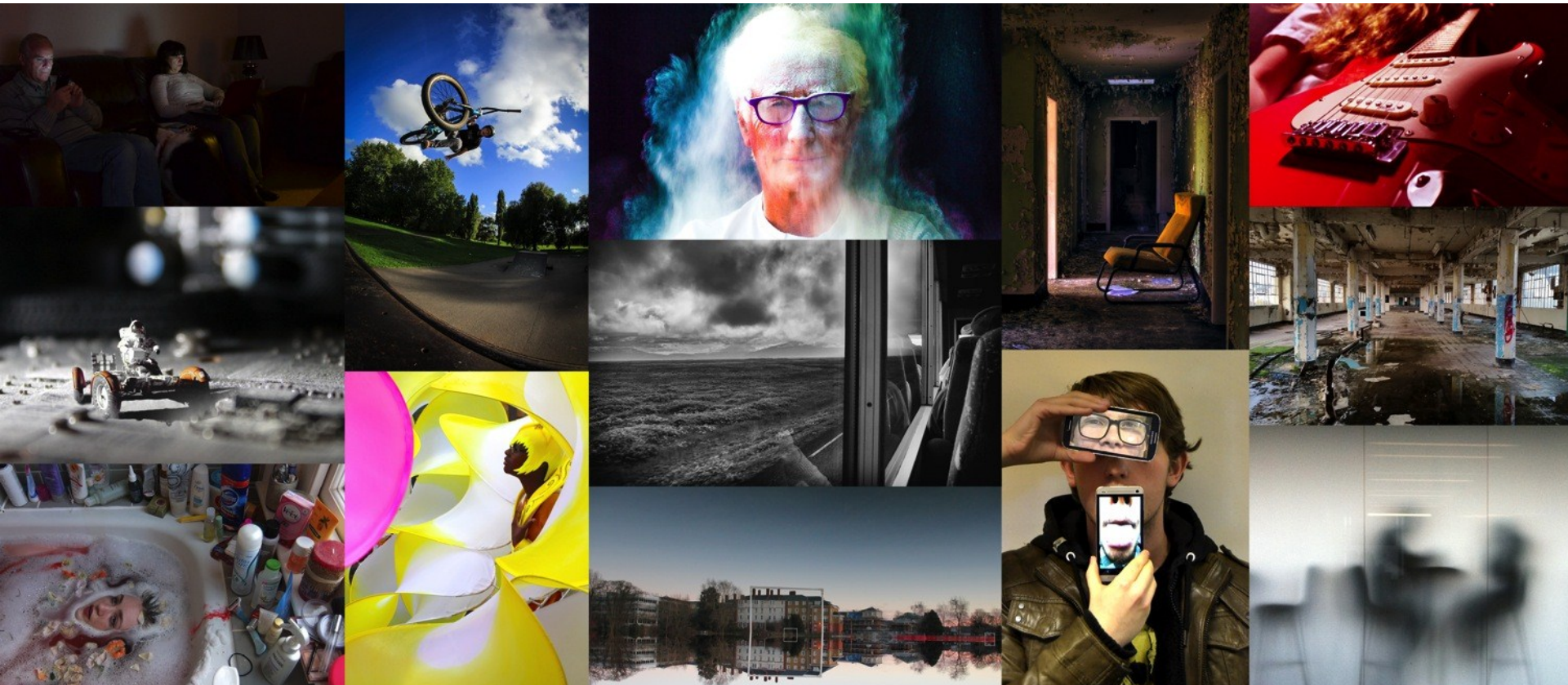


ESRC Presentation

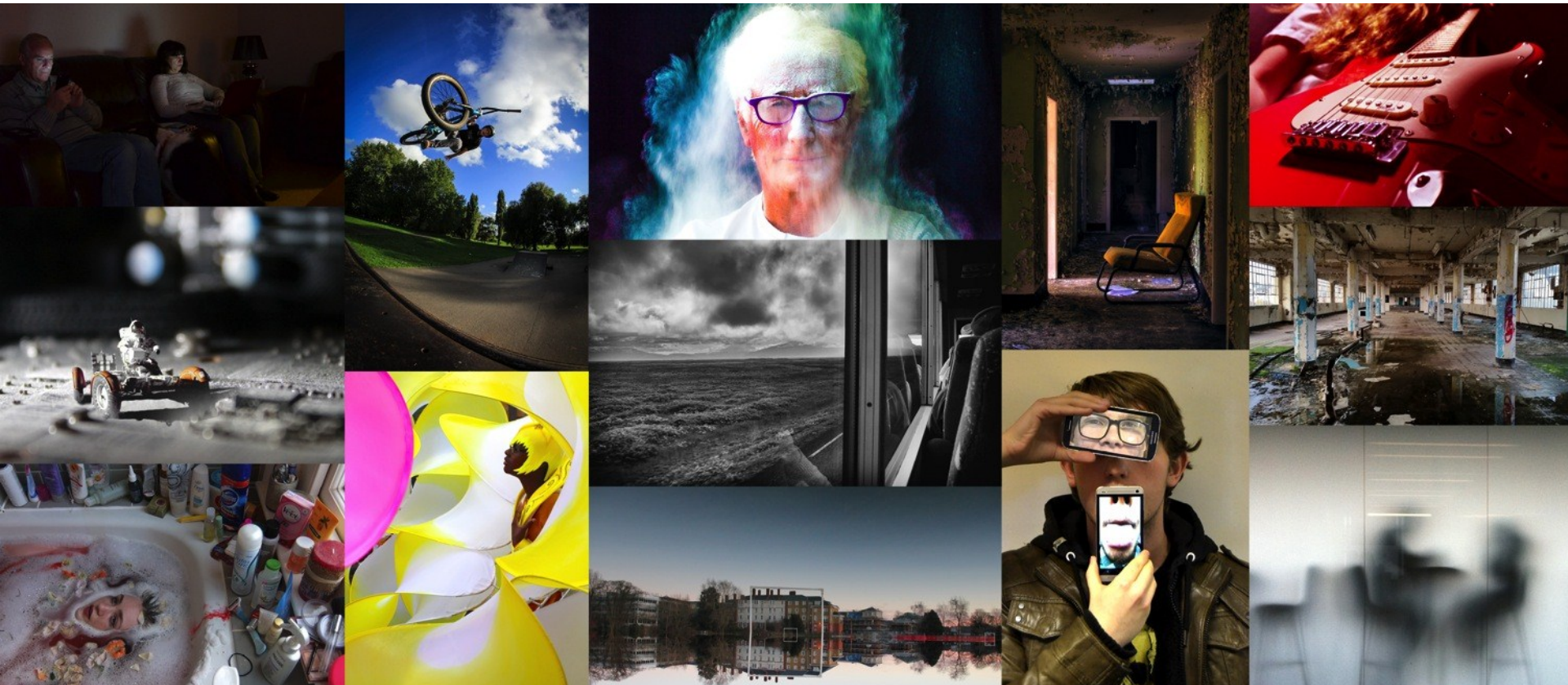


Welcome and overview

- ▶ **Purpose of the meeting - priorities**
- ▶ **Part 1: Social science funding ecosystem and ESRC strategy**
 - External context
 - Austerity
 - Science and innovation strategy
 - Capital investment
 - ESRC new Strategic Plan
 - Funding ecosystem
 - ESRC funding thresholds and opportunities
 - Questions & discussion
- ▶ **Part 2: ESRC portfolio, resources and initiatives**

Part I: Social Science funding ecosystem and ESRC strategy

Jane Elliott, Chief Executive of ESRC

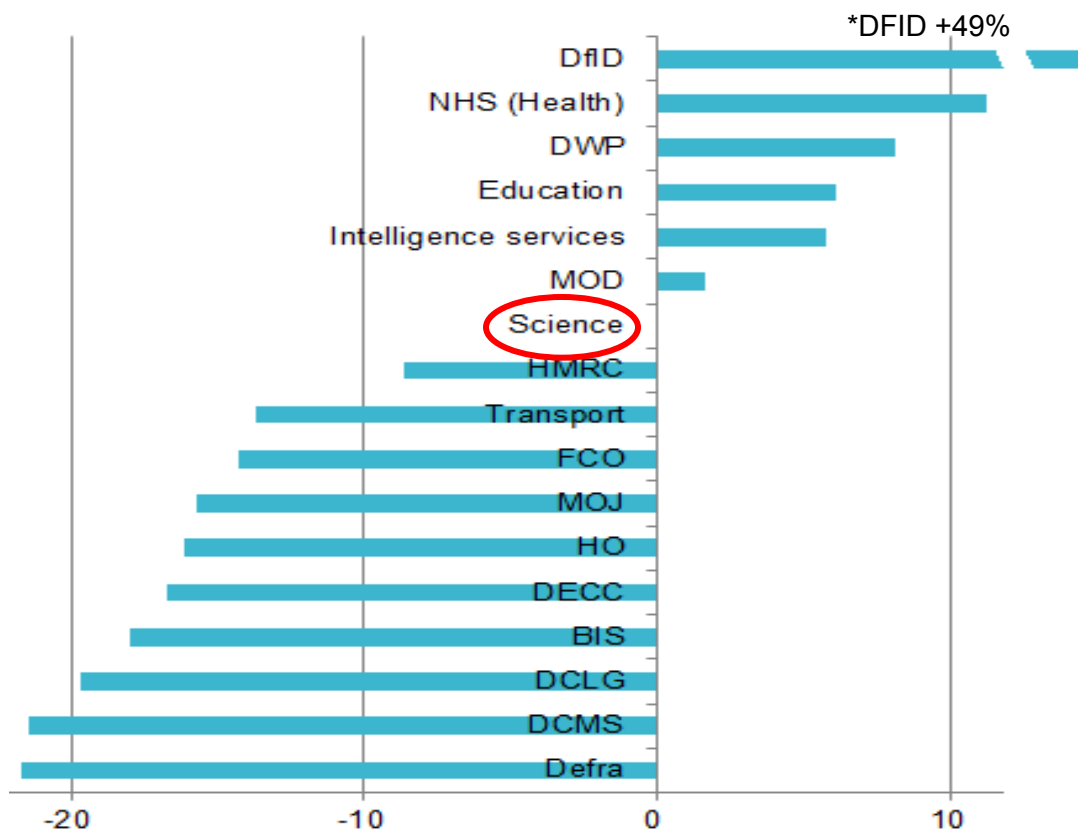


External context

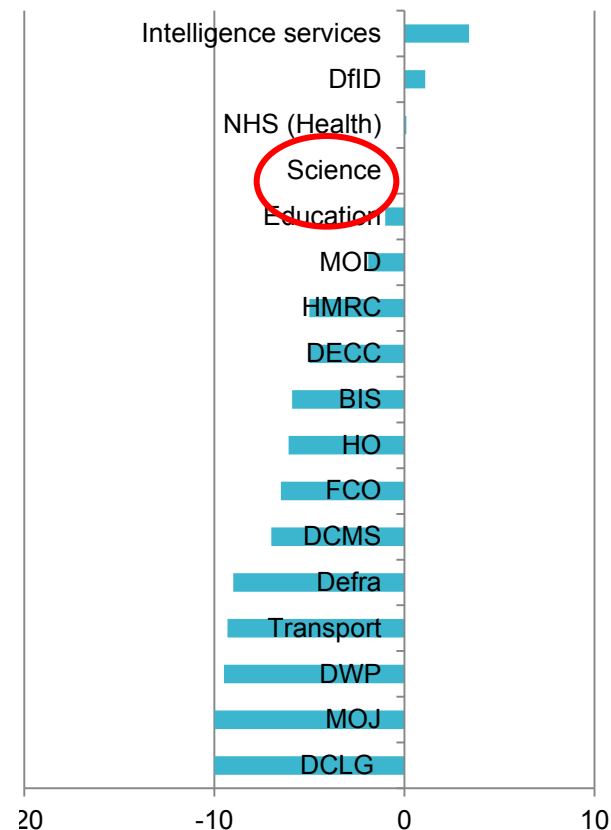
- ▶ Austerity - Spending Review 2010:
 - Flat cash = major reduction in programme budget in real terms
 - 23% cut in real terms to Administration budget
 - Reduction in departmental budgets for research
- ▶ Need to continue to make strong arguments for social science research in next Spending Review

Science budget

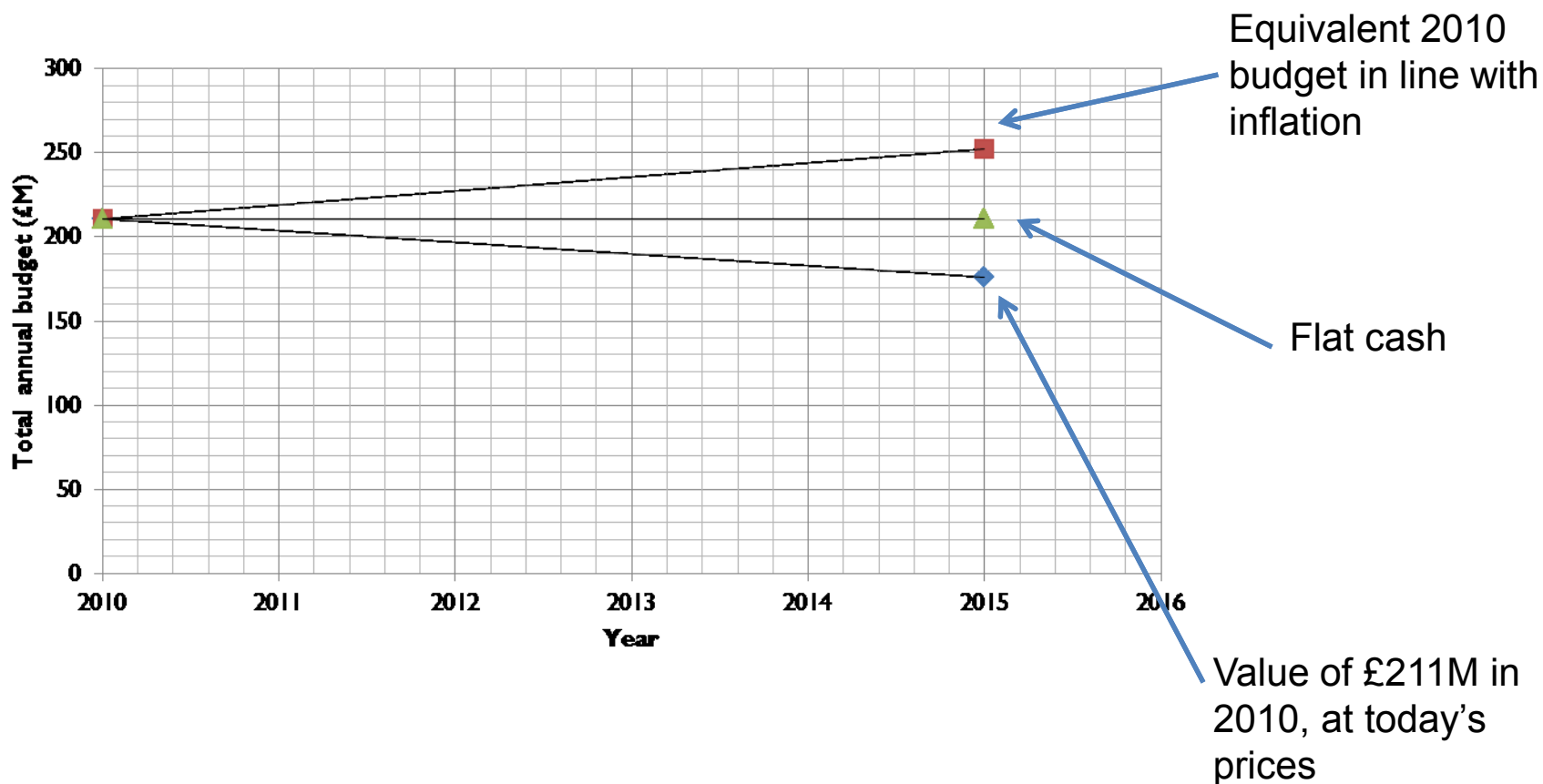
2011-14



2015-16



Cumulative impact of inflation on 'flat cash' budget settlement



Science and Innovation Strategy

- ▶ Recognition for the importance of research to the UK economy and society
- ▶ Government's strategy included:
 - Commitment to funding for HEFCE/devolved funders and RCUK capital to 2020-21
 - Investments in larger-scale strategic projects which address 'Grand Challenges'
 - A further unallocated 'Grand Challenges' fund to provide agility to respond to priorities as they emerge
 - Nurse review of Research Councils

Capital investment

- ▶ Government long-term commitment to investment in science and research infrastructure:
 - increasing capital investment in real terms to £1.1 billion in 2015-16
 - growing this in line with inflation each year to 2020-21
- ▶ Capital Consultation informed Government's vision for scientific infrastructure, set out in the Capital Roadmap and Science and Innovation Strategy

Nurse Review

- ▶ Nurse Review of the Research Councils:
 - Builds on the Triennial Review
 - Aims to ensure that the UK research system continues to deliver high impact and quality research that benefits UK economy and society and beyond
 - Opportunity to reaffirm the benefits that the Research Councils bring to UK research, economy and society, while exploring every opportunity to improve effectiveness and efficiency

ESRC Strategic Plan 2015

- ▶ Cross-disciplinary work to answer major societal issues
- ▶ Greater awareness of international perspective
- ▶ Collaborative working (in the UK and beyond)
- ▶ Full exploitation of existing resources
- ▶ Investing in the next generation
- ▶ Focused priorities will follow in the next Delivery Plan



Strategic Plan – Our mission

- ▶ Promote and support high-quality research and related postgraduate training in the social sciences
- ▶ Develop and support the national data infrastructure that underpins high-quality research
- ▶ Advance knowledge and provide trained social scientists who meet the needs of users and beneficiaries
- ▶ Communicate clearly and promote public understanding of the social sciences

Strategic Plan – key areas of activity

- ▶ Fostering research and innovation
- ▶ Creating and maximising data infrastructure for research
- ▶ Building capability
- ▶ Facilitating partnerships and realising impact
- ▶ Focussing on where we can contribute most

Fostering research and innovation

► We will:

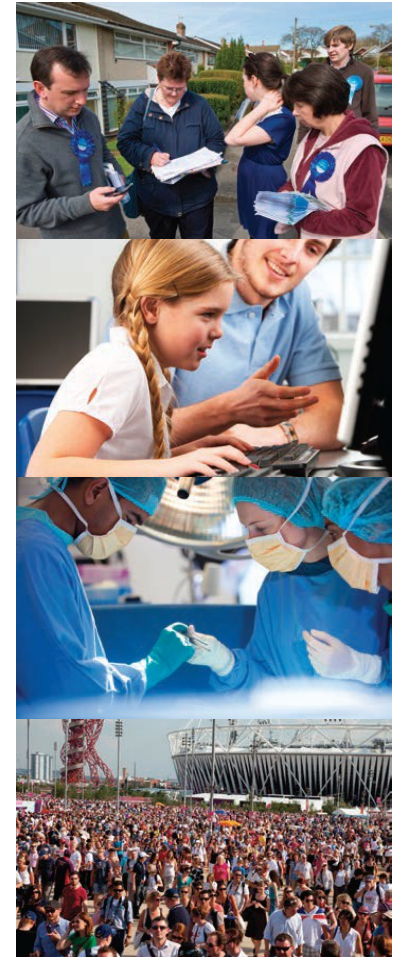
- Encourage ambitious and innovative social science
- Support research that exploits the UK's excellent data resources
- Play a brokering role in identifying priorities for research that will deliver useful evidence for decision-makers in policy and practice
- Ensure a portfolio of investment that includes 'curiosity-driven' or 'fundamental' research, applied, synthetic, methodological, and interdisciplinary research.



Creating and maximising data infrastructure for research

► We will:

- Continue to play a leadership role in supporting a robust data infrastructure
- Fully exploit the benefits of our data infrastructure through new partnerships and funding opportunities
- Explore opportunities to harness new forms of data and to link existing data in new ways.



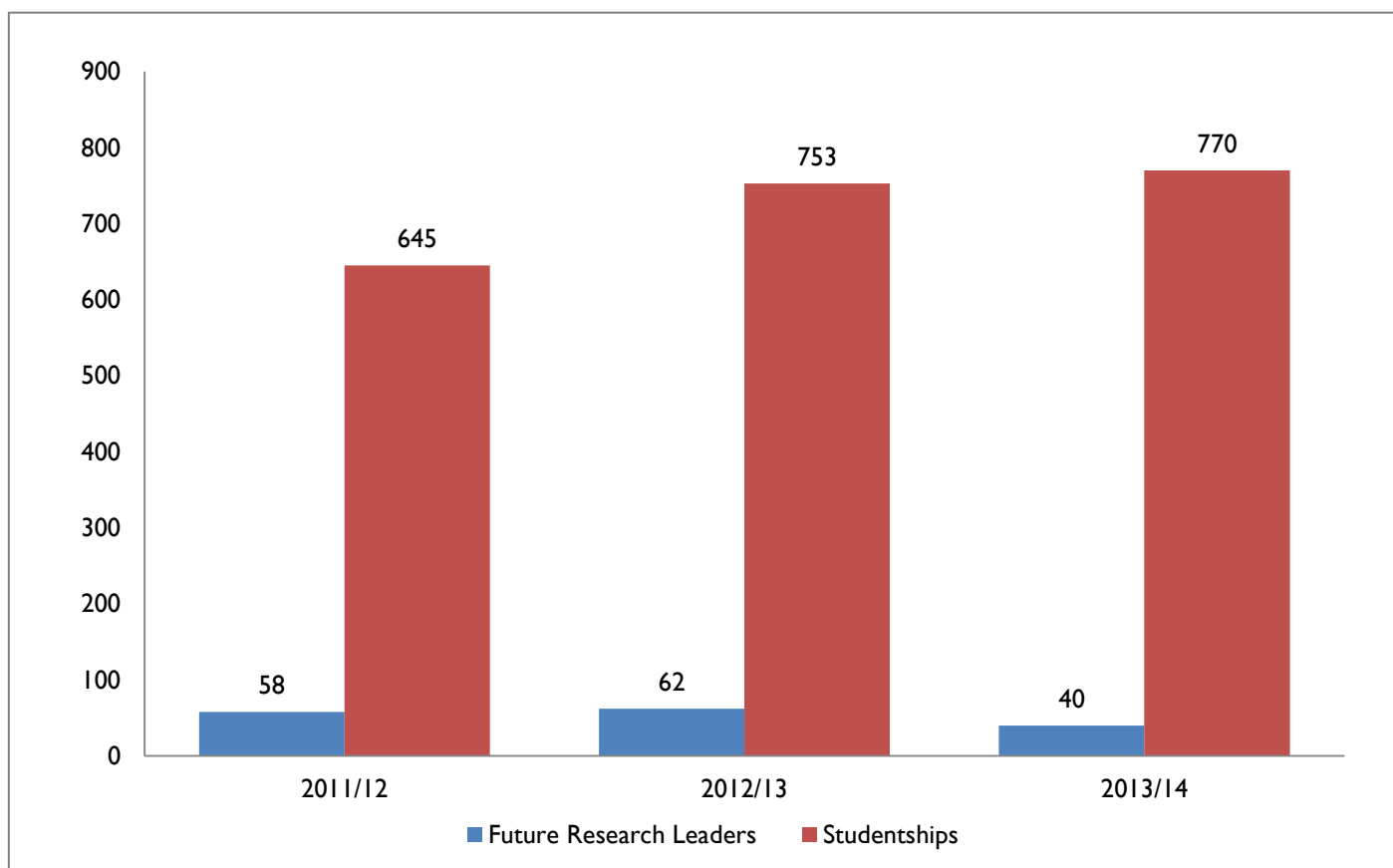
Building capability

► **We will:**

- Support the development of highly capable and innovative researchers
- Expand support for early career researchers
- Develop capability for social science leadership
- Support the development of analytical capabilities required to maximise the existing data infrastructure
- Enable postgraduate students and early career researchers to forge links and networks internationally.



Funding Early Career Researchers



Facilitating partnerships and realising impact

► We will:

- Engage with a wide range of research users and help build partner coalitions to deliver our priorities
- Embed knowledge exchange in all of our priorities
- Explore and promote new ways of maximising, recording and communicating impact to users of research and the public.



REF Economic and societal impact

- ▶ Impact is defined as *“an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia”* (HEFCE 2012)
- ▶ Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014:
 - aimed to assess the impact of excellent research undertaken within each submitted unit
 - the focus of the assessment was the impact of the submitted unit's research, not the impact of individuals or individual research outputs,
 - inclusion of assessment of impact as 20% of assessment
 - submissions were assessed on the type and quality of research publications; volume and source of research funding and quality of the research environment

REF 2014 - analysis highlights

- ▶ 2,675 social science impact case studies were analysed
- ▶ Around 50% from Sociology, Economics and Econometrics, and Politics and International Studies were supported directly by ESRC
- ▶ At least one in three were underpinned by ESRC funding (core social science Main Panel C)
- ▶ Further work being undertaken at ESRC on economic impact



What do we mean by impact

‘The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy’ (RCUK)

- Fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the UK
- Increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy
- Enhancing quality of life, health and creative output



Instrumental

Influencing the development of policy / practice
Shaping legislation Altering behaviour

**Pathways to impact
vary**

**Impacts range from
instrumental to more
subtle**

Conceptual

Shifts our understanding
of policy/practice
Reframing debates

Capacity-building

Technical / personal skills
development

Cultural change

- Increased willingness to engage in knowledge exchange activities
- Changed mindsets

Enduring connectivity

- Establishment of enduring relationships – indicator future impacts

Research Councils UK



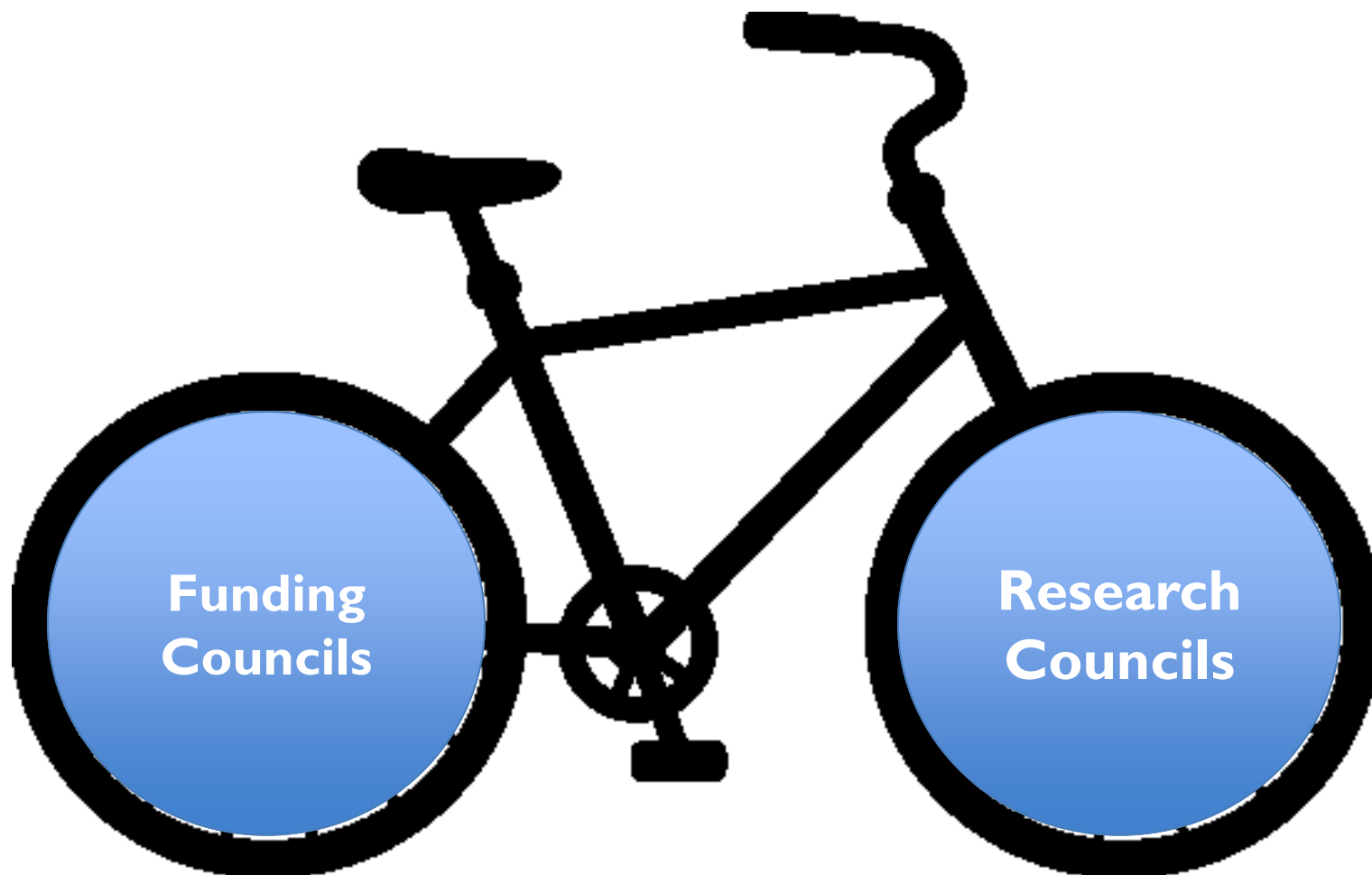
Arts & Humanities
Research Council

E·S·R·C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL

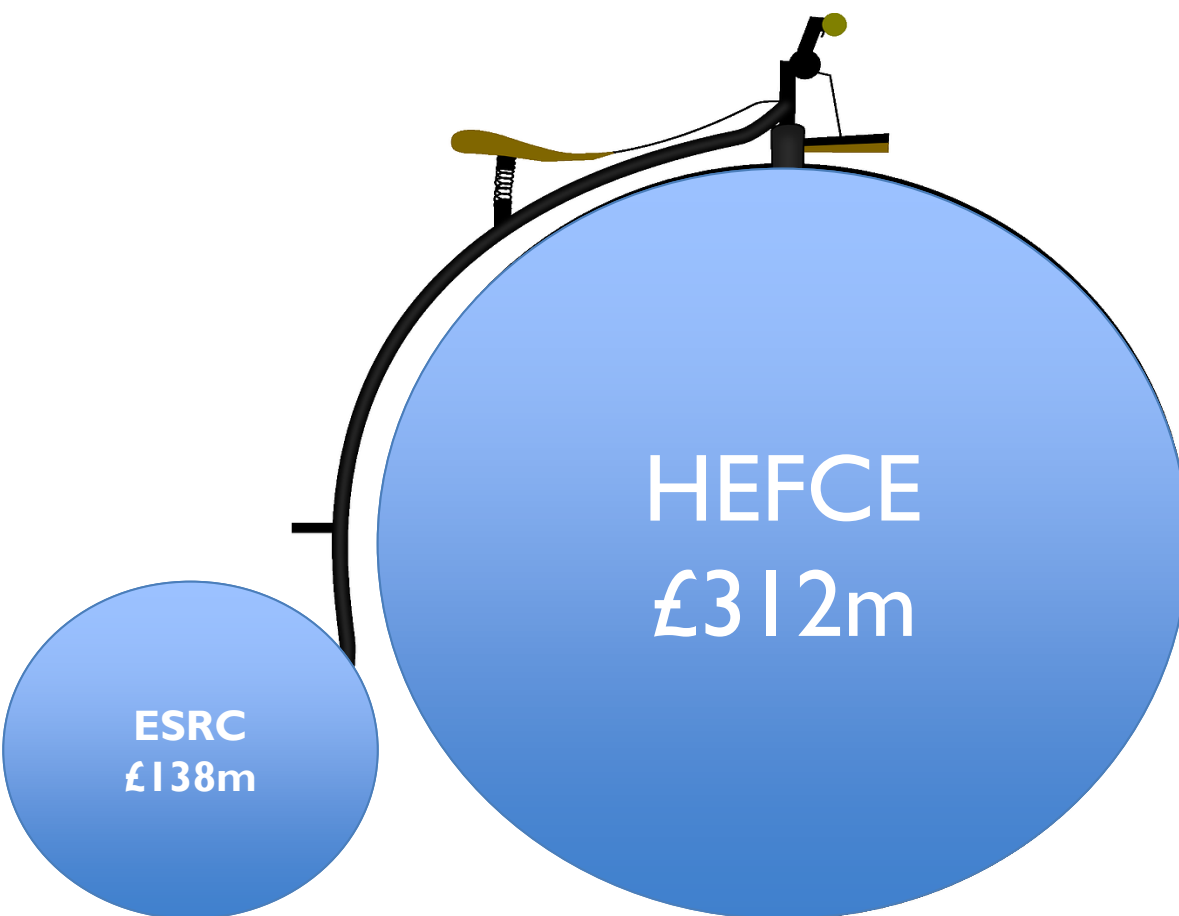


Science & Technology
Facilities Council

Dual Support



Approximate value of QR and ESRC Research Grant funding for Social Sciences (2010/11)



A further £401m was available from other sources in 2010-11:

UK Civil Society	£53m
UK Government	£144m
Government outside UK	£90m
UK Industry	£47m
Other sources	£37m
Industry outside UK	£15m
Civil society outside UK	£15m

UK Research Funding in the Social Sciences

Charity sector

Responsive and directed mode grants

Government departments

Business sector

Europe EC, Horizon 2020, ERC

Leverhulme

Career stage fellowships, travel and open grants

HEFCs

Block grant funding by quality assessment

ESRC

Responsive and directed mode grants

Joseph Rowntree

Thematic calls

Wellcome Trust

Strategic and Responsive modes

British Academy

Career stage fellowships, small grants, international

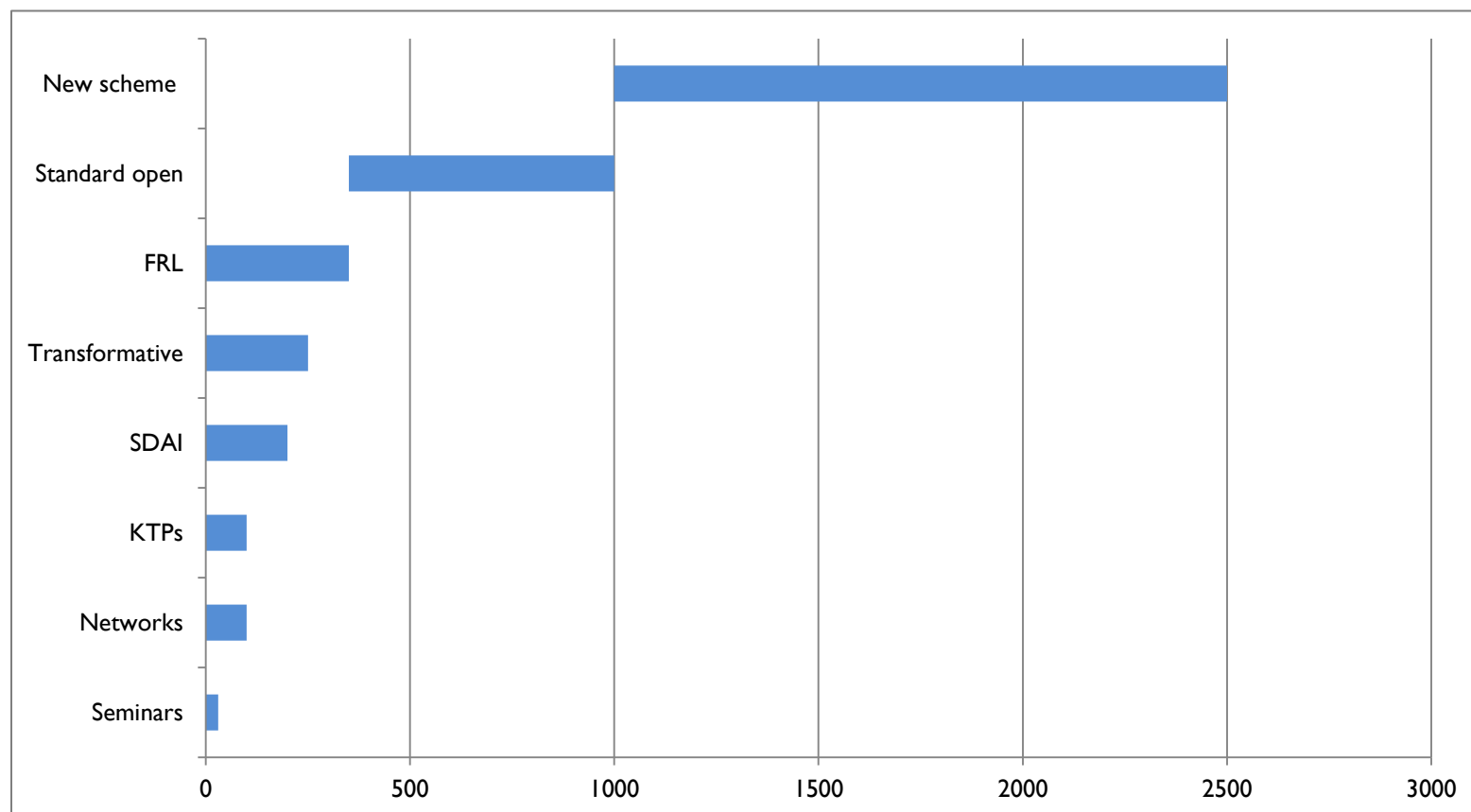
Nuffield

Thematic and open grant programmes

Changes to ESRC Research Grants funding thresholds

- ▶ For standard grants the lower threshold will rise to £350,000 and the upper threshold will be reduced to £1 million at Full Economic Costs
- ▶ New scheme to be introduced to fund applications between £1 million and £2.5 million
- ▶ Changes will come into effect from 1 July 2015
- ▶ Current thresholds will continue to operate for any application submitted up to 30 June 2015

ESRC Funding Opportunities



Current Funding Opportunities

- ▶ [ESRC/NRF International Centre Partnerships](#) (29th April)
- ▶ [ESRC-DFID Raising Learning Outcomes in Education Systems call 2015](#) (14th May)
- ▶ [ESRC-NSFC call for Collaborative Research Urban Transformations in China](#) (28th May)
- ▶ [ESRC UK in a Changing Europe Initiative Commissioning Fund](#) (31st May and 31st October)
- ▶ [Pre-call: DFID-ESRC Growth Research Programme \(DEGRP\) - call 3](#) (23rd April)
- ▶ [NCRM Methodological Research Projects 2015 call](#) (16th June)
- ▶ [Pre-call: Increasing Resilience to Natural Hazards in Earthquake-Prone regions in China](#) (open for expression of interest)

ESRC Future funding opportunities

▶ **Centres and Large Grants**

- Next call to be announced at the end of 2015
- work underway to identify and develop the strategic priorities that will feature as steers in the Competition

▶ **Future Research Leaders**

- Plan to announce details of next call in late 2015

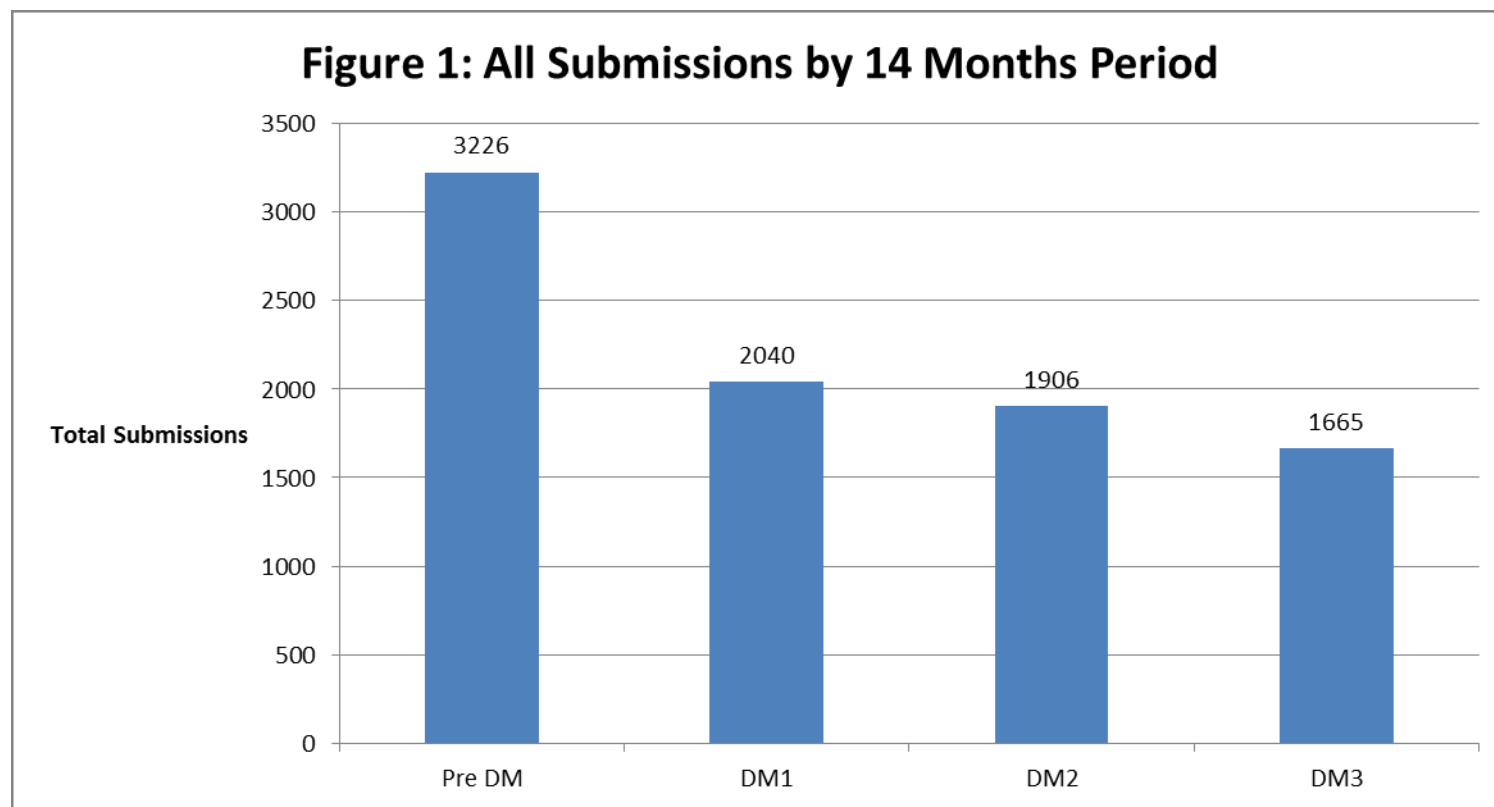
▶ **Research seminars and Strategic networks competition**

- Plan to announce details of next call in late 2015

Demand Management: Key aims

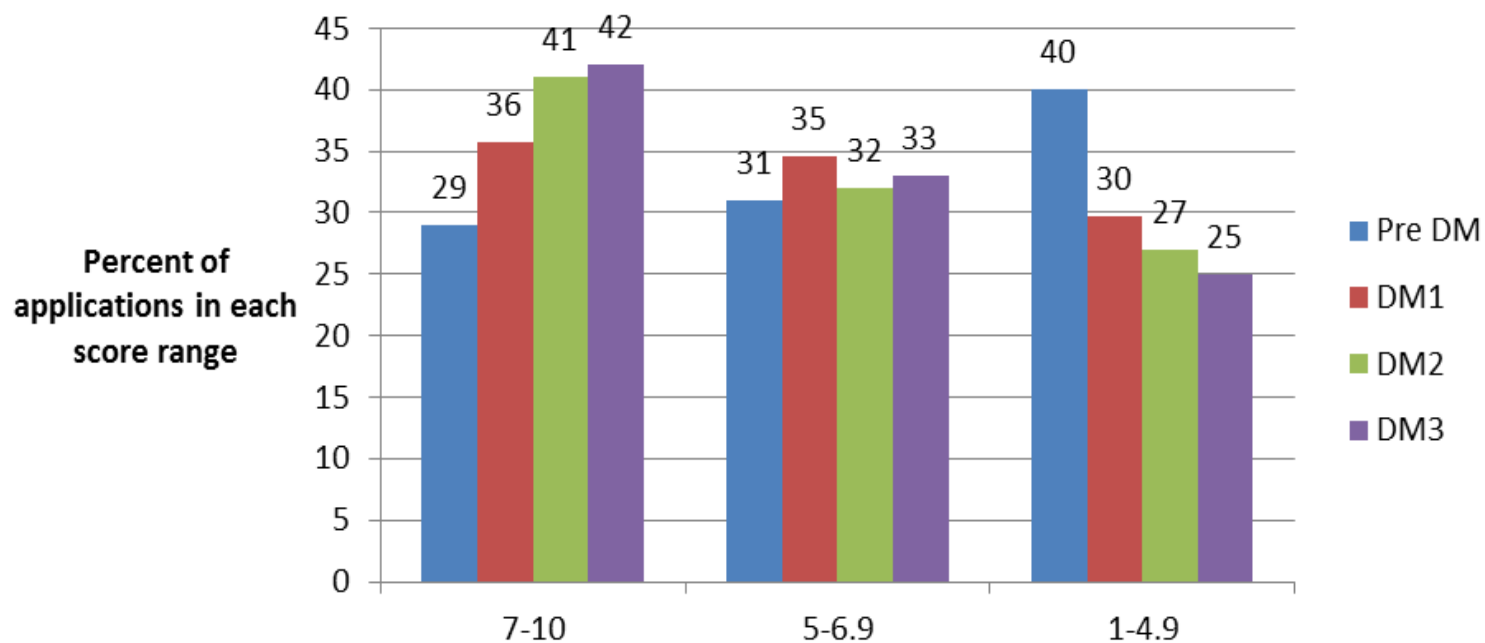
- ▶ Submission of fewer, but high quality, applications with a genuine chance of securing funding
 - reduce the amount of redundant effort by the community on the preparation of unsuccessful applications.
 - scale back the peer review burden placed on academics by application volumes
 - reduce the number of applications which require processing by administrative staff both in HEIs and the ESRC.
- Strategy based on a HEI self-regulation model

Submissions: a downward trend



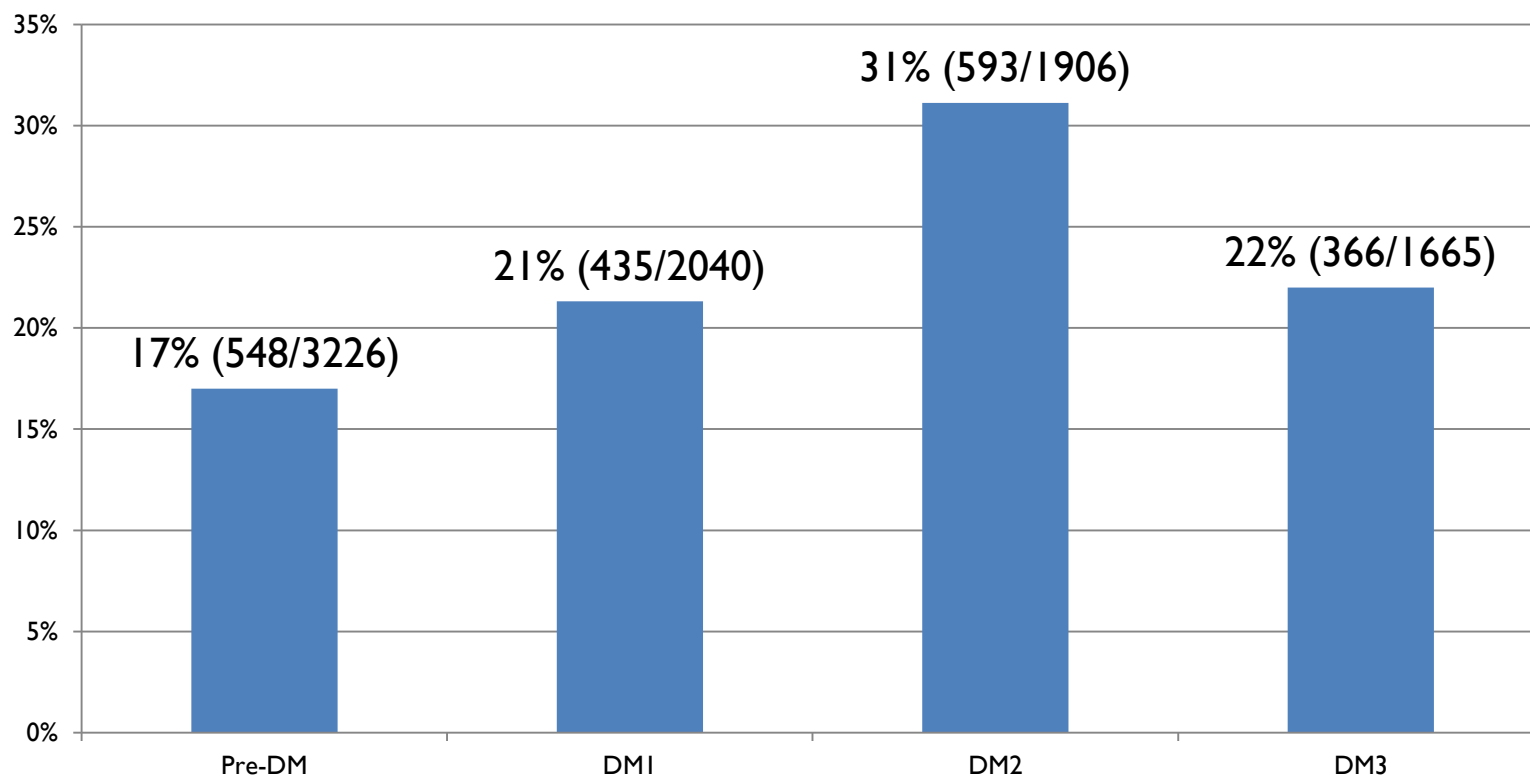
Quality: an upward trend

Quality profiles Pre and Post Demand Management Period



Success Rates: falling back

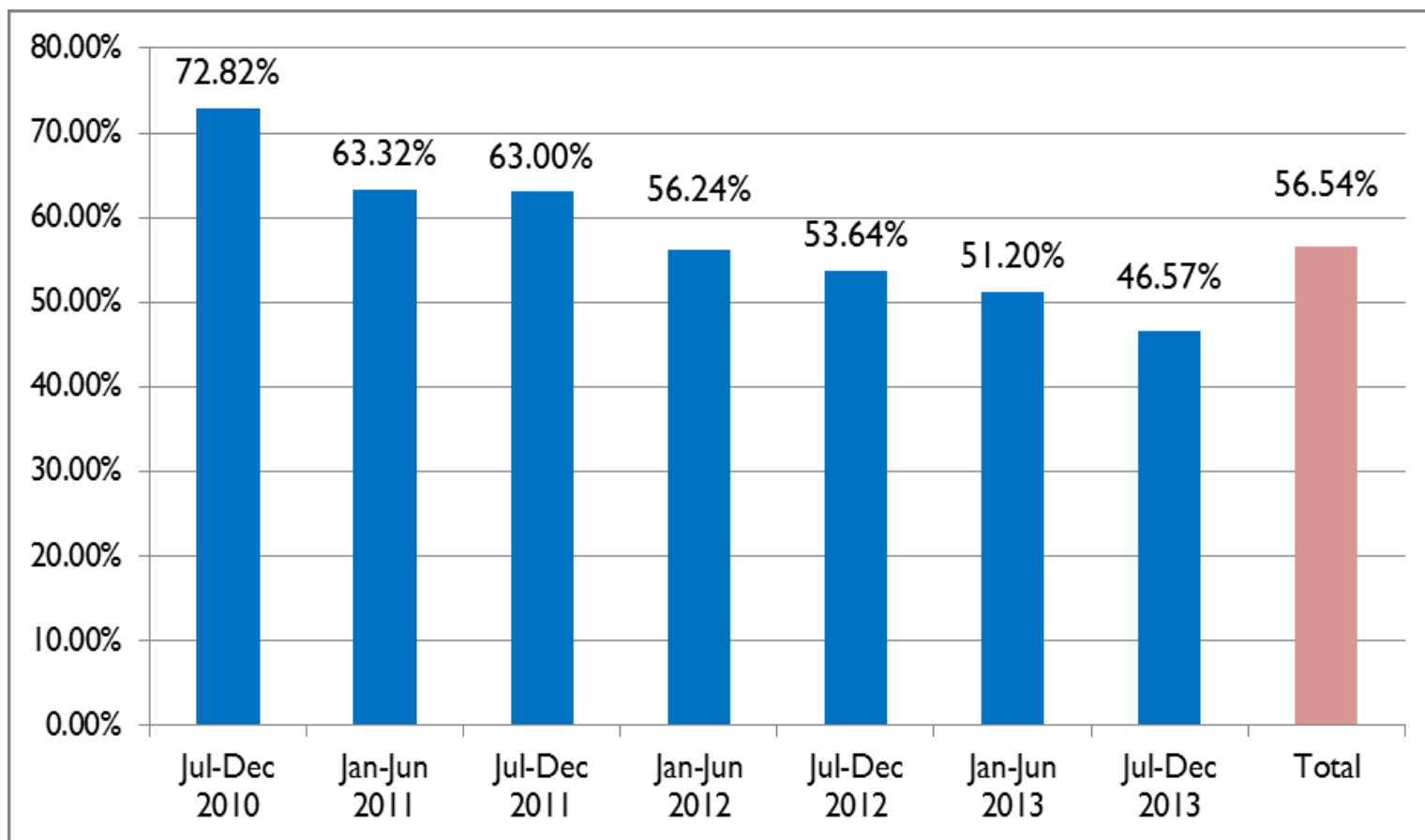
Overall Success rates



Improving Peer Review processes

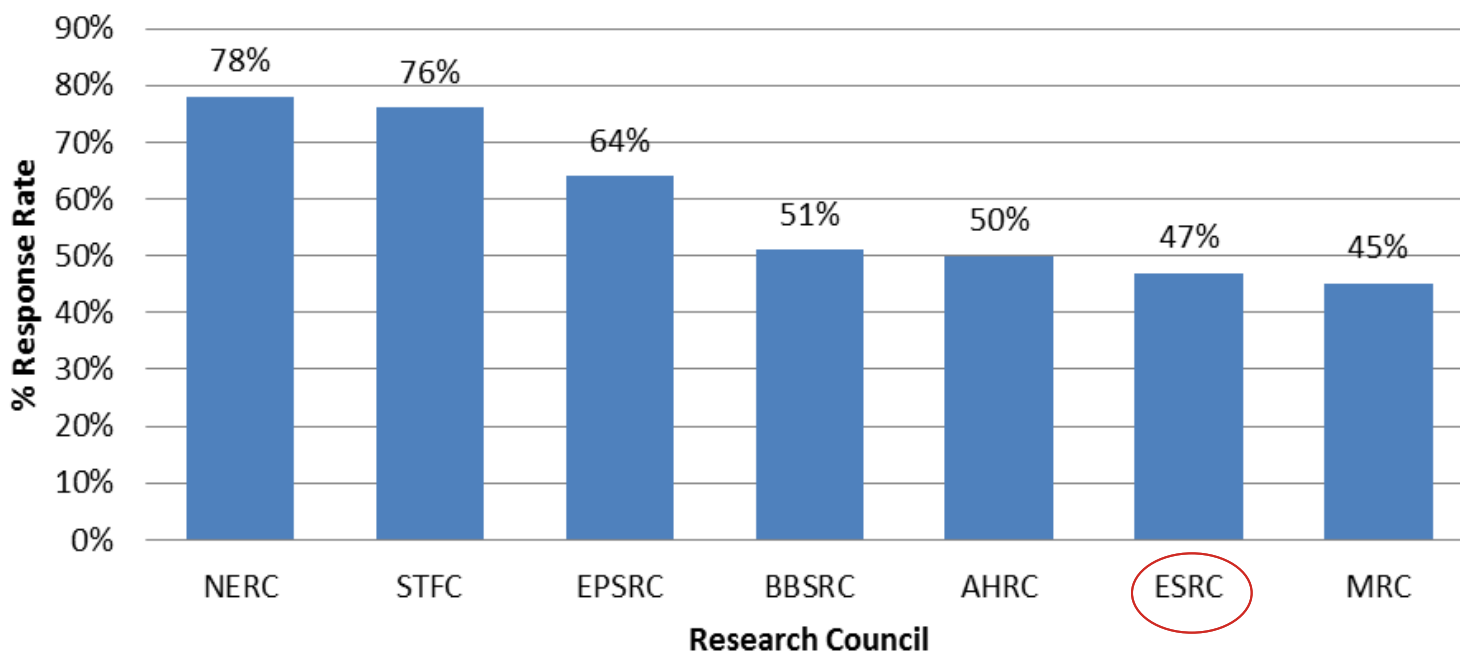
- ▶ Refreshing and restructuring of the ESRC Peer Review College
- ▶ Expanding membership in key shortfall areas
- ▶ Providing better feedback to College members
- ▶ Sharing peer review and performance data with HEIs
- ▶ Next steps:
 - Learned Societies asked for nominations to join the Peer Review College (alongside ESRC identifying new members)
 - We intend to complete the nomination process and re-launch the College in October 2015

Falling Peer Review response rates



RCUK comparison

Figure 8: % of Rate of Reviewers Approached that Provide a Review



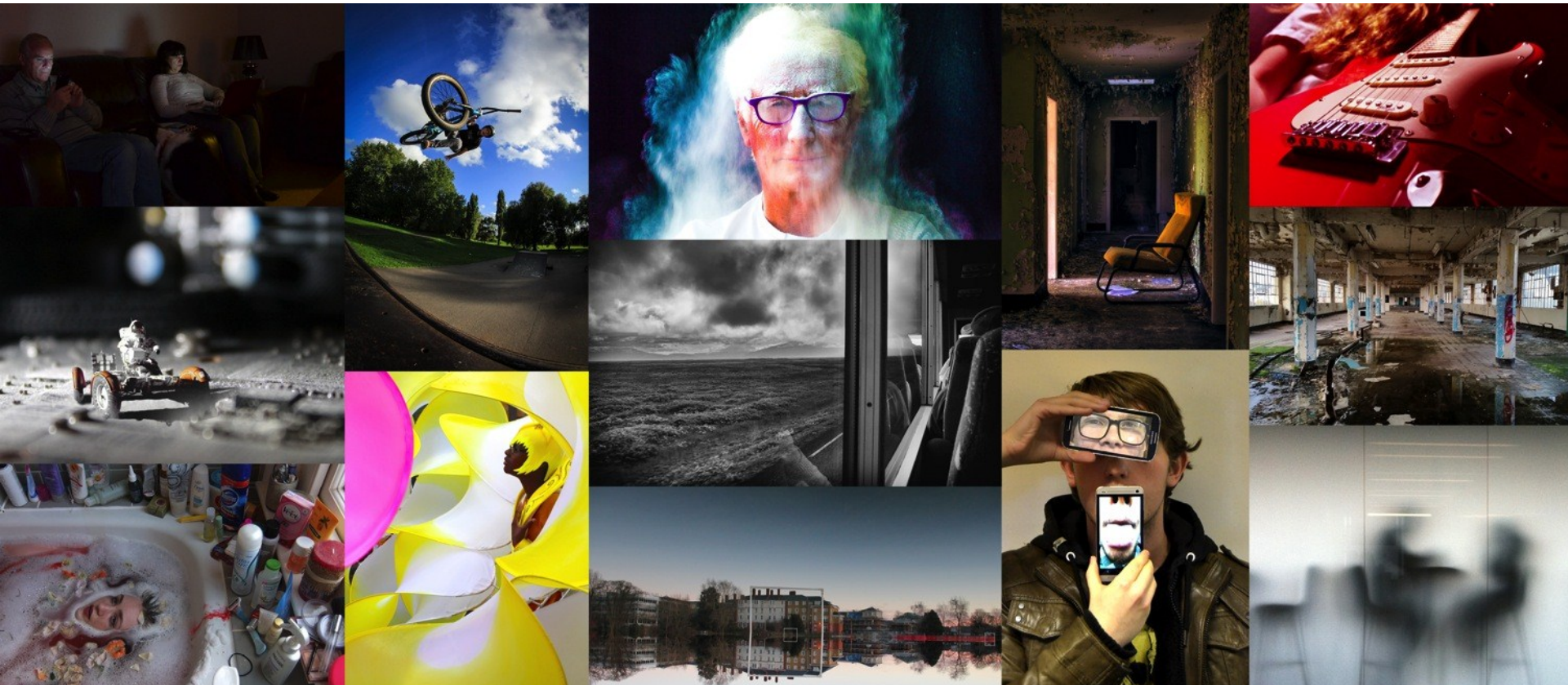
ESRC: Opportunities for involvement

- ▶ Applications invited for our new Research Committee and Capabilities Committee (Closing date 24 April)
- ▶ Applications invited for Grant assessment panels (8th May)
- ▶ Applications invited for the chair of Panel A (Economics, Management and Business Studies and Psychology) (8th May)

End of Part I - Questions

- ▶ Coming up in Part 2: ESRC portfolio, resources and initiatives
 - Data Infrastructure
 - Diversity in our portfolio
 - Relationships with Government departments
 - International activity
 - UK Maps of ESRC investments
 - ESRC Office

Part 2: ESRC portfolio, resources and initiatives



Welcome and overview

- ▶ **Part 1: Social science funding ecosystem and ESRC strategy**
- ▶ **Part 2: ESRC portfolio, resources and initiatives**
 - Data Infrastructure
 - Diversity in our portfolio
 - Relationships with Government departments
 - International activity
 - UK Maps of ESRC investments
 - ESRC Structure
 - Questions

Resilience through austerity

- ▶ Collaborative working (in the UK and beyond)
 - ESRC as part of a funding eco-system
 - Greater harmonisation across RCUK
- ▶ Full exploitation of existing resources
- ▶ Valuing and maintaining our unique assets (e.g. longitudinal studies)
- ▶ Investing in the next generation
- ▶ Cross-disciplinary work to answer major societal issues

Data Infrastructure

- ▶ We continue to develop, expand and maintain our investments in some of the world's leading studies
- ▶ Exploiting excellent data resources
 - Building a robust and reliable infrastructure
 - Working in partnership in the UK and overseas
 - Working strategically on data linkage
 - Supporting innovative methodological work
 - Providing explicit support to exploit use of high quality data
 - Training and capacity building for 'Big Data' challenges (Qstep and DTPs)

ESRC Data Landscape – Some Examples

**LIFE
STUDY**

Understanding lives –
now and for the future



closer

Cohort & Longitudinal Studies
Enhancement Resources



CASS

Corpus Approaches
to Social Science

**Urban
Big
Data
Centre**

SDAI



Understanding Society
THE UK HOUSEHOLD LONGITUDINAL STUDY

UK Data Service

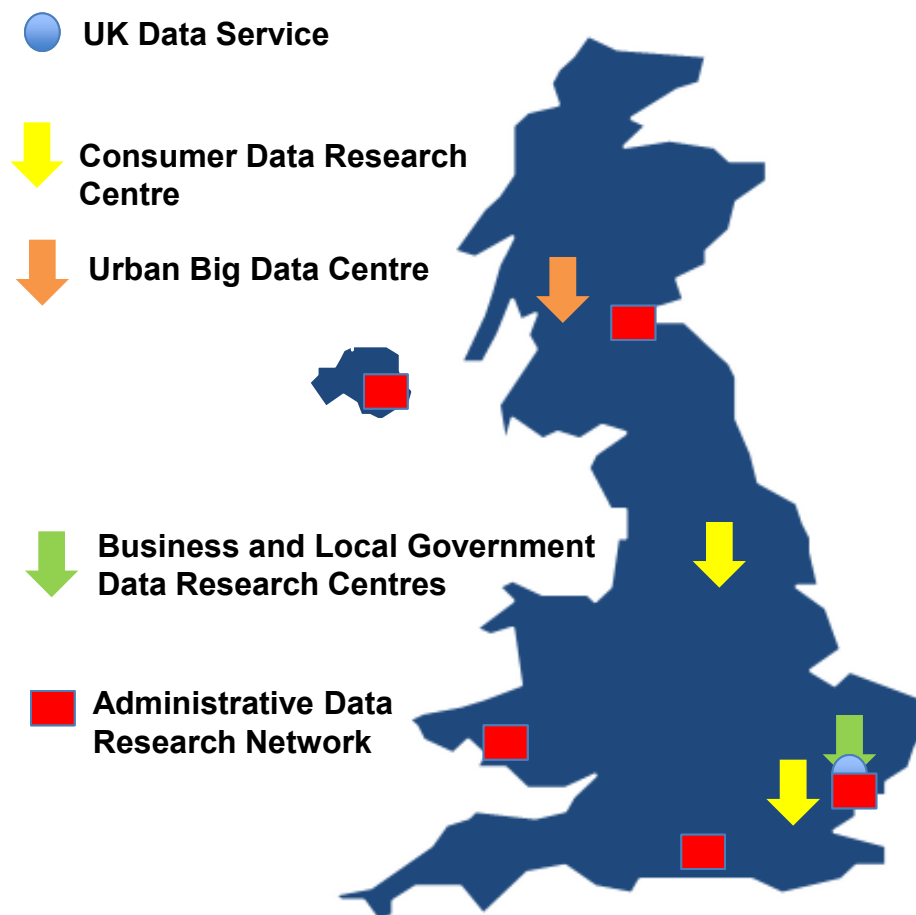
- ▶ **10x return on investment**
- ▶ Re-use of research data provides:
 - new research opportunities
 - increases productivity
 - saves time and resources for researchers, teachers and policymakers.
- ▶ Increased use of data due to the ESRC-funded UK Data Service is independently estimated to be worth **£58M-£230M** over 30 years from one single year's expenditure



UKDS has:

- over **6,000 datasets**,
- over **25,000 registered users**, **60,000 downloads** worldwide each year.

ESRC investment in Big Data



- Huge new investment in 2012 for RCUK – continuing priority
- ESRC interest in ‘data not originally collected for research purposes’
- Huge potential – as well as complexity and issues
- Three Phases of investment
 - Administrative data
 - Business data
 - Social media/ civil society data
- Facilitating access to novel forms of data for research purposes

Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN) – Phase I

- ▶ Facilitate access to routinely collected administrative data
- ▶ What types of data?
- ▶ Awards:
 - Four Administrative Data Research Centres (ADRCs):
England, Wales, Scotland and N Ireland
 - An Administrative Data Service to coordinate the network
- ▶ Safe settings
- ▶ Researcher training and accreditation



Business and Local Government Data Research Centres – Phase 2

- ▶ Facilitate access to data held by private sectors and local government organisations
- ▶ Cross-cutting themes
- ▶ Infrastructure, research, training, methods
- ▶ Three Centres funded:
 - **Urban Big Data Centre** – Glasgow
 - **Consumer Data Research Centre** – Leeds/ UCL
 - **BLG Data Research Centre** – Essex
- ▶ Started February 2014



Urban
Big
Data
Centre

An ESRC Data
Investment



Consumer
Data
Research
Centre

An ESRC Data
Investment



ESRC Business and Local Government
Data Research Centre

Big Data Network Phase 3

- ▶ ‘New forms of data’
 - (including **Civil Society** and **social media** data)
- ▶ Current activities
 - Enhancement of RCUK Digital Economy Hubs around social media
 - Civil Society Data Partnership Scheme
- ▶ Planned New funding:
 - **International Interdisciplinary Centre in Real-time Data Analytics** – currently being scoped
 - Aim to facilitate access to new forms of data such as social media and develop international partnerships

Access

- Many ways to explore ESRC data resources and their potential for your research:
 - UK Data Service - Discover
 - Administrative Data Research Network - Catalogue
 - 'Big Data' – public and secure
 - CLOSER
 - New tools and resources – BES data playground

Discover

Search and browse our data collections, support guides, case studies, and related publications.

Search our data catalogue and related resources

GO

Reset filters

Clear search

☒ Auto-complete

☒ Map search to HASSET thesaurus?

Help



Case study



Data collection



Series record



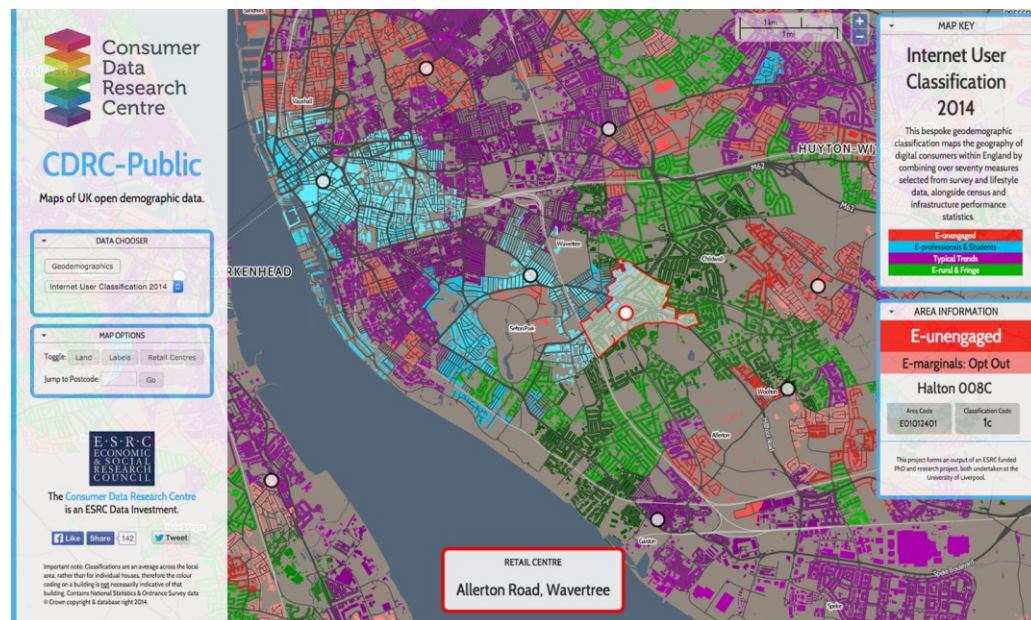
ESRC output



Support guide

UK Data Service – 'Discover' tool

Consumer Data Research Centre – public portal



British Election Study – 'Data Playground'

BRITISH
ELECTION STUDY

GET STARTED

NEWS

DATA

FAQS

Data

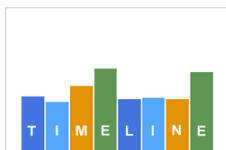
Data Playground

Data Download

Data Playground

Welcome to the BES Data Playground. This is the beta version of our resource to make possible the analysis of 2014 BES data without need for specialist software or expertise. Create a graph, choose data and variables, see the raw data in a table beneath each graph. Just edit or start over to try something new. Please just ensure you credit the British Election Study in any uses of these data.

The British Election Study is not responsible for any analysis or any uses of data playground analysis. All data in the data playground are weighted for a general population of the UK. Scotland, Wales and England specific weights are not applied. For more complex or detailed analysis than possible in the playground, please download the data from the Data Download section of this page. Since the Data Playground is launched in beta version, we would be grateful to be informed of any potential bugs or queries via mail(at)britishelectionstudy.com. Please note: we are currently fixing a bug in the date variable (date of interview).



Age group vs Does England get fair share from Union?



CREATE YOUR OWN GRAPH



Crime levels getting higher or lower

Capacity and Capability

- ▶ National Centre for Research Methods (current call for methodological projects, deadline 16th June)
- ▶ Secondary Data Analysis Initiative
- ▶ Next generation of data users and **leaders**



Diversity of our portfolio

- ▶ We are committed to encouraging collaboration between researchers and the business, public and civil society sectors
- ▶ Attracting £23m additional co-funding from government departments, civil society and international bodies
- ▶ Working with other Research Councils to commission independent researchers to carry out work to inform policy and practice

Relationships with Government Departments

- ▶ Extend our successful partnerships with DfID
- ▶ Breakfast briefings (all-party group for social science)
- ▶ Fellowships (both directions) and internships
- ▶ Close relationship with ONS
- ▶ Range of co-funded grants and initiatives
- ▶ We are providing c.£500k over a three year period to support the new Social Science Section for POST

What Works Network

- ▶ Independent institutions part-funded by UK government, with significant support from ESRC
- ▶ Provide robust research evidence for policy and practice:
- ▶ ESRC supported initiatives:
 - Crime reduction
 - Local economic growth
 - Scotland
 - Tackling poverty
 - Early intervention
- ▶ Network is expanding - 'What Works Wellbeing' centre will commence in June 2015.

Embedding Knowledge Exchange

- ▶ Recent changes in the way ESRC supports KE:
 - Impact Acceleration Accounts at 24 of our top-funded Research Organisations
 - We no longer support responsive KE applications
 - We have a fast-track support mechanism (“impact uplifts”) for our existing investments
- ▶ Funding opportunities to support collaborative working and knowledge exchange:
 - Responsive mode standard grants
 - Impact Acceleration Accounts
 - Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

International collaboration

- ▶ International collaboration remains a key priority
- ▶ Embed international in all we do
 - International Co-Investigator policy
- ▶ Work with European partners
 - Open Research Area (ESRC, NWO, DFG, ANR)
 - Calls under NORFACE partnership
- ▶ Collaborations with key partner countries
 - 3 RCUK teams (US, India and China)
- ▶ Leading role in the Newton Fund
 - Importance of ODA requirements

'Newton Fund'

£375 million 'Newton' Fund for 5 years from 2014-15 to improve the research and innovation capacity of Emerging Powers and build research partnerships for the UK.

Recent calls:

China



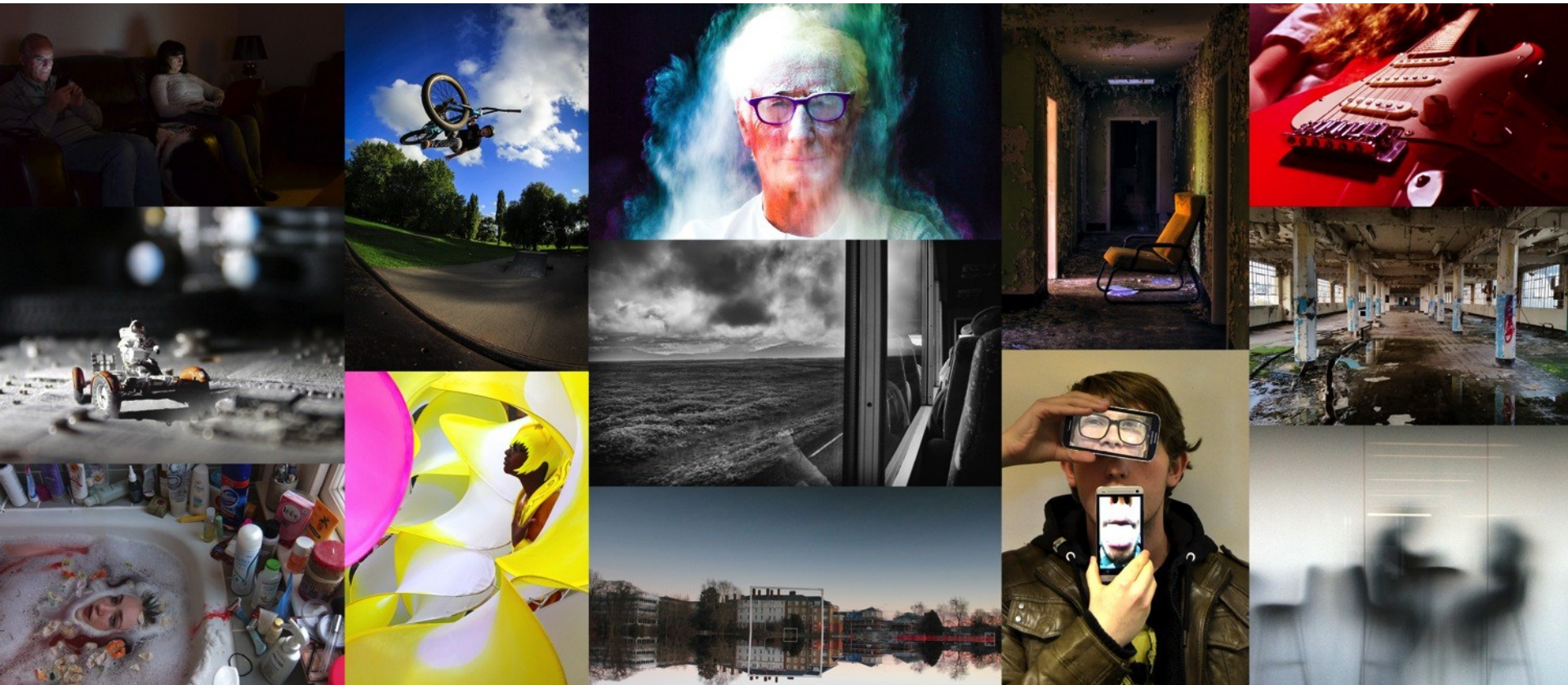
- ▶ [ESRC-AHRC-CASS International Centre Partnerships 2014](#)
- ▶ [Pre-announcement of a joint NERC/ESRC/NSFC call for Increasing Resilience to Natural Hazards in Earthquake-Prone regions in China \(IRNHIC\)](#)

South Africa



- ▶ [ESRC/NRF International Centre Partnerships](#)

UK maps of ESRC investments

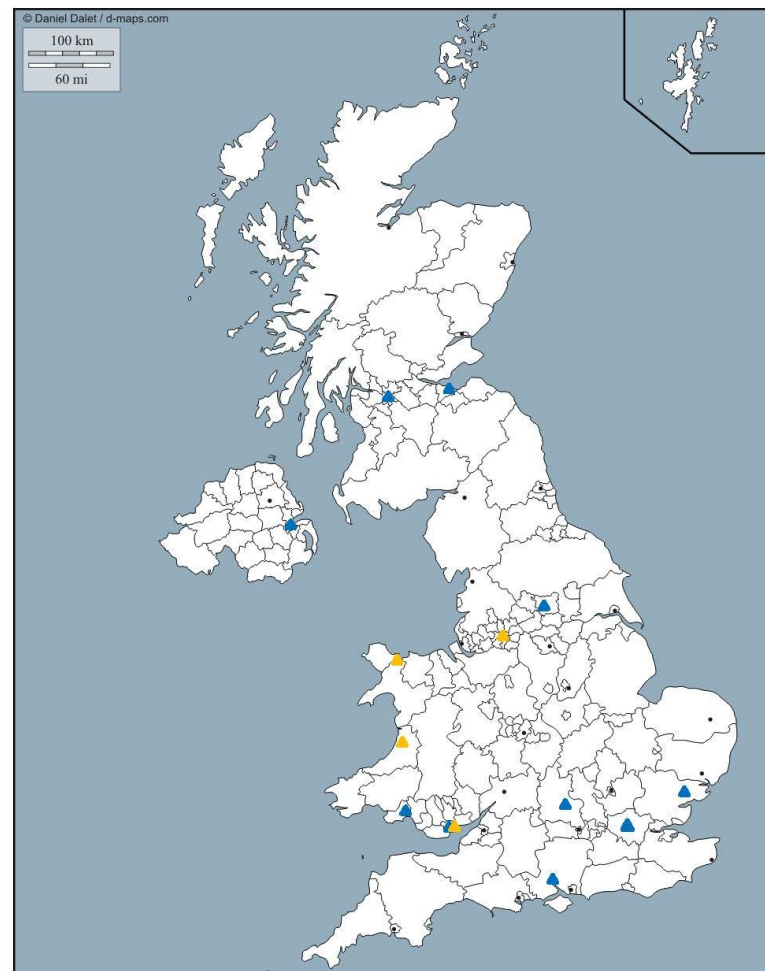


DATA INVESTMENTS

Aberystwyth University ▲
Bangor University ▲
Cardiff University ▲
University of Edinburgh ▲
University of Essex ▲
University of Glasgow ▲
University of Leeds ▲
University of Manchester ▲
University of Oxford ▲
Queen's University of Belfast ▲
University of Southampton ▲
University of South Wales ▲
Swansea University ▲

LONDON City University London ▲
Institute for Fiscal Studies ▲
UCL Institute of Education ▲
University College London ▲

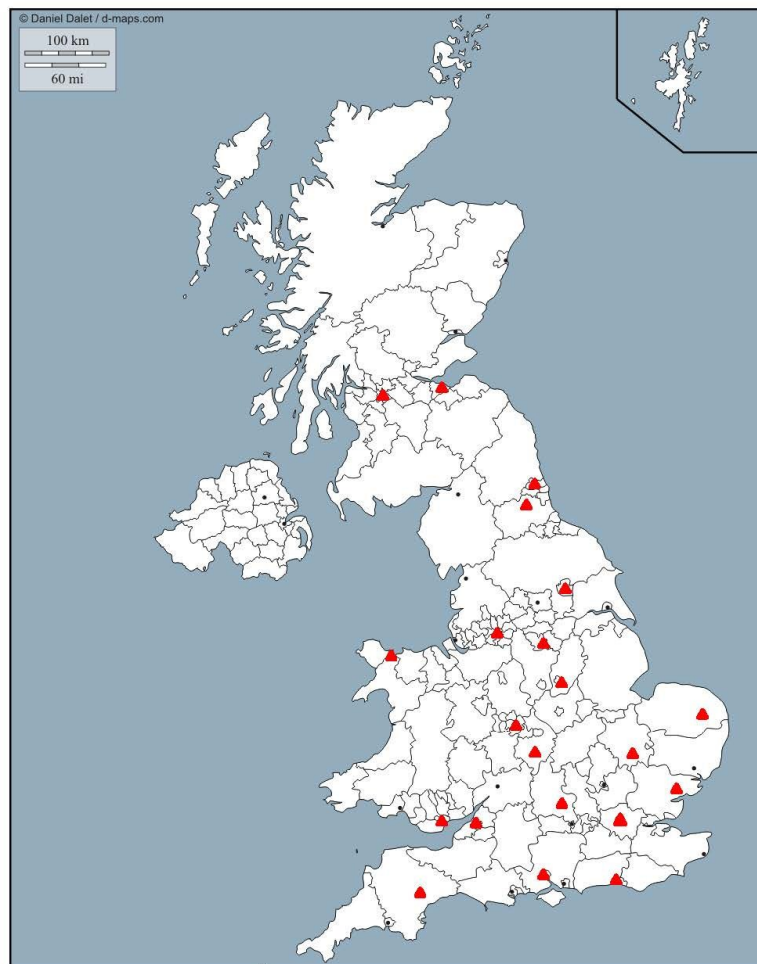
Lead Institution ▲
Collaborating Institution ▲



IMPACT ACCELERATION ACCOUNTS

Bangor University
University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
University of Durham
University of Edinburgh
University of East Anglia
University of Essex
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
University of Manchester
University of Newcastle upon Tyne
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University of Sussex
University of Warwick
University of York

LONDON Institute for Fiscal Studies
Imperial College London
King's College London
London School of Economics



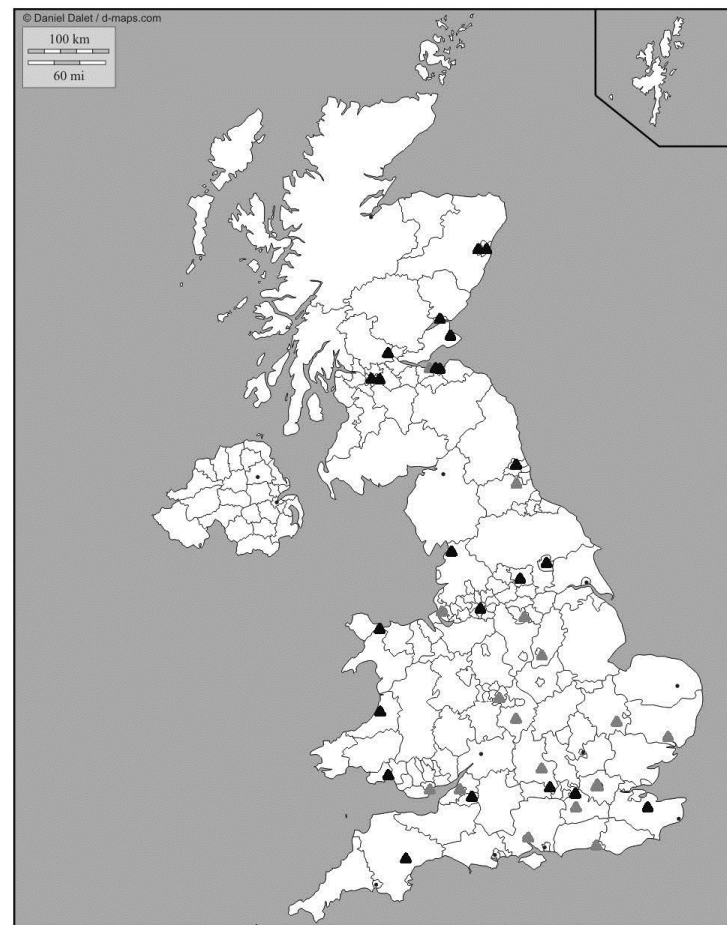
DOCTORAL TRAINING CENTRES

University of Aberdeen ▲
Aberystwyth University ▲
Bangor University ▲
University of Bath ▲
University of Birmingham ▲
University of Bristol ▲
University of Cambridge ▲
Cardiff University ▲
University of Dundee ▲
University of Durham ▲
University of Edinburgh ▲
Edinburgh Napier University ▲
University of Essex ▲
University of Exeter ▲
University of Glasgow ▲
Heriot-Watt University ▲
University of Kent ▲
Lancaster University ▲
University of Leeds ▲
University of Liverpool ▲
University of Manchester ▲
University of Nottingham ▲
University of Newcastle upon Tyne ▲
University of Oxford ▲
University of Reading ▲
Robert Gordon University ▲
Royal Holloway, University of London ▲
University of St Andrews ▲
University of Sheffield ▲
University of Southampton ▲
University of Stirling ▲
University of Strathclyde ▲
University of Surrey ▲

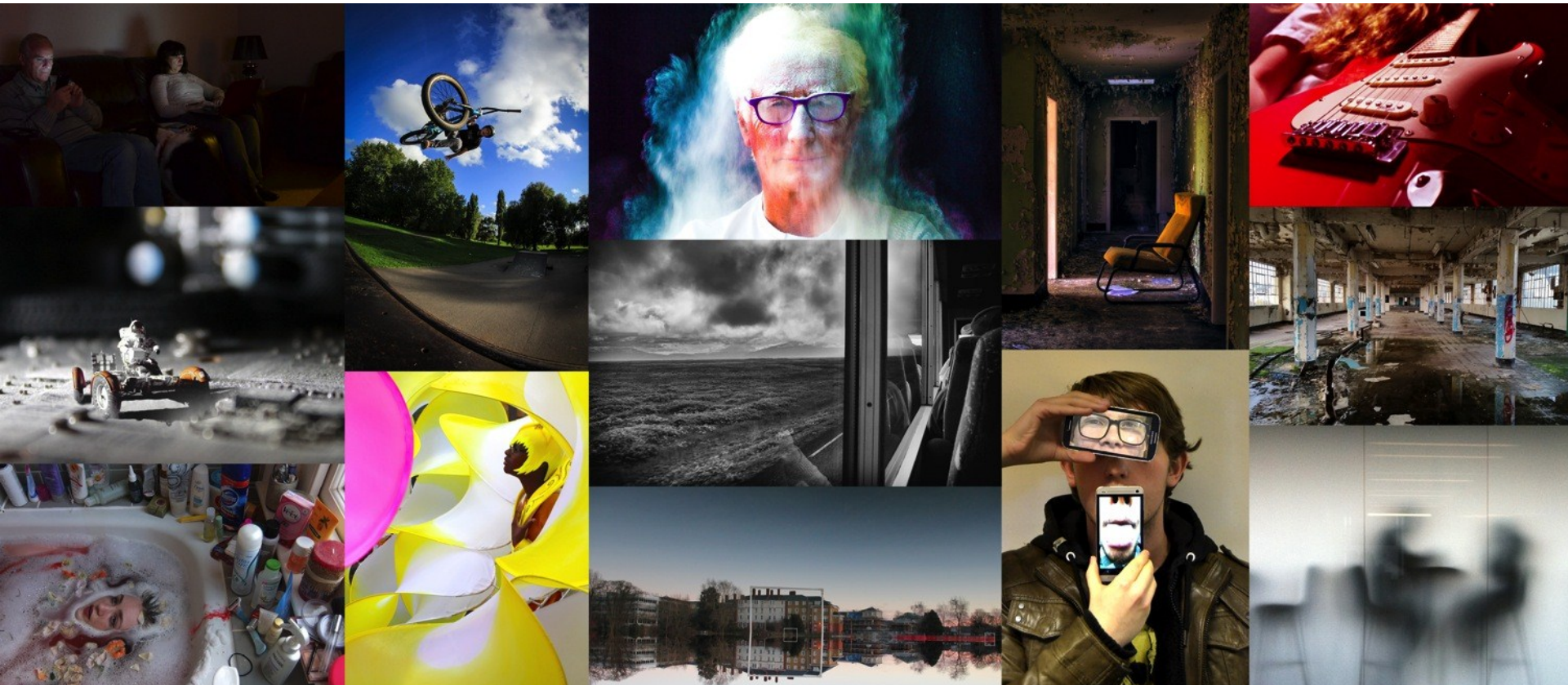
University of Sussex ▲
Swansea University ▲
University of Warwick ▲
University of York ▲

LONDON
Birkbeck, University of London ▲
Goldsmiths, University of London ▲
UCL Institute of Education ▲
King's College London ▲
London Business School ▲
London School of Economics ▲
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine ▲
Queen Mary University of London ▲
SOAS, University of London ▲
University College London ▲

Lead Institutions ▲
Collaborating Institutions ▲



ESRC Structure



Council

- ▶ [Dr Alan Gillespie \(Chair\)](#), (current term ends June 2017)
- ▶ [Professor Jane Elliott](#), ESRC Chief Executive
- ▶ [Professor Tara Fenwick](#), University of Stirling (current term ends July 2016)
- ▶ [Professor Dame Glynis Breakwell](#), University of Bath (current term ends July 2017)
- ▶ [Mr Martin Coleman](#), Norton Rose LLP (current term ends July 2016)
- ▶ [Professor Simon Collinson](#), University of Birmingham (current term ends March 2018)
- ▶ [Mr Paul Grice](#), Scottish Parliament (current term ends July 2015)
- ▶ [Professor David Martin](#), University of Southampton (current term ends July 2016)
- ▶ [Dr James Richardson](#), HM Treasury (current term ends July 2017)
- ▶ [Mr Martin Rosenbaum](#), BBC (current term ends July 2015)
- ▶ [Professor Judith Squires](#), University of Bristol (current term ends August 2018)
- ▶ [Professor L Alan Winters](#), University of Sussex (current term ends January 2019)
- ▶ [Professor Linda Woodhead](#), Lancaster University (current term ends July 2016)
- ▶ [Ms Karin Woodley](#), Cambridge House (current term ends January 2019)
- ▶ [Mr Mark Robson](#), Bank of England

The ESRC Office

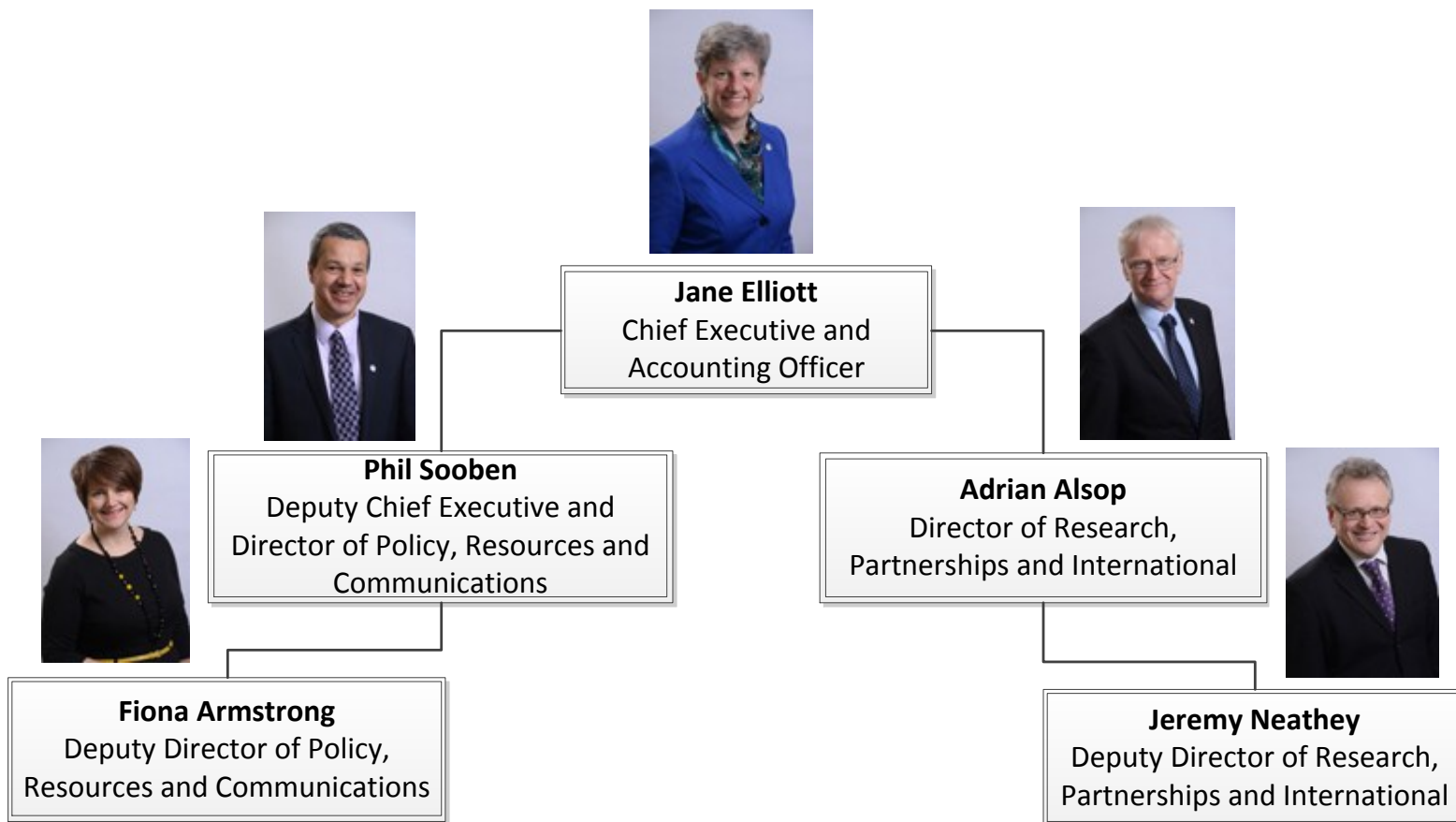
Polaris House, Swindon

130 staff

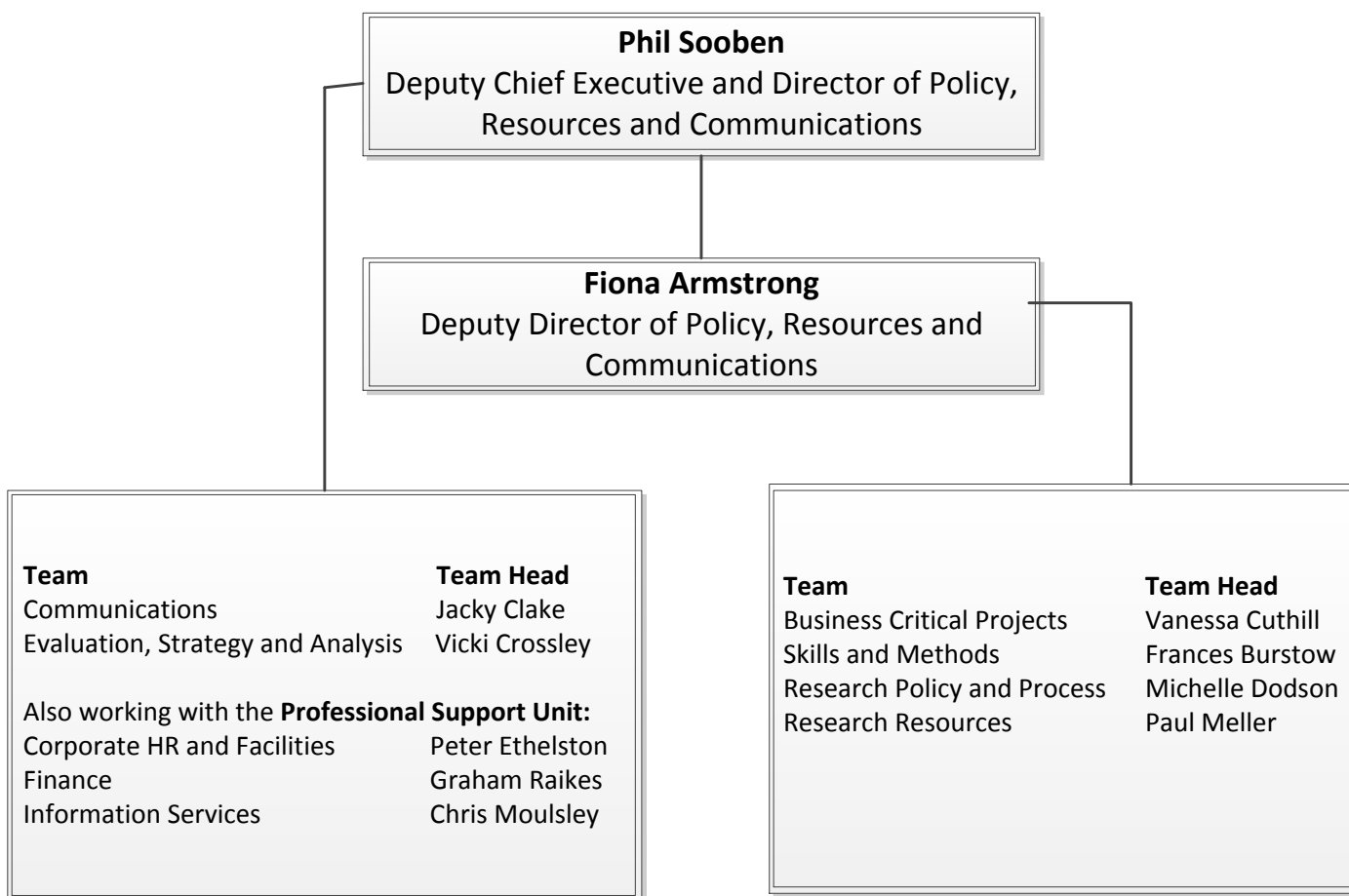
12 teams



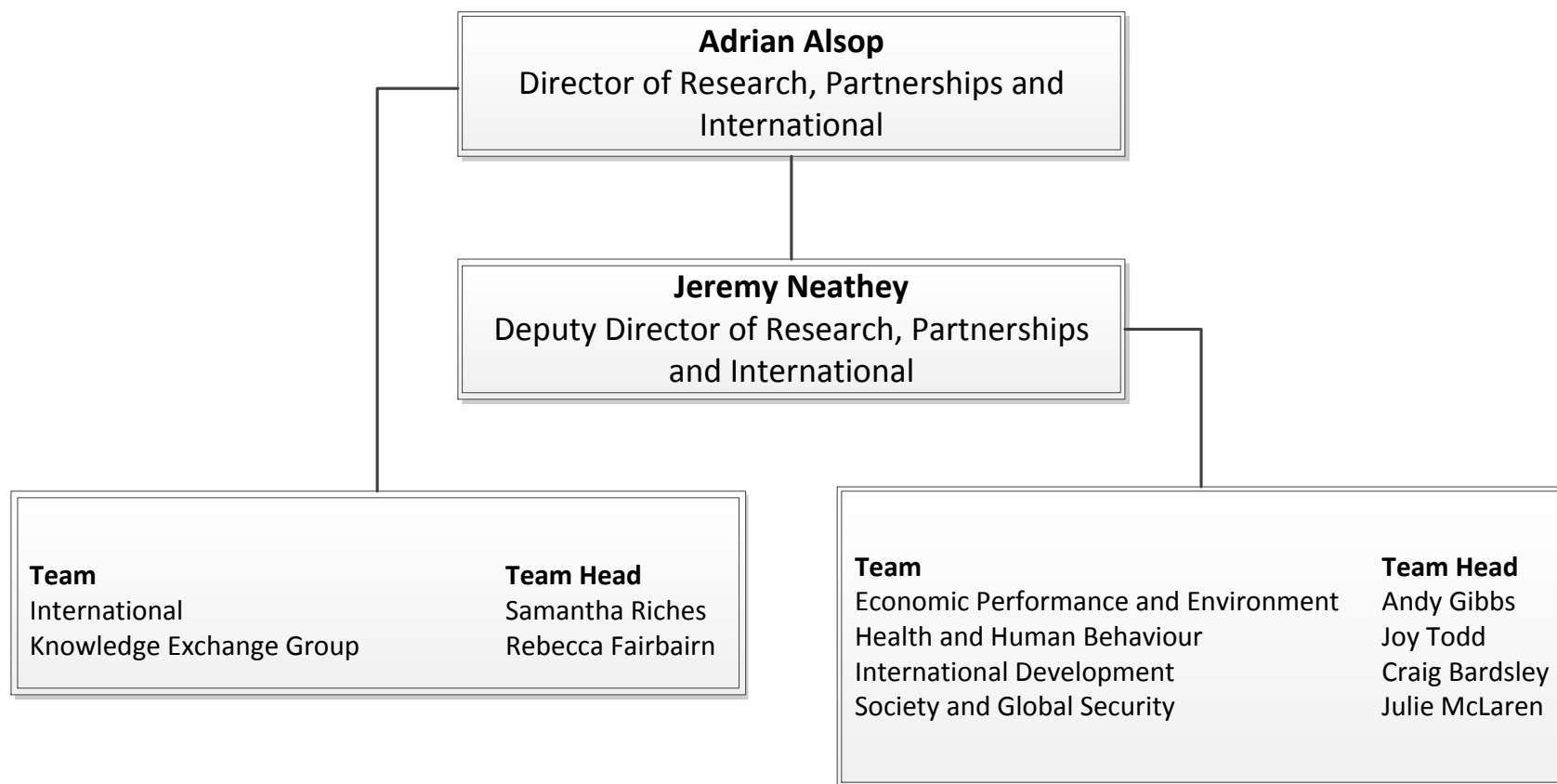
ESRC Directors Group – current structure



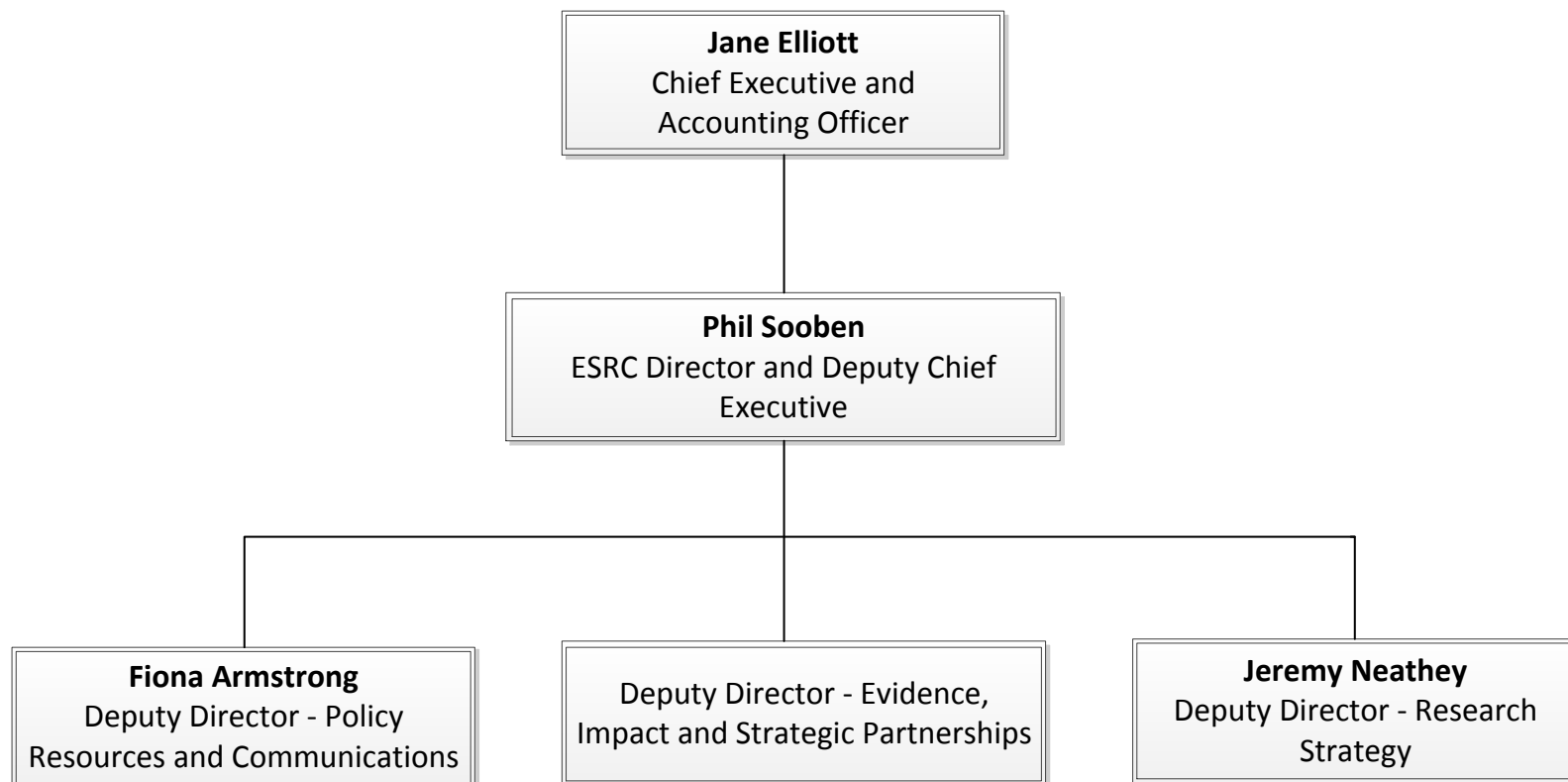
Policy, Resources and Communications Directorate



Research, Partnerships and International Directorate



ESRC Office – new structure from 1.6.15



End of Part 2

- ▶ Question and Answer Session
- ▶ Thank you to our host