

## Executive Committee 2003/2004

### Officers

*Chair:* Jacqui Forsyth, University of Kent

*Deputy Chair, External Relations:*

Phil Clare, Bournemouth University (C)

*Deputy Chair, Membership Services:*

Steff Hazlehurst, Institute of Education,  
University of London (T, C)

*Treasurer:* Rossana Dowsett,

University of Sussex

*Secretary:* Nigel Bilsbrough,

Loughborough University(T)

### Elected members

Rosemary Hatch, University of Plymouth (T)

Matt Heger, London Metropolitan University (T)

Simon Kerridge, University of Sunderland

Pauline Muya, Birkbeck College (T)

Helen Stochaj, London Institute (T, C)

Peter Townsend, Loughborough University

(C) (Chair Elect)

Kerry Wilding, Lancaster University

(resigned 20 January 2004)

### Co-opted members

Claire Gauld, University of Glasgow (C)

Jonathan Hackney, University College

London (C)

### Special advisers

Lee-Ann Coleman, Association of Medical  
Research Charities

Gareth MacDonald, Biotechnology and  
Biological Sciences Research Council

(T) Training sub-committee members

(C) Communications sub-committee  
members

# Financial Report

## Income and Expenditure Account For the year ended 31 March 2004

	2004		2003	
	(£)	£	(£)	£
<b>Income:</b>				
Membership fees:		21,724		13,460
Corporate membership fees		200		758
Events fees		71,852		47,744
Advertising		-		188
Interest received on deposit account		333		410
		<u>94,109</u>		<u>62,560</u>
<b>Expenditure:</b>				
Food and drink (events <sup>1</sup> )		3,075		33,873
Accommodation (incl. residential)		47,432		2,000
Accommodation (day only)		2,460		1,492
Committee travel		1,038		2,188
Committee expenses <sup>2</sup>		4,197		1,404
Representation at SRA		-		614
Bank charges		661		1,766
General consumables (*incl. laptop)		3,464		5,030
Speakers fees & expenses		4,910		11,960
Casual assistance		14,363		470
Accountancy		470		3,301
Printing		2,564		510
Website fees		551		35
Data protection		35		6,194
Research project <sup>3</sup>		5,573		1,160
Miscellaneous expenses		63		
		<u>90,856</u>		<u>71,997</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus for Year		3,253		(9,437)
<b>Presented by:</b>				
Members Funds:				
Bank balance as at 1 April		32,866		42,303
(Deficit)/Surplus for Year		3,253		(9,437)
Bank balance as at 31 March		36,119		32,866

1. Conferences and seminars. See also table below.

2. Including representation at conferences of sister organisations, organisation of events, and training.

3. Final Payment to Bluebell Research

# RAGnet

## Annual Report 2003 - 2004

## Chair's Report

As I write there is considerable change on the horizon for research managers and administrators; the introduction of Full Economic Costing, the implementation of the Department of Health Research Governance Framework and Improving Standards in Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes, and preparation for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, to name but four. Through the year RAGnet has supported its members in preparing for these initiatives, organising relevant training events and promoting discussion amongst members, face to face and by email.

Much of the work of the executive committee this year has been focused on developments arising from the review of the organisation commissioned last year. Whilst many of those changes, such as to categories of membership, and the proposal to change RAGnet's name, will take effect in the year 2004/05, others are already being implemented by two new sub-committees, on training and communications. More information on the work of the training sub-committee, and the training events held this year, is given over page.

In terms of communications this year we bid farewell to RAG Times after seventeen issues. We intend continue the high standards of content, style and relevance to members in the new e-newsletter and Occasional Papers series entitled Issues in Research Management and Administration. Issue one, on full economic costing, will be out soon.

We have revived our quest for charitable status, having received advice on how to respond to our

initial rebuff from the Charities Commission. We are discussing a new application, and hope that we will be able to report good news in the near future.

Our collaborations with our sister organisations overseas continue, and we sent representatives to the SRA International conference in October, and the ACU-SARIMA conference in Cape Town this month, amongst others. We continue to welcome international speakers to the RAGnet Spring Conference.

RAGnet membership passed 500 for the first time this year, with 536 members at the end of March, representing over 170 organisations. Eighty five per cent of these are universities, including some in the Republic of Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands; others include independent research organisations, funding bodies (including five Research Councils and the Wellcome Trust) and organisations in the NHS. Fifty eight per cent of members are in central research offices and 35% in faculties, departments and research centres.

## Events

### Summary accounts for events taking place in 2003/04

	2002/2003	2003/2004		Outstanding (estimated)		Out-turn
	Income/-Expenditure (net)	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Surplus/-Deficit
<b>Income:</b>						
Funding from the United States for UK research		2200	-1,635	150		715
Spring Workshop 2003: The Management and Governance of Research	4,676	38,910	-36,207	395		3,236
Costing, Pricing and Sustainability of Research		6,482	-2,808	250	-687	2,186
Induction Workshop: An Introduction to Research Administration		16,200	-11,955	300	-3184	1,361
IPR for Research Managers and Administrators		4,095	-4,881	300		-486
Supporting Research Grant Applications		2,880	-1,087	540	-1,788	544
<b>Total</b>		70,767	-58,574	1,935	-5,659	13,145

Of those members in faculties, departments, research centres and discipline-specific organisations (including funders), almost 40% are in the social sciences, with 27% in medical, life and health sciences, 16% in engineering, physical and computing sciences and 13% in arts and humanities subjects. There has been a noticeable growth across the science areas compared to the others, up from 36% a year ago to 49% now. As we hoped last year, there are a growing number of members from outside the university sector, particularly in funding bodies and the NHS Trusts, whose experience and perspective enriches the organisation for the benefit of us all.

This year we have welcomed Helen Stochaj, Claire Gauld and Jonathan Hackney to the executive committee. We have also appointed two special advisers, Gareth MacDonald and Lee-Ann Coleman, to ensure the interests of Research Council and medical charities staff respectively are adequately represented in event and training planning. Kerry Wilding resigned from the committee during the year, following her appointment to a new post. Her contribution is greatly missed.

Finally, this has been my last year as Chair. It has been a real privilege for me to chair such a dynamic and active organisation for the last three years. I would like to thank all members for their support of and continued participation in this outstanding network, in particular all the committee members who give so freely of their time, expertise and energy to make RAGnet so successful. I will of course remain a member - it's hard to know how I could do my job properly without it! I wish Peter Townsend, who takes over as Chair in June, good luck in leading the organisation in its next phase of growth. I have every confidence that RAGnet will continue to prosper, grow and meet the needs of its ever broadening and increasing membership.

Jacqui Forsyth  
Chair  
May 2004

## Training Review of the year

As reported above, significant effort in 2003 was committed to making developments based on the review which RAGnet had commissioned. On the training side this was perhaps less radical than in other areas, but we have made a number of changes to further professionalise our events. One of the main changes is to clearly identify different types of activities and have different members of the Executive Committee responsible for the coordination of each one. For example, during the last two years we have been developing a series of Study Tours, initially to EPSRC, but we are talking to the other Research Councils about broadening the scope to include them. This is now recognised as an area of responsibility in its own right, and Matt Heger is leading on it.

We have also decided to separately recognise two types of one-day seminar. The established 'brand' of Expert Seminar is now used to define one day events on topical and generally one-off subjects. Speakers are experts on the topic, often from funding bodies or similar agencies, and talking about a policy area relevant to their roles. They focus on a single subject in more detail and allow members to keep up to date with development in the field and increase their knowledge of a specific subject. Rosemary Hatch is leading on programming Expert Seminars.

We have decided to develop a series of about ten Training Seminars to run over a three yearly cycle. The topics will build on those covered in the induction workshop, and it is likely that most research administrators/managers would be expected to have familiarity in six or more areas. Topics planned are:

- u Research funding: sources and sponsors
- u Research students
- u Getting to grips with research and consultancy contracts
- u Introduction to research ethics
- u Intellectual Property Rights
- u VAT
- u Costing and pricing
- u Getting the most from European Research
- u Disseminating Research Findings
- u Project management

Finally, there is now potential for occasional or ongoing Discussion Groups to hold networking meetings. Two Special Interest Groups, expected to hold such meetings, are currently being developed: Ethics and Research Governance (led by Ross Dowsett), and Practice-based Degrees (led by Rosemary Hatch). Any member wishing to propose other groups is welcome to discuss this with Steff Hazlehurst.

Steff Hazlehurst  
Deputy Chair, Membership Services,  
Chair of the Training sub-committee

## Events held in 2003/2004

Funding from the United States for UK research

*30 April 2003, Thistle Hotel, Bristol*

This popular seminar saw fifty delegates arriving early for the Spring Workshop to learn more about some of the main potential US funding sources and the issues that applicants need to consider when applying to these bodies. Delivered mainly by American speakers, the presentations focused on funding opportunities for non US applicants from the Office of Naval Research (ONR) the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Spring Workshop 2003:

The Management and Governance of Research

*1-2 May 2003, Thistle Hotel, Bristol*

The twelfth annual Spring Workshop was considerably bigger than any previous Workshop, with over 120 delegates. Its theme was highly topical, and the Workshop explored how research can be most effectively managed and supported given increased external governance of research and complexity of projects, new regulations and legislation to improve the management of research students and research staff, and the government's radical proposals for future research policy (at the time). Speakers came from a wide variety of organisations, including the Association of Medical Research Charities, the Office of Science and Technology, HEFCE, Universities Scotland, the UK GRAD Programme and universities in England, Scotland and the USA.

Afternoon workshop sessions ranged from a discussion on Contract research staff and fixed term contracts legislation to 'International worst practice', and included a session on running an ethics committee and one on Managing conflicts of interest.

Reports from the Workshop are available in the events section of the RAGnet website.

Costing, Pricing and Sustainability of Research

*8 September 2003,*

*London College of Fashion*

Timed shortly ahead of the deadline for responses to the OST Consultation on Sustainability of University Research, this

highly topical and very popular (over 80 delegates) seminar featured presentations from Dr John Wand, Office of Science and Technology, Coordinator of the Sustainability of University Research Consultation, John Newton, National Coordinator, Joint Costing and Pricing Steering Group and Dr Ian Carter, Director of Research Development, Glasgow University, who provided a university response to the 'official' viewpoints provided by the previous speakers. The audience was a mixture of research administrators, JCPSG coordinators, and those responsible for costing and pricing, transparency review, and institutional research strategy. Participants were able to discuss the possible implications for their institutions, and ask questions of those who are managing the initiatives.

Induction Workshop:

An Introduction to Research

Administration

*15-16 September 2003, Burleigh Court, Loughborough*

This annual workshop is aimed at people with less than one year's experience in research administration, either from a research centre or from a central position. The programme looks at varying roles and responsibilities of a research administrator, gives information on funding for research and how to apply for funds, looks at negotiation skills and gives an insight into project management and into the financing and administration of research projects. Above all it offers delegates the opportunity to network with other new research administrators. In 2003, 51 people attended the induction course.

IPR for Research Managers and Administrators

*10-11 December 2003, Bournemouth*

This two-day, two-level training seminar was a repeat of one first run for RAGnet in October 2001 by members of Bournemouth University's Centre for Intellectual Property Policy & Management. The first day covered the basics of IP and was aimed at research administrators at all levels looking for basic information on intellectual property law and management, whilst the second day focused

on IP management issues, and was aimed at administrators and managers responsible for making decisions on protecting or exploiting IP, research administrators responsible for reviewing IP issues in research contracts and projects, or those seeking a more detailed knowledge building on the subjects covered in day 1. Reports from the Workshop are available in the events section of the RAGnet website.

Supporting Research Grant Applications

*3 March 2004,*

*London College of Fashion*

One of our newly branded Training Seminars, this session was a one-day event for those wishing to develop their skills in supporting academics in the research proposal process. Building on the RAGnet induction workshop, the sessions focused on preparing a project budget, supporting academics in the writing of proposals, quality assurance processes, other related issues such as risk management and ethics, submitting proposals, and included an overview of the peer review process. It was aimed at recently appointed research administrators, and departmental/faculty administrators involved in the preparation of research proposals.

EPSRC Study Tours

Two Study Tours to EPSRC took place in 2003/04, on 3-4 April 2003 and 15-16 January 2004, each with 10 participants. The tours are intended for small groups and provide an excellent opportunity for interaction between EPSRC staff and University administrators. The programme includes sessions on the EPSRC grants and peer review processes, discussions on policy issues and on interaction with University Interface Managers as well as a mock EPSRC panel.

For further information please contact:

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