

## ESRC Delivery Plan 2007-08

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## 1. 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's **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 1.

This Delivery Plan is an updated version of the Plan initially prepared in 2005. It sets out the key priorities for 2007-8. These 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 bilateral agreements are considered via the responsive mode. Our work on data and methods has a significant international and comparative component, including the launch of an International Data Forum. 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 contains our scorecard with targets for the year and 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. This led the Council to increase funding for standard awards and to 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 were held in 2006-7. The development of the former is particularly 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 Council is committed to enabling the UK's leading social scientists to undertake collaborative research with colleagues from across the globe. The ESRC has now signed bilateral research agreements with ten countries, namely Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Quebec, South Korea and Sweden, covering responsive mode collaborations across ESRC's remit and overcoming the current bureaucratic hurdles. In 2007-8 we will add similar agreements with Hong Kong, India, Norway and South Africa. 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.

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 was launched in 2005 for applications above £1.5 million and up to £5 million (in 100% FEC) and two rounds have now taken place with a third round in the coming year.

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 were launched in 2006-7, one in the area of the highlight notice and one in research methods. In 2007-8 the competition had an open strand and also highlighted the research challenge of 'education for life' and three new centres were agreed for funding. The 2007-08 competition will highlight climate change and population change as well as retaining the open element.

## 2.2 Creating Opportunities in Research

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

ESRC's 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) **Understanding Individual Behaviour**
- c) **Education for Life**
- d) **Environmental change**
- e) **Security and International Relations**
- f) **Religion and society**
- g) **Population change**

Some of these challenges are being 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. New investments in these areas will also emphasise the co-production of knowledge with a commitment to knowledge transfer and impact built into the full research life cycle.

### ***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 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. £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 the emerging economies; and effectiveness of public services.

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

'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 are commissioning 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 2007-8 will include completion of the commissioning of the targeted initiative on Innovation and the preparation of proposals for new investments focusing on the role and performance of the service sector.

### **Succeeding in the Global Economy – Development and the Emerging Economies (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 launched in 2006-7 the first 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 2007-8. The new Centre on sustainability in developing countries (see below) will also contribute to this challenge.

We are also developing proposals for new research on the major emerging economies of the world, particularly China, India, Brazil, Russia and South Africa.

### **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 particularly through the Centre for Market and Public Organisation and the Public Services: Quality, Performance and Delivery Research Programme. A research broker for public services was appointed in 2006 to enhance the communication and impact of this work including the creation of a public services zone within ESRC Society Today.

## *Education, Psychology, Cognition, and Linguistics*

### **Current Activities**

ESRC's major investments include the programmes on Teaching and Learning (TLRP), Innovative Health Technologies 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 2006-7 a new phase of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme, focused on technology enhanced learning, was commissioned.

The centre on deafness research 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 continues to receive the largest number of research grant awards.

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

#### **Understanding Individual Behaviour (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. ESRC is now leading the commissioning of a number of Centres in UK Public Health on behalf of a consortium of seven major funders.

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 announce a capacity building initiative in the area of behaviour and the neurosciences during 2007-08.

#### **Education for Life (c)**

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 are being addressed by, respectively, a new Ventures partnership with EPSRC announced in 2006 with a second phase under consideration for the coming year; a targeted initiative in science and maths education in partnership with other funders, including DfES, with projects to be announced this year; and the

funding of two centres from the 2006-7 Research Centres competition, the details of which will be announced shortly.

### ***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 2005-06 research centres competition and a new Centre on Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS) started work in October 2006 as a result.

Building on our exiting portfolio, we will work with the NERC, other Research Councils and other partners in developing the Living with Environmental Change Programme. Activities this year will include joint funding for transdisciplinary seminar groups with NERC and EPSRC on the theme of ecosystem services, collaboration with DfID and NERC on the new Ecosystem Services and Poverty Alleviation Programme as well as further work on climate change.

#### **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 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 the 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.

In 2007 - 08 we will commission new fellowships on climate change as an urgent response to the challenges identified in the Stern Report and as a part of the Council's initial contribution to the Living with Environmental Change Programme. We will also be highlighting climate change as a priority topic within the 2007-08 Research Centres competition.

### 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 took place 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. We now have a joint venture with partners in the water industry on water shortage and further research on water management was commissioned in 2006-07 under the Rural Economy and Land Use Programme in partnership with DEFRA.

### 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 is contributing to a NERC led capacity building partnership programme in this area through the commissioning of inter-disciplinary fellowships and the co-funding of developmental awards.

### Transport Policy

A second round of joint studentships with the Department for Transport was 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 2007-8 we will announce the funding of a joint transport research and evidence centre with the Department and the Scottish Executive.

## ***Government, Political Science and Law***

### **Current Activities**

Current and continuing activity includes the final stages of our programme on devolution, key aspects of our public services programme and new security challenges. £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 areas described here. A research partnership with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on radicalisation is being commissioned with projects starting in the autumn of 2007. Work with the Home Office on security will be pursued during 2007-08. ESRC is leading the cross-Council work in this area and will be developing opportunities for new multi-disciplinary work in this area. In addition, these discipline areas 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; 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, 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)**

We are currently commissioning, with AHRC, 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. We will also be announcing, with AHRC, new opportunities for research on young people and religion in 2007.

## ***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 cross-Council Programme on the New Dynamics of Ageing, funded by the ESRC, EPSRC, BBSRC and MRC, and building on ESRC's earlier Growing Older Programme will continue with further commissioning in 2007. The ESRC has also supported a modest, £300,000, collaboration through our Ventures Fund with the Scottish Executive on

Scotland's population, the outcomes of which were published and discussed at a seminar in early 2007. £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 are being addressed through the Understanding Population Trends and Processes Programme. In addition, one of the priority areas for the 2007-08 Research Centres competition will be migration and population change.

### 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 carried out in 2005 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 have also introduced higher stipends for postgraduate students in Economics and Advanced Quantitative Methods, starting with the October 2006 cohort.

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 is 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 are seeking to foster.

In conjunction with the AHRC and funding councils, we completed the commissioning in 2006 of a programme to build capacity in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Asian and East European Studies. This involves a number of measures, such as funding studentships and tailored training for academic staff at more advanced stages of their research careers.

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 has been gathering further evidence to develop this more flexible portfolio of training and development strategies through 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 will provide an additional capacity building resource within the responsive mode. The first grants scheme - a dedicated responsive mode scheme for junior applicants – is providing support for 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 commenced in 2006-7. We are also strengthening our support for researchers at all stages of their careers through the new 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 supported the development of the National Data 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 are 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 is essential to supporting the global and comparative aspects of UK social science research. This is being pursued through our leadership of the International Data Forum.

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. 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 in 2005 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 Capital Fund to launch the new UK Household Longitudinal 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 including consultation on and the development of the substantive topics and design strategy will take place throughout 2007-8.

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 is working closely

with the Medical Research Council and Wellcome Trust over 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.

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, starts work in the summer of 2007 and will advance knowledge in economic and social science by developing and applying tools to extract information about human behaviour from non-experimental data.

## **4.2 Methodology**

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. Commissioning of new work in both of these areas will be taking place during 2007-08

## 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.

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. This requirement has been given greater impetus by the Warry Report, which strengthened the requirement on all Councils to increase the rates of knowledge transfer, interaction with business, and the amount of collaborative research.

ESRC, in addition to collaborating on these issues with the other research councils, adopted in November 2006 a new cross-cutting Knowledge Transfer and Economic Impact Strategy. Under this strategy ESRC will create and support increased impact through: knowledge exchange based on social science research; people transfer; infrastructure, data, information resources and methodologies. It will also play a leadership role within the wider social science community and communicate the impact of the social sciences, specifically developing measures and analytical tools to identify the impact of its investments.

### 5.1 Knowledge Transfer

In April 2004, the ESRC Council approved the organisation's Knowledge Transfer Strategy that identified key strategic actions. In response to the Warry Report, ESRC will be strengthening its engagement with the business sector in the coming year with a focus on priority sectors where social science research can add the greatest value. Interaction with business will be enhanced through our various training and development schemes, such as Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering (CASE) and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. We are also launching a new business engagement opportunities scheme in May 2007 that provides funding for a range of activities targeted at our priority sectors. The expansion of these various schemes will contribute to the generation of new knowledge, enhance research-host organisation interactions, and expand communities of practice.

The ESRC will also continue to engage with Government departments and devolved administrations through strategic partnership agreements and will collaborate to provide a research evidence base that can be drawn on in the policy formulation process. We are also committed to extending our engagement with the Third Sector (voluntary sector) and have undertaken an extensive consultation exercise, including regular contact with The Office of the Third Sector. An Impact Grants Scheme has also been introduced to assist these processes.

Similar principles underlie the ESRC's decision last year to introduce placement schemes that allow researchers to spend time in Government departments working on identified projects and developing the research skills of other employees. This year the scheme is being extended to business. Conversely, it is also intended 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 is also being met 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, introduced in 2005, is now our main vehicle for engaging with strategic partners on jointly-funded research. There are now 19 initiatives supported through this mechanism with plans for further activity in 2007-08 including a major new collaboration with the US Hewlett Foundation on population and reproductive health in Sub-Saharan Africa; a new joint Transport Research Centre co-funded with the Department for Transport and the Scottish Executive; and a new centre on Spatial Economics with the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Welsh Assembly Government.

## **5.2 Science in Society**

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 produced 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 social science research are communicated so that they inform our activities in this area; and that we have more focused interaction with schools and young people.

## **5.3 International Collaboration**

We will be maintaining a variety of activities which enhance the UK's international position. This includes promoting and supporting UK research participation in the European Union's 7th 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, to make it more amenable to supporting the highest quality collaborative 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.

At a global level, we shall for the first time make awards under the Transatlantic visiting fellowship scheme to researchers who have applied from across the Americas. We shall work with the National Science Foundation's Social, Behavioural and Economics directorate, and with the National Institutes of Health, to take forward specific collaborative funding initiatives. Building on the opportunities created by the opening of the Research Councils UK office in Beijing, we shall work to open up dialogue and resources to pave the way to bottom-up collaborative social science research with China. 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 OSI's performance management framework. The Council has a well-established system for evaluating the academic quality of individual investments and projects, and we have now extended this work to include a greater emphasis on international benchmarking and policy and practice impact.

The extended work includes a series of reviews to benchmark the international standing of UK social science disciplines; the reviews add an international perspective to the assessment of academic impact, and increase the evidence base for capacity building and monitoring the health of disciplines. The first two reviews, in anthropology and political science and international relations, have now been completed and the third, in economics, will take place in the coming year. The Council is continuing to explore ways of improving bibliometric data for assessing the international standing of the social sciences and plans to discuss this further with HEFCE as part of the development of the post-RAE assessment system.

The Council has also launched a series of case studies to provide more evidence of the policy and practice impact of ESRC's research, and to test assessment techniques in this challenging area of evaluation work. The first two studies have been completed and more are planned in the coming year. This work will be expanded further to encompass economic impact assessment, and the Council's approach in this area will complement and build on the work currently being undertaken at RCUK level including the Research Councils Economic Impact case study project..

### **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 has been 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. Our focus going forward is on maintaining these efficiencies and making an important contribution to the introduction of the new Shared Services Centre.

## Appendix 1 – Financial Data

### Forecast Expenditure and Income 2007- 08

	<b>£K</b>
	<b>2007/08</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Science budget – resource and capital (incl. FEC)	150,715
Other Income	24,748
EYF Brought Forward	5,900
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>181,363</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Supporting World Class Research	95,296
Future Sustainability: Trained People and Building Capacity	53,500
Underpinning Research Excellence: Facilities and Infrastructure	17,250
Engagement and Partnership	5,416
Measuring our Performance: Evaluation and Efficient Administration	9,026
International	875
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>181,363</b>

## APPENDIX 2 - ESRC SCORECARD 2007-08: 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.	<p><b>Q4</b></p> <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.	<p><b>Q1</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To launch with ESF the third round of the European Collaborative Research Projects (ECRP) scheme in the social sciences.</li> <li>2. To review in June collaborative research on health inequalities with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the US.</li> <li>3. To have convened under UK leadership the International Data Forum in Beijing to review the openness of different national datasets for social science research, and to establish protocols for ensuring comparability of research.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To open ESRC research applications to co-investigators from other countries.</li> <li>5. To launch a second round of the ESRC/British Academy Visiting fellowships scheme for scholars from the Middle East and South Asia.</li> </ol>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p>6. To establish bilateral agreements with South Africa and with India, and initiate a collaborative programme with the Indian Council of Social Science Research.</p> <p>7. To announce a joint programme with the US Hewlett Foundation on Population and reproductive health in Sub-Saharan Africa.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>8. To agree enhanced collaborative activities with the Chinese Academy of Social sciences (CASS).</p> <p>9. To initiate discussions as part of the UK / Brazil Year of Science to promote more joint research between the UK and Brazil.</p> <p>10. To agree and announce an ESRC strategy on international development by the end of 2007.</p> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>11. To have reviewed and revised ESRC bi-lateral agreements with key sister agencies to reduce further barriers to joint funding.</p> <p>12. To have co-funded at least six applications under the ECRP or ESRC Bi-lateral schemes.</p> <p>13. To have collaborated with the NSF in the US on at least two common programmes.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		14. To have developed a joint Trans-National Research Programme with European partners under the New Opportunities (Norface) network for decision by Council in February 2008.
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.	<p><b>Q1</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To announce the 2007 -2008 centres competition by May 2007.</li> <li>2. To agree funding for at least three awards under the 2006-07 large grants competition.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To announce the 2007-08 large grants competition.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To agree funding recommendations for new and continuing centres by March 2008.</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.	<p><b>Q1</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To announce two new Centres on skills and education.</li> <li>2. To announce new funding opportunities for research on climate change following the Stern report on the economics of climate change.</li> <li>3. To announce new opportunities for research on population change.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To launch the new research initiative on science and maths education.</li> </ol>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p>5. To complete commissioning of the Centres in UK Public Health on behalf of a consortium of seven major funders.</p> <p>6. To announce with AHRC new opportunities for research on young people and religion.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>7. To announce a new joint Transport Research Centre with the DfT by December 2007.</p> <p>8. To prepare a proposal for a new research investment on emerging economies by December 2007.</p> <p>9. To prepare a proposals for a new research investment on the service sector by December 2007.</p> <p>10. To complete commissioning of the current phase of the cross-Council programme on the New Dynamics of Ageing and to announce the call for the next phase.</p> <p>11. To prepare a proposal for new investment in the area of the social and biological bases of individual behaviour.</p> <p>12. To announce a capacity building initiative in the area of behaviour and the neurosciences.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>13. To announce with Research Council partners opportunities under the ESRC led new cross-Council research priority on security.</p> <p>14. To announce with Research Council partners opportunities for social science participation in each of the other new cross-Council research priorities (living with environmental change, energy, lifelong health, digital economy , nanotechnologies).</p>
<p>5. To establish a major strategic collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID).</p>	<p>To enhance the global impact of UK social science research on development through new work on these issues.</p>	<p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>1. To complete the commissioning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the joint DfID-ESRC research scheme.</p> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>2. To agree future collaboration arrangements with DFID and to announce the next phase of the ESRC – DFID collaboration.</p>
<p>6. To continue to support the Research Councils' Energy Programme.</p>	<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>	<p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>To announce with EPSRC new opportunities for research on energy and equity and energy and security.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>To continue to support high quality work in these areas.</p>	<p>See 4 above.</p>

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.	See 4 above.
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.	<p><b>Q3</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To launch a capacity building strategy in socio-legal studies. This will involve working with the Nuffield Foundation and other stakeholders.</li> <li>2. To agree and announce the allocation of new studentship quotas by December 2007.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To allocate no less than the following number of studentships in the priority areas listed below from March 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>80</b> – Economics</li> <li><b>50</b> – Management</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> <p>*Across all disciplines</p> </li> <li>4. To agree a capacity building strategy for Management and Business Studies by March 2008. This will involve working in conjunction with the management community, particularly through a new capacity building initiative within the Advanced Institute of Management.</li> </ol>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
<p>10. To increase our support, including 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.</p>	<p>To increase the potential recruitment pool in those areas experiencing the most difficulties in attracting and retaining good people.</p>	<p><b>Q2</b> 1. To have completed commissioning of 24 new awards under the First Grants Scheme by July 2007.</p> <p><b>Q4</b> 2. To allocate no less than the following number of fellowship in the priority areas listed below from March 2008: <b>20</b> – Economics <b>15</b> – Advanced Quantitative Methods <b>10</b> – Management Studies</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>To increase the language skills of UK social scientists working on key regions and countries.</p>	<p><b>Q3</b> 1. To have recruited no less than 45 new students across the five new Language Based Area Studies Centres by November 2007.</p> <p><b>Q4</b> 2. To have appointed no less than 20 Fellows across the five Language Based Area Studies Centres by March 2008.</p>
<p>12. To introduce a new Researcher Development Initiative.</p>	<p>To provide training and development for UK social scientists throughout the academic life course.</p>	<p><b>Q2</b> 1. To have commissioned the third round of training and development projects by July 2007. At least half of these awards will be in the priority areas of Economics, Education, Advanced Quantitative Methods, Management and Business Studies and Social Work.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
13. To continue funding for the Census Programme and the European Social Survey.	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.	<p><b>Q3</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have announced the funding decisions of the Census Research Programme by December 2007.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. To have appointed the UK national coordinator and survey agency for Round 4 of the European Social Survey by end of March 2008.</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.	<p><b>Q2</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To launch the new Centre for Microdata Methods and Practice at the Institute for Fiscal Studies by July 2007.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. To complete the commissioning of the National Centres for Research Methods and e-Social Science by the end of December 2007.</li> </ol> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To support the implementation of the UK National Data Strategy by the commissioning of an administrative data service and pilot virtual microdata laboratory by March 2008.</li> <li>4. To have commissioned, in partnership with the Funding Councils, a major new initiative aimed at building capacity in advanced quantitative methods by end of March 2008.</li> </ol>
15. To launch a new British Household Panel Study.	To agree the substantive topics and survey design of study and design survey pilot.	<p><b>Q3</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To have completed the Wave 1 detailed topic consultation by the end of December 2007.</li> </ol>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>2. To have commenced the Wave 1 pilot for the Study by the end of March 2008.</p>
<p>16. To implement an ESRC communications strategy to support delivery of the Council's strategic priorities.</p>	<p>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 key target groups.</p>	<p><b>Q1</b></p> <p>1. Produce marketing materials to support business engagement by end June 2007.</p> <p>2. Extend and improve ESRC's Society Today portal, by implementing audience specific channels providing dedicated access for key user groups, such as business users, by June 2007.</p> <p><b>Q2</b></p> <p>3. Produce an ESRC brochure that highlights the diversity of ESRC business-related research by August 2007.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>4. Survey the learned societies to gain an understanding of the extent of their KT and public engagement activity by October 2007.</p> <p><b>Q3/Q4</b></p> <p>5. Promote the work of ESRC's Professorial Fellows by developing a series of press briefings on topical research areas e.g. public health, environment, ageing and stem cells. First two to be delivered by October 2007 and second two by March 2008.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>6. To hold a public engagement/KTEI workshop for ESRC's Collaborative and Case students by April 2008.</p> <p>7. To populate ESRC's repository of social science journals publications with the aim of doubling the number of full text materials by March 2008.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>To extend the engagement and understanding of the general public in relation to social science research.</p>	<p><b>Q1/Q4</b></p> <p>1. To produce a minimum of five research syntheses on key science in society issues. To commission the first two by end of June 2007 and to have commissioned all five by January 2008.</p> <p><b>Q2</b></p> <p>2. Review the current Communications toolkit and KT Guides to ensure that the two are presented as complementary guides for external users. By September 2007.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>3. To survey ESRC's research investments on their engagement with young people in the 16-18 year age group and to develop a plan to extend this that complements RCUK objectives by December 2007.</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>To increase the impact of social science research on policy and practice.</p>	<p><b>Q2</b></p> <p>1. To have commissioned a review of the ESRC research brokers schemes, including a mapping of the social sciences intermediaries landscape, within the context of RCUK engagement with intermediary organisations.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
knowledge transfer activities.		<p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>2. To have received the above review and to have identified possible approaches to future engagement with and funding of intermediaries and intermediary organisations for social sciences specifically.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p><b>Q2</b></p> <p>1. To sign a new agreement between the local government sector and the Research Councils, with the lead taken by ESRC to provide the basis for collaborative research and evidence for policy and practice.</p> <p><b>Q2/Q4</b></p> <p>2. To have held 12 events (seminars and workshops) for a predominantly business audience, with at least five taking place in the first half of the year.</p> <p>3. To have achieved 12 placements of both academics in public/VCS organisations and personnel from these sectors in academic institutions, with at least six achieved by September 2007.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>4. To commission urgent contributions from social science to the understanding of infectious diseases in partnership with DH and other funders.</p> <p>5. To agree and implement a strategy for improving our engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sectors.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p>6. To ensure that a minimum of 15 new CASE studentships commence with business partners.</p> <p>7. To review the findings of the RCs KTEI user survey and identify the implications for ESRC.</p> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>8. To launch a new centre on spatial economics with the DTI, DCLG and WAG.</p> <p>9. To have received seven reports on current ESRC research relevant to the priority business sectors and the knowledge needs of those sectors.</p> <p>10. To have supported 10 new Knowledge Transfer Partnerships where the associate is based in a business.</p> <p>11. To have developed four partnerships with Regional Development Agencies to identify regional business needs.</p>
20. To develop improved ways of assessing the bibliometric performance of UK social science.	To develop robust bibliometric indicators for possible use after RAE 2008, with the Funding Councils, of the quality and impact of social science publications.	Subject to further discussion with HEFCE.
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.	<p><b>Q1</b></p> <p>1. To complete and evaluate the International Benchmarking Review of Politics &amp; International Relations by June 2007.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>2. To complete the panel assessment and site visits for the International Benchmarking Review of Economics by March 2008.</p>
<p>22. To extend the evaluation of research impact on policy and practice.</p>	<p>To provide more evidence of policy and practice impact, and to test new evaluation approaches.</p>	<p><b>Q2</b></p> <p>1. To identify possible approaches to assessing economic impact in the social sciences by July 2007.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>2. To incorporate the results of the RCUK economic impact assessment project into the design of ESRC's case studies by October 2007.</p> <p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>3. To complete impact case studies of three major ESRC investments and to review the results by February 2008.</p> <p>4. To commission the first ESRC economic impact case studies by February 2008.</p>
<p>23. To work towards the agreed cross-Council efficiency targets for 2007/08.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p><b>Q4</b></p> <p>To achieve our agreed targets in 2007-08 for the RCUK efficiency delivery project.</p>
<p>24. To contribute towards greater cross-Council harmonisation.</p>	<p>To play a full, positive and active role in the introduction of a new Shared Services Centre by 2009</p>	<p><b>Q1</b></p> <p>1. To clarify the number of staff within the scope of the project and those in retained functions.</p> <p><b>Q2</b></p> <p>2. To confirm the work involved within the scope of the project.</p> <p><b>Q3</b></p> <p>3. To address the likely staffing changes and develop a change management plan.</p>

Key Deliverable	Target	Milestones
		<b>Q4</b> 4. To begin implementation of the change management process.

### Appendix 3: List of ESRC Investments (as of 1 April 2007)

#### Economics, Management, Innovation and Economic Development

Investment	End Date	Location <sup>1</sup>
AIM Management Initiative (www.aimresearch.org)	Nov 11	London Business School/Warwick
Evolution of Business Knowledge Programme (www.ebkresearch.org)	Dec 07	Warwick
Centre for Business, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS) (www.brass.cf.ac.uk)	Sep 11	Cardiff
Centre for Microeconomic Analysis of Public Policy (CMAPP) (www.ifs.org.uk/esrc)	Sep 11	Institute for Fiscal Studies, London
Centre for Competition Policy (CCP) (www.ccp.uea.ac.uk)	Aug 13	University of East Anglia
Centre for Economic Learning and Social Evolution (ELSE) (else.econ.ucl.ac.uk)	Sep 10	University College London
Centre for Economic Performance (CEP) (cep.lse.ac.uk)	Sep 10	LSE
Centre for Market and Public Organisation (www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/CMPO)	Sep 14	Bristol
Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE) (www.economics.ox.ac.uk/skope)	Sep 08	Oxford/Cardiff
Public Services: Quality, Performance and Delivery Programme (public-services.politics.ox.ac.uk)	Oct 09	Oxford
World Economy and Finance Programme (www.worldeconomyandfinance.org)	Feb 09	Birkbeck College London
Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS) (www.steps-centre.org)	Sep 11	University of Sussex

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

### Education, Psychology, Cognition and Linguistics

Investment	End Date	Location
Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre (www.dcal.ucl.ac.uk)	Dec 15	University College, London
People at the Centre of Communication and Information Technologies Programme (PACCIT) (www.paccit.gla.ac.uk)	Sep 08	Glasgow
Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) (www.tlrp.org)	Dec 08	Institute of Education, London

### Geography, Environment, Urban/Rural and Transport Studies, Area Studies

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

### Government, Political Science and Law

Investment	End Date	Location
Devolution and Constitutional Change Programme (www.devolution.ac.uk)	Jul 07	Edinburgh
Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR) (www.csgr.org)	Sep 07	Warwick
Social Contexts and Responses to Risk Network (SCARR) (www.kent.ac.uk/scarr/)	Sep 08	Kent
New Security Challenges Programme (www.newsecurity.bham.ac.uk)	Dec 08	Birmingham
Centre for the Analysis of Risk and Regulation (CARR) (www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CARR)	Sep 10	LSE

### Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work and Social Anthropology

Investment	End Date	Location
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">www.consume.bbk.ac.uk</a> )	Aug 08	Birkbeck College London
E-Society Programme ( <a href="http://www.london.edu/e-society">www.london.edu/e-society</a> )	Mar 09	York
Genomics Research Centre – INNOGEN ( <a href="http://www.innogen.ac.uk">www.innogen.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 12	Edinburgh
Genomics Research Centre – EGENIS ( <a href="http://www.ex.ac.uk/egenis">www.ex.ac.uk/egenis</a> )	Sep 12	Exeter
Genomics Research Centre – CESAGEN ( <a href="http://www.cesagen.lancs.ac.uk">www.cesagen.lancs.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 12	Lancaster/Cardiff
Genomics Forum ( <a href="http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk">www.genomicsforum.ac.uk</a> )	Jul 09	Edinburgh
Families and Social Capital Group ( <a href="http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families">www.lsbu.ac.uk/families</a> )	Jun 07	South Bank
Research Centre on Micro-social Change (MISOC) ( <a href="http://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/misoc">www.iser.essex.ac.uk/misoc</a> )	Sep 09	Essex
Gender Equality Network ( <a href="http://www.genet.ac.uk">www.genet.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 09	Cambridge
Social Contexts of Pathways in Crime (SCOPIC) ( <a href="http://www.scopic.ac.uk">www.scopic.ac.uk</a> )	Dec 07	Cambridge
Non-Governmental Public Action Programme ( <a href="http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/NGPA">www.lse.ac.uk/collections/NGPA</a> )	Apr 09	LSE
Science in Society Programme ( <a href="http://www.sci-soc.net/SciSoc/">www.sci-soc.net/SciSoc/</a> )	Dec 07	Oxford
Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) ( <a href="http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/">sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/</a> )	Dec 07	LSE
Social Identities and Social Action Programme ( <a href="http://www.identities.org.uk">www.identities.org.uk</a> )	Dec 08	Open University
Centre for Research on Socio-cultural Change ( <a href="http://www.cresc.man.ac.uk">www.cresc.man.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 14	Manchester
Stem Cells Research Initiative	Mar 09	n.a.

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

Investment	End Date	Location
Centre on Migration, Policy and Society ( <a href="http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk">www.compas.ox.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 13	Oxford
British Election Study 2005/06 ( <a href="http://www.essex.ac.uk/bes">www.essex.ac.uk/bes</a> )	Mar 07	Essex
Centre for Applied Social Surveys (CASS) ( <a href="http://www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/cass/">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">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">www.esds.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 07	Essex/Manchester
European Social Survey ( <a href="http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org">www.europeansocialsurvey.org</a> )	Sep 07	National Centre for Social Research
ESRC/JISC Census Programme ( <a href="http://www.soton.ac.uk/~djm1/">www.soton.ac.uk/~djm1/</a> )	Jul 11	Southampton
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences ( <a href="http://www.lse.ac.uk/ibss">www.lse.ac.uk/ibss</a> )	Mar 07	LSE
National Centre for E-Social Science ( <a href="http://www.ncess.ac.uk">www.ncess.ac.uk</a> )	Mar 07	Manchester/Essex
Research Methods Programme ( <a href="http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods">www.ccsr.ac.uk/methods</a> )	Mar 08	Manchester
National Centre for Research Methods ( <a href="http://www.ncrm.ac.uk">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">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">www.iser.essex.ac.uk</a> )	Sep 09	Essex
Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) Data Dissemination Unit	Sep 07 <sup>2</sup>	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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<sup>2</sup> The fifth sweep of the WERS was completed in September 2005. However, the Research Resources Board has agreed to fund a WERS Data Dissemination Unit which will run from September 2005 until August 2007.