

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee

The 84th meeting of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee of the Scottish Funding Council was held virtually on MS Teams on 24 February 2022 at 10.00am.

Present

Board members

Professor Lesley Yellowlees (Chair)
Mhairi Harrington, Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam, Caroline Stuart

Members

Dr Caroline Cantley, Professor Nicholas Fyfe, Dr Jano van Hemert, Professor Julian Jones, Dr Helen Reddy, Professor Jonathan Seckl, Professor Andy Porter

Observers

Derek Shaw (SE), Gillian Galloway (HIE), Helen Cross (UKRI), Laura Dougan (SG), Rhona McDonald (SG), Carolyn Reeve (BEIS)

Apologies received

Professor Anne Anderson, Dr Alicia Greated, Sara Rae

SFC Executive:

Dr Cat Ball, Gary Bannon, Fiona Bates, David Beards, Morag Campbell, Dr Stuart Fancey, Jenny Jamieson, Robin Lee, Dr Charlotte Matheson, Hazel McGraw, Maggie Mroczkowski, Morven Pritchard, Andrew Youngson

Other:

Lorna Jack, Deputy Chair SFC Board/Chair SFC Finance Committee
Professor Wayne Powell, US

22/01 **Welcome from Chair**

The Chair welcomed members to the 84th meeting of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. The Chair also welcomed Gillian Galloway from HIE and Derek Shaw from Scottish Enterprise who were attending their first meeting as observers, and in place of previous observers.

Update from Director (RKEC/22/01)

The Director presented the update paper for the February meeting that provided a summary of recent developments of interest to members. This paper will be published on the website.

22/02 **Minutes of previous meetings 28 October 2021: (RKEC/21/min5)**

The minute was agreed.

22/03 **Consultation on Research Excellence Grant and Research Postgraduate Grant: Summary of responses (RKEC/22/02)**

This paper invited the Committee to note the summary of responses to the Research Excellence Grant and Research Postgraduate Grant consultation ([SFC/CN/01/2021](#)). The summary of responses would be used to inform discussion of the following two papers on this agenda RKEC/22/03 and RKEC/22/04.

Publication

This paper was initially withheld from publication as it contained information which, if disclosed, was likely to prejudice substantially the free and frank provision of advice, the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation, or would have otherwise prejudiced the effective conduct of public affairs. (Section 30: Prejudicial to effective conduct of public affairs).

The paper will be published in due course.

22/04 **Research Excellence Grant (RKEC/22/03)**

This paper invited the Committee to discuss proposals on the principles and allocation of Research Excellence Grant drawing on previously discussed finding of the short life Working Group (RKEC/21/18) and the consultation responses as set out in previous paper RKEC/22/02.

Publication

This paper will be withheld from publication as it contains information which, if disclosed, is likely to prejudice substantially the free and frank provision of advice, the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation, or would otherwise prejudice the effective conduit of public affairs. (Section 30: Prejudicial to effective conduct of public affairs)

The following was noted during the discussion:

- a) The Chair thanked the working group on the consultation and the community for their responses.
- b) The Committee noted that any decisions made will be reached through full appraisal and discussion and will take into account all outcomes and impacts.
- c) The Committee emphasised their ongoing commitment to preserving the stability of the research base.

22/05

Research Postgraduate Grant (RKEC/22/04)

This paper invited the Committee to discuss recommendations for the Research Postgraduate Grant's principles, purpose and allocation model, drawing on the previously discussed findings of the short life Working Group and the consultation responses received.

Publication

This paper will be withheld from publication as it contains information which, if disclosed, is likely to prejudice substantially the free and frank provision of advice, the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation, or would otherwise prejudice the effective conduit of public affairs. (Section 30: Prejudicial to effective conduct of public affairs)

The following was noted during the discussion:

- a) That the Executive will proceed with next steps as agreed by Committee.

22/06

Scottish Research Networks (RKEC/22/05)

This paper provided an update on preparation to implement SFC's Review recommendation on the development of the next generation of Research Pools.

Recommendations

RKEC is invited to:

- Consider plans to implement the Review's recommendations for research collaboration ('Next Gen Pools') through the creation of Scottish Research Networks;
- Provide comment and feedback on the proposed approach in terms of both design and deliverability; and
- Suggest potential names for this new initiative.

The following was noted during the discussion:

- a) The intention of this investment is to support the realisation of ambitions through research collaboration.
- b) The executive will edit the descriptors for 'networks' in order to better capture their broad origins.

22/08

Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KE & I) Consultation (RKEC/22/06)

This paper updated the Committee on the key areas of focus in the KE & I consultation and updated Committee on our engagement plans to support responses and next steps.

RKEC is invited to:

- Note the update on KE & I consultation and engagement plan
- Note the plan to return to next RKEC meeting (1 June) with summary of responses and proposed policy and implementation plans.

The following was noted during discussion:

- a) The possibility for Research pools to hold an innovation focus where evidence allowed.
Executive to follow up.

22/09

Forward agenda (RKEC/22/07)

At the meeting of 14 October 2020, RKEC agreed to revise the forward agenda to take account of the emergency years 2020-22 and consequential policy adjustments due to the impact of the pandemic. This paper notifies the Committee of proposed agenda items for the future business of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. These items take account of views expressed by Committee members. To enable alignment with the SFC Council, the attached forward agenda plan follows the same format as that used for the SFC Council, for easy mapping.

Recommendations

The Committee was invited to **note** the proposed agenda items and **suggest** any further additions or

amendments to this list. The Committee

noted the following:

- The possibility of scheduling a discussion on research culture, inclusivity and equality.
Executive to follow up.

21/37

Any other business

There was no other business.

Future meetings

24 August 2022

12 October 2022

7 December 2022