

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

The 64th meeting of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee of the Scottish Funding Council was held on 17 May 2018 at University of Strathclyde, Technology & Innovation Centre, 99 George Street, Glasgow G1 1RD.

Present: Professor Lesley Yellowlees (Chair)
Professor Anne Anderson
Professor David Cumming
Dr Jano van Hemert
Professor Tom Inns
Dr Siobhan Jordan
Mr Douglas Mundie
Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski
Professor Jonathan Seckl

Observers attending:
Carolyn Fishman (SG)
Luke Humberstone (NUS)
Dr Pieter van de Graaf (SG)
Carolyn Reeve (SG)
Helen Cross (UKRI)

Officers: Dr Stuart Fancey/Keith McDonald/Jenny
Jamieson (Clerk)/Gary Bannon/Morag Campbell/ Fiona
Bates/Hazel McGraw/Morven Pritchard/John Stout/Andrew
Youngson/Kathryn O'Loan

Apologies: Professor Tim Bedford/Morven Cameron/Professor Susan
Craw/Dr Alicia Greated/Ian Reid

18/27

Chair's business

The Chair welcomed Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski and noted that the two Committees (from SFC and Universities Scotland) should work as cohesively as possible.

The Chair confirmed that Mhairi Harrington, Council member had joined the Committee but was unable to attend the May meeting. Keith Nicholson had stood down as a committee member due to other work commitments. The Executive would agree with the Chair on the best approach for appointing a replacement from SFC's board membership. Andre Howie from Scottish Enterprise had also stepped down due to work commitments and would be replaced by Alison Munro (also from Scottish Enterprise). The Chair welcomed Dr Pieter van de Graaf as the new observer from Scottish Government.

The Chair confirmed with members that there were no matters that would require discussion under 'Any Other Business' at the end of the meeting.

The Chair informed members that she had been interviewed by the national news about her participation in a television series on women in STEM, supporting the public interest in this area.

Director's update

The Director relayed the following announcements:

- The Director had attended the launch event of UKRI in late March (2018). UKRI officially came into existence in April.
- The Strategic Board was meeting that same day and outputs were expected from this soon.
- The Council executive had been working with the sector to pump prime activity related to the UK Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

18/28

Minutes of previous meeting 14 March 2018 (RKEC/18/min2)

The minute from the previous meeting was agreed.

18/29 SFC final OA funding allocations for AY18/19 (Oral)

The Director provided an update to the Committee. Final allocations were due to be published the next day by SFC. Uplifts in indicative allocations, a partial recovery in the University Innovation Fund, and final GCRF were expected. Changes to the Research Excellence Grant as a result of inflationary uplift and FRS102 would be provided in the upcoming announcement.

18/30 Research England 'Funding for higher education institutions for 2018-19' (Oral)

The Committee noted that SFC is working with colleagues in Research England to understand recent uplifts and new streams to Research & Innovation funding in England to better understand the potential consequential for Scotland. Members noted the importance of SFC and its board strengthening its presence and influence within the funding landscape to ensure that identified funding priorities are articulated to the Scottish Government. The Committee noted that there was a commitment across the UK to preserve alignment and consistency across the four nations in terms of strategic focus and research funding.

18/31 Research England – Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) (Oral)

Keith McDonald provided members with a presentation on the progress of the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) being led by and for Research England. It was noted that SFC is being kept apprised of developments and progress and would expect to be consulted before any formal engagement commences with the sector. Some members stressed the importance of Scottish representation in KEF discussions to ensure it will add value across the UK. The Committee noted that a conversation was also about to begin on the development of the Knowledge Exchange concordat – led by UUK.

Members discussed how the Committee could better link with Innovate UK in terms of future funding in the context of Scotland's economic strategy and preserving collaboration across borders.

18/32 Innovation Centres programme phase 2 update (Oral)

Gary Bannon provided an update to the Committee on the Innovation Centres programme. SFC contracts had now been agreed for CENSIS and IBioIC and would be issued within the coming week. The indicative timetable for appraising the phase two funding plans for the other six Innovation Centres was provided. The Monitoring and Evaluation framework had been revised as of May 2018 and would be issued to the Innovation Centres soon.

During the discussion progress with the future funding of Interface was noted.

18/33 Place of Creative Production (RKEC/18/10) (Oral)

Professor Tom Inns provided the Committee with an update on the first event to be held on Scotland's Creative Economy Landscape at Glasgow School of Art. The event took place on 3rd February 2018 and had welcomed 175 delegates who were invited to explore current and future connections between Higher Education and the Creative and Cultural sectors. Professor Inns noted that in terms of creative industries, funding opportunities were predominantly coming from the Research Councils. Finalists from the current round of bids with AHRC would be announced in July.

18/34 Outcome Agreement Remit for AY2019/20 (RKEC/18/11)

Keith McDonald and Hazel McGraw gave a presentation on the outcome agreement remit which was intended to draw together the committee's discussions on this topic to date.

The Committee noted the importance of having a 'golden thread' of evidence to track the achievements of the university sector in Scotland. The Committee noted that development of Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) could influence future development of Innovation measures. It was noted that this and the committee's wider feedback would inform updates to the AY2019/20 OA guidance.

The Committee noted that there was less funding coming through

formulaic funding in Scotland in comparison to funding to Research England . The Scottish Government is accelerating funding for industry and HEIs would be expected to provide evidence on progression of research activity.

18/35 Forward agenda (RKEC/18/12)

The Chair invited the Committee to consider items for the forward agenda. The following items were discussed by members:

- Discussion around the research strategy of the future? With a focus on making research more visible, impact of research and any future REF.
- South of Scotland to be included within HIE Research Strategy.
- Creative Industries and industry-mapping.
- UKRI.
- Impact of industry research and R & D on university research agenda/industrial strategy.

18/36 Other business

There was no other business.

18/37 Future Meetings

20 August 2018
11 October 2018