cross-Council 'Towards a Sustainable Energy Economy Programme'.</li> </ul>	<p>To ensure that social science makes a key contribution to cross-Council programmes generally and, in this instance, to the achievement of an energy efficient economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To commission, in collaboration with EPSRC, a first round of interdisciplinary early career energy fellowships by December 2006.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. To consider our continuing support for the cross-Council Tyndall Centre and to seek to make additional investments in the areas of the environment, sustainability and climate change.</li> </ul>	<p>To continue to support high quality work in these areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To consider future research priorities in light of the Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change, by December 2006.</li> <li>2. To launch the new Centre on Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability by December 2006.</li> </ul>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
8. To develop a research agenda with colleagues in the arts and humanities in the areas of identities, culture, ethnicities and religion.	To consider a major joint AHRC/ESRC investment following the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To finalise the specification for a joint AHRC-ESRC initiative in the area of religion and society by September 2006, including developing capacity through secondary analysis of data on religion.</li> <li>2. To commission a Ventures initiative on ethnicity and youth justice with the Commission for Racial Equality by October 2006.</li> <li>3. To issue a call in September 2006 for capacity building activities based on the secondary analysis of data on ethnicity.</li> </ol>
9. To support additional studentships and allow stipends in identified priority areas such as economics, management and quantitative work.	To identify and support those areas most in need of additional, targeted ESRC support.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To allocate no less than the following number of studentships each year in the priority areas listed below from March 2006: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>80</b> – Economics</li> <li><b>40</b> – Advanced Quantitative Methods</li> <li><b>25</b> – Socio-legal studies and criminology</li> <li><b>10</b> – Social Work</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. To agree a capacity building strategy for Management and Business Studies by December 2006. This will involve working in conjunction with the management community, particularly through a new capacity building initiative within the Advanced Institute of Management Research.</li> </ol>
10. To increase our support, through higher salaries, at the postdoctoral and junior levels through the postdoctoral fellowship scheme, a new early career fellowship initiative, a new scheme for first grants and a commitment to the cross-Council Roberts fellowships.	To increase the potential recruitment pool in those areas experiencing the most difficulties in attracting and retaining good people.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To allocate no less than the following number of fellowship each year in the priority areas listed below from March 2006: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>25</b> – Economics</li> <li><b>20</b> – Advanced Quantitative Methods</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. To have completed commissioning of 20 new awards under the First Grants Scheme by July 2006.</li> </ol>
11. To develop a joint initiative with AHRC and HEFCE focused on training in languages such as Arabic, Chinese and Japanese for new social scientists.	To increase the language skills of UK social scientists working on key regions and countries.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have completed commissioning of at least one capacity building Centre of Excellence in each of the following areas: Arab World, Eastern Europe, China and Japan by June 2006.</li> </ol>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. To have agreed contracts for successful Centres with each of the co-funders of the initiatives by September 2006.</li> <li>3. Successful Centres to commence activities by December 2006.</li> <li>4. To allocate no less than <b>10</b> studentships and postdoctoral fellowships a year (or no less than 50 overall) in <b>each</b> of the priority areas of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Eastern European Studies from October 2006.</li> </ol>
12. To introduce a new Researcher Development Initiative.	To provide training and development for UK social scientists throughout the academic life course.	To commission the second round of training and development projects by July 2006.
13. To continue funding for the Census Programme and the European Social Survey (ESS).	To enhance access to and the usage of the Census datasets and the ESS as vital elements in underpinning many areas of UK social science.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To agree a specification for the Census Research Programme by February 2007.</li> <li>2. To complete data collection for the the third sweep of the ESS by December 2006.</li> </ol>
14. To develop proposals for a significant extension of our data and methods portfolio in SR 2006.	To extend our portfolio of data resources improve the quality of data collected, create major new large scale data sets and develop cutting edge methodological tools and techniques to improve the quality and impact of UK social science research.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To implement early key priorities agreed in the UK National Datasets Strategy by March 2007. The priorities include improved access to bio-medical and administrative data; expansion of the ESRC's international datasets portfolio; and design of the new Household Panel Study (see target 15).</li> <li>2. To develop, in conjunction with the Funding Councils, an integrated capacity building strategy for quantitative methods by February 2007.</li> <li>3. To launch a new investment on evaluation research methods by January 2007.</li> <li>4. To launch the new Centre for Microdata Methods and Practice at the Institute for Fiscal Studies by June 2007.</li> </ol>

<b>Key Deliverable</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
15. To launch a new British Household Panel Study.	To agree the substantive topics and survey design of study and design survey pilot.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To agree key topics to be covered by the Study by July 2006.</li> <li>2. To agree a sampling strategy for the Study by November 2006.</li> <li>3. To appoint a Principal Investigatory team and Fieldwork Agency by February 2007.</li> <li>4. To design a Pilot Study by March 2007.</li> </ol>
16. To implement a new two-year ESRC communications strategy around the theme of 'Giving social science a voice'.	To increase the dissemination of our social science research findings to a wider audience and to raise awareness of the contribution and impact of social science within the wider science community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase stakeholder buy-in to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> and achieve a year on year 30 per cent increase in ESRC Society Today page views by April 2007.</li> <li>2. Provide greater access to full text materials by fully implementing Open Access integration and indexing content from 50 additional third party content sources by April 2007.</li> <li>3. To develop a project to raise national awareness of the diversity of social science research to a wide range of audiences by December 2006, and to deliver the project by March 2007.</li> </ol>
17. To implement the public engagement objectives of the ESRC's science and society strategy, which includes working in partnership with the new RCUK Science in Society Unit.	To extend the engagement and understanding of the general public in relation to social science research.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To hold an open meeting in the summer of 2006.</li> <li>2. To develop further the ESRC's science and society strategy in a way that complements and adds value to the RCUK strategy, as well as making public consultation and dialogue an integral part of our activities by June 2006.</li> <li>3. Develop a series of ESRC publications to highlight the findings from the Science in Society Research Programme to be delivered by September 2006.</li> <li>4. Fund and participate in two schemes aimed at schools and young people – the British Association for the Advancement of Science's Creativity in Science and Technology (CREST) scheme from April 2006; and Researchers in Residence from July 2006.</li> </ol>

<b>Key Deliverable</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
18. To introduce a new scheme for 'research brokers' to act as intermediaries between researchers and research users by performing a variety of communication and knowledge transfer activities.	To increase the impact of social science research on policy and practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To appoint a public services research broker in May 2006.</li> <li>2. To implement the advice of the Research Council's Knowledge Transfer External Challenge Panel, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To increase the number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships based in a business setting by five by December 2006.</li> <li>■ To apply the Impact Grants Scheme to the business sector by December 2006.</li> <li>■ To increase the number of events organised for a predominantly business audience by December 2006.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
19. To extend our range of concordats with government departments, devolved administrations; businesses; and organisations in the private and voluntary sectors and to extend the range of co-funding activities drawing on the Council's Venture Fund.	To increase our collaborative funding with a range of research partners thus increasing the amount of additional funding from outside the science vote for high quality social science research relevant to our strategic priorities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have concluded at least two further formalised agreements with strategic partners by March 2007.</li> <li>2. To organise 20 knowledge transfer seminars and workshops with strategic partners by March 2007.</li> <li>3. To increase collaborative funding by 10% a year from March 2006.</li> <li>4. To agree collaborative funding arrangements with five new strategic partners by March 2007.</li> </ol>
20. To develop improved ways of assessing the bibliometric performance of UK social science.	To develop robust bibliometric indicators of the quality and impact of social science publications.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To complete an assessment of practical options for improving data coverage in the social sciences by June 2006.</li> <li>2. To complete discussions about joint action with other social science funders by October 2006.</li> </ol>
21. To establish a series of international benchmarking reviews of Social Sciences.	To benchmark the quality and impact of UK Social Sciences against international standards; to identify ways of enhancing performance and capacity; and to help establish and promote future research agendas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To complete and evaluate the International Benchmarking Review of Anthropology by June 2006.</li> <li>2. To complete and evaluate the International Benchmarking Review of Politics &amp; International Relations by June 2007.</li> </ol>

<b>Key Deliverable</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
22. To extend the evaluation of research impact on policy and practice.	To provide more evidence of policy and practice impact, and to test new evaluation approaches.	1. To complete two impact case studies, and to review the utility of the methods and results by October 2006.
23. To work towards the agreed cross-Council efficiency targets for 2007/08.	To direct our funds towards new priority investments, to add value to the science budget by leveraging additional resources from outside the public sector and to reduce the proportion of our budget spent on administration.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To spend at least 5% of the Council's budget on new initiatives in priority areas in each of the three years covered by the Spending Review 2004.</li> <li>2. To reduce the proportion of our budget spent on administration to 3.2% in 2005/06 falling to 2.9% by 2007/08.</li> <li>3. See target 19, milestone 3.</li> </ol>

## APPENDIX 3 – LIST OF CURRENT ESRC INVESTMENTS (AS OF 1 APRIL 2006)

<b>Economics, Management, Innovation and Economic Development</b>		
<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location<sup>1</sup></b>
AIM Management Initiative ( <a href="http://www.aimresearch.org">http://www.aimresearch.org</a> )	Mar 07	London Business School/Warwick
Evolution of Business Knowledge Programme ( <a href="http://www.ebkresearch.org">http://www.ebkresearch.org</a> )	Dec 06	Warwick
Centre for Business, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS) ( <a href="http://www.brass.cf.ac.uk">http://www.brass.cf.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 11	Cardiff
Centre for Microeconomic Analysis of Public Policy (CMAPP) ( <a href="http://www.ifs.org.uk/esrc">http://www.ifs.org.uk/esrc</a> )	Sep 11	Institute for Fiscal Studies, London
Centre for Competition Policy (CCP) ( <a href="http://www.ccp.uea.ac.uk">http://www.ccp.uea.ac.uk</a> )	Aug 13	University of East Anglia
Centre for Economic Learning and Social Evolution (ELSE) ( <a href="http://else.econ.ucl.ac.uk">http://else.econ.ucl.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 10	University College London
Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) ( <a href="http://cep.lse.ac.uk">http://cep.lse.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 10	LSE
Centre for Innovation in Complex Product Systems (CoPS) ( <a href="http://www.cops.ac.uk">http://www.cops.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 06	Sussex/Brighton
Centre for Market and Public Organisation ( <a href="http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/CMPO">http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/CMPO</a> )	Sep 14	Bristol
Centre for Research on Innovation and Competition (CRIC) ( <a href="http://www.cric.ac.uk">http://www.cric.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 06	Manchester
Centre for Organisation and Innovation (COI) ( <a href="http://www.shef.ac.uk/esrccoi">http://www.shef.ac.uk/esrccoi</a> )	Sep 06	Sheffield
Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE) ( <a href="http://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/skope">http://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/skope</a> )	Sep 08	Oxford/Warwick
Public Services: Quality, Performance and Delivery Programme ( <a href="http://public-services.politics.ox.ac.uk">http://public-services.politics.ox.ac.uk</a> )	Nov 09	Oxford
World Economy and Finance Programme ( <a href="http://www.worldeconomyandfinance.org">http://www.worldeconomyandfinance.org</a> )	Feb 09	Birkbeck College London

<sup>1</sup> Location of Centre/Group host institution or location of Programme/Network Director

<b>Education, Psychology, Cognition and Linguistics</b>		
<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre	Dec 15	University College, London
People at the Centre of Communication and Information Technologies Programme (PACCIT) ( <a href="http://www.paccit.gla.ac.uk">http://www.paccit.gla.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Glasgow
Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) ( <a href="http://www.tlrp.org">http://www.tlrp.org</a> )	Dec 08	Institute of Education, London

<b>Geography, Environment, Urban/Rural and Transport Studies, Area Studies</b>		
<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Centre for Socio-economic Research on the Global Environment (CSERGE) ( <a href="http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/cserge">http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/cserge</a> )	Sep 06	University of East Anglia
Development and Persistence of Human Capability and Resilience in its Social and Geographical Context ( <a href="http://www.capabilityandresilience.org">http://www.capabilityandresilience.org</a> )	Mar 07	University College London
Global Poverty Research Group ( <a href="http://www.gprg.org.uk">http://www.gprg.org.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Oxford/ Manchester
Well-being in Developing Countries Research Group ( <a href="http://www.welldev.org.uk">http://www.welldev.org.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Bath
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research ( <a href="http://www.tyndall.ac.uk">http://www.tyndall.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 08	University of East Anglia
Rural Economy and Land Use Programme ( <a href="http://www.relu.ac.uk">http://www.relu.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 11	Newcastle
UK Energy Research Centre (part of the TSEC Towards a Sustainable Energy Economy Programme) ( <a href="http://www.ukerc.ac.uk">http://www.ukerc.ac.uk</a> )	Apr 09	Policy Studies Institute/Imperial College London/Oxford
The Sussex Energy Group	Mar 10	University of Sussex
Sustainable Technologies Initiative ( <a href="http://www.sustainabletechnologies.ac.uk">http://www.sustainabletechnologies.ac.uk</a> )	Dec 06	Brunel

<b>Government, Political Science and Law</b>		
<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Devolution and Constitutional Change Programme ( <a href="http://www.devolution.ac.uk">http://www.devolution.ac.uk</a> )	Mar 07	Edinburgh
Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR) ( <a href="http://www.csgr.org">http://www.csgr.org</a> )	Sep 07	Warwick
Social Contexts and Responses to Risk Network (SCARR) ( <a href="http://www.kent.ac.uk/scarr/">http://www.kent.ac.uk/scarr/</a> )	Sep 08	Kent
New Security Challenges Programme ( <a href="http://www.newsecurity.bham.ac.uk">http://www.newsecurity.bham.ac.uk</a> )	Dec 07	Birmingham
Centre for the Analysis of Risk and Regulation (CARR) ( <a href="http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CARR">http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CARR</a> )	Sep 10	LSE

<b>Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work and Social Anthropology</b>		
<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
New Dynamics of Ageing ( <a href="http://www.shef.ac.uk/newdynamics">http://www.shef.ac.uk/newdynamics</a> )	Jul 09	Sheffield
Cultures of Consumption Programme ( <a href="http://www.consume.bbk.ac.uk">http://www.consume.bbk.ac.uk</a> )	Jun 07	Birkbeck College London
E-Society Programme ( <a href="http://www.london.edu/e-society">http://www.london.edu/e-society</a> )	Mar 09	York
Genomics Research Centre – INNOGEN ( <a href="http://www.innogen.ac.uk">http://www.innogen.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Edinburgh
Genomics Research Centre – EGENIS ( <a href="http://www.ex.ac.uk/egenis">http://www.ex.ac.uk/egenis</a> )	Sep 07	Exeter
Genomics Research Centre – CESAGEN ( <a href="http://www.cesagen.lancs.ac.uk">http://www.cesagen.lancs.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Lancaster/Cardiff
Genomics Forum ( <a href="http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk">http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk</a> )	Jun 09	Edinburgh
Families and Social Capital Group ( <a href="http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families">http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families</a> )	Jan 07	South Bank
Research Centre on Micro-social Change (MISOC) ( <a href="http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/misoc">http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/misoc</a> )	Sep 09	Essex

**Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work and Social Anthropology (continued)**

<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Gender Equality Network ( <a href="http://www.genet.ac.uk">http://www.genet.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 09	Cambridge
Social Contexts of Pathways in Crime (SCOPIC) ( <a href="http://www.scopic.ac.uk">http://www.scopic.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Cambridge
Non-Governmental Public Action Programme ( <a href="http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/NGPA">http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/NGPA</a> )	Dec 07	LSE
Science in Society Programme ( <a href="http://www.sci-soc.net/SciSoc/">http://www.sci-soc.net/SciSoc/</a> )	Jul 07	Oxford
Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) ( <a href="http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/">http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/</a> )	Sep 07	LSE
Social Identities and Social Action Programme ( <a href="http://www.identities.org.uk">http://www.identities.org.uk</a> )	Sep 08	Open University
Centre for Research on Socio-cultural Change ( <a href="http://www.cresc.man.ac.uk">http://www.cresc.man.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 14	Manchester
Stem Cells Research Initiative	Sep 06	n.a.

**Statistics, Computing, Infrastructure, Demography, and Research Methodology**

<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Centre on Migration, Policy and Society ( <a href="http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk">http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 13	Oxford
British Election Study 2005/06 ( <a href="http://www.essex.ac.uk/bes">http://www.essex.ac.uk/bes</a> )	Mar 07	Essex
Centre for Applied Social Surveys (CASS) ( <a href="http://www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/cass/">http://www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/cass/</a> )	Oct 08	Southampton/Surrey/ National Centre for Social Research
Centre for Longitudinal Studies (incorporates Millennium Cohort Study/NCDS and BCS70) ( <a href="http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk">http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk</a> )	Mar 10	Institute of Education, London
Demonstrator Scheme for Qualitative Data Sharing and Research Archiving	Sep 06	Essex
Economic and Social Data Service ( <a href="http://www.esds.ac.uk">http://www.esds.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Essex/Manchester

**Statistics, Computing, Infrastructure, Demography, and Research Methodology (continued)**

<b>Investment</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
European Social Survey ( <a href="http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org">http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org</a> )	Sep 07	National Centre for Social Research
ESRC/JISC Census Programme ( <a href="http://www.soton.ac.uk/~djm1/">http://www.soton.ac.uk/~djm1/</a> )	Jul 11	Southampton
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences ( <a href="http://www.lse.ac.uk/ibss">http://www.lse.ac.uk/ibss</a> )	Mar 07	LSE
National Centre for E-Social Science ( <a href="http://www.ncess.ac.uk">http://www.ncess.ac.uk</a> )	Mar 07	Manchester/Essex
Research Methods Programme ( <a href="http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods">http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods</a> )	Mar 08	Manchester
National Centre for Research Methods ( <a href="http://www.ncrm.ac.uk">http://www.ncrm.ac.uk</a> )	Mar 09	Southampton
Scottish Longitudinal Studies Centre	Mar 09	St Andrews
Social Science Information Gateway ( <a href="http://www.sosig.ac.uk">http://www.sosig.ac.uk</a> )	Aug 06	Bristol
UK Longitudinal Studies Centre (incorporates British Household Panel Study) ( <a href="http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk">http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 09	Essex
Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) Information and Advice Service ( <a href="http://www.wers2004.info">http://www.wers2004.info</a> )	Dec 07	DTI
ESRC Question Bank ( <a href="http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk/">http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk/</a> )	Aug 08	Surrey



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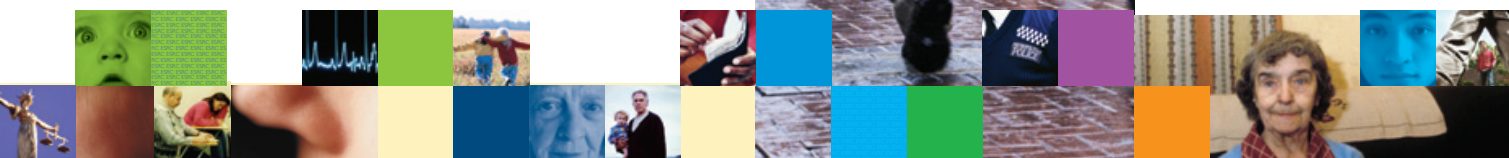
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