



RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

SPRING 2001

NEWS FROM THE RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME OF THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES

IN THIS ISSUE

FINDING THE PERFECT PARTNER

Christine Porter on ways to get your research interests noticed page 2

THE WELLCOME TRUST – FUNDING FOR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

Ian Scott describes Commonwealth research programmes from one of the Worlds largest charities page 4

SETTING UP A RESEARCH OFFICE

Diana McCann on the experience of the University of Natal page 6

EUROPEAN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

Michaela Wright on opportunities from the INCO-DEV programme in 2001 page 8

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT: THE STORY SO FAR

Julie Stackhouse surveys the current position in ACU members universities page 10

PROGRAMME NEWS

New funding opportunities and benchmarking events page 12

WHY RESEARCH MANAGEMENT?



Welcome to *Opportunities* – the first newsletter of a new ACU initiative to assist the research management process in member universities.

Historically, most universities have not ‘managed’ their research activity at all. The design, funding, quality and promotion of research were seen largely as the province of the individual. Over the past two decades, much has changed. Universities have assumed an important role in co-ordinating and governing these functions – and for good reasons. External research income has become more vital than ever. Securing grants has become fiercely competitive. The legal environment has become more complex. Publicising good quality research is vital to attracting staff and students, whilst demonstrating relevance to external society has become important to governments and international agencies.

But the process of centralising this activity has not been even between universities and countries. While some institutions have well staffed and highly professional offices, others have very little infrastructure. Few universities claim to have got the process completely right; this is an area in which most of us are still learning.

The ACU initiative aims to support this process - by sharing international experience, helping institutions forge a stronger relationship with funding bodies and supporting those wishing to develop research management activity from a very small base. We aim not to duplicate the vast amount of good practice already available in the field, but to share and publicise this, for the benefit of all.

I hope that you will find this initial publication useful, and welcome further suggestions or ideas for future activity.

John Kirkland
Director of Human Capacity Development

*Consortium building can be an essential part of writing high quality research proposals. But how can appropriate partners be identified and attracted – particularly where funds for international travel are limited? One answer is the use of databases of academic expertise. In this article **Christine Porter**, of the US based Community of Science, describes some of the channels available to researchers in Commonwealth countries*

Let's say a department at your university has detailed knowledge in an area that Unilever is looking for. Do they know how to find you? When you are starting a new project, do you know how to find out if others in your field are onto the same line of enquiry? Can you find the right research partners for this project? Is your department tapping the funds available for collaborations that cross geographic and discipline boundaries?

Historically, scientists and scholars have depended almost exclusively upon meetings, 'old boys' networks and published papers to find collaborators and publicise their expertise. These methods will always play a key role in global R&D; however time, money, distance and discipline severely curtail their effectiveness in the modern information society.

Today, the Web can eliminate these boundaries. You can find potential collaborators, publicise your expertise, and survey what others are doing in your field, whether they are down the hall from you or oceans away.

In the short history of the Internet, thousands of online expertise databases have sprung up all over the world, ranging from online catalogues of academic staff in a university department, to discipline-based databases, to global expertise networks. This article samples a few of the resources available to you at no cost to give you a taste of where you can look for partners, publicise your knowledge by registering a profile, and survey the current state of your field.

UNDP (United Nations Development Program) supports an international network called WIDE (Web of Information for Development). This system, found at <http://www2.wide.org.br/>, focuses on institutional capacities, expertise, and innovative experiences and is aimed at facilitating technical cooperation among developing countries. With 44,256 experts currently registered, it is one of the larger networks available. Anyone can add a profile, and a few quick searches pulled up as many commercial consultants as academic experts, making it a resource for finding professional advice commercially as well in the university world. The site also includes a list of other expertise resources, which you may wish to explore.

Your name in lights: a sample front entry from the COS database


University of Edinburgh

[expertise home](#) / [about](#) / [instructions](#) / [subscribe](#) / [help desk](#)

Linda Adams FOTHERGILL-SILMORE

University of Edinburgh
School of Medicine
Biomedical Sciences
Reader Appointed: 1995

Susquehanna University
Institute of Science
Chemistry
Visiting Professor Appointed: 1999

University of Concepcion
Biological Sciences
Molecular Biology
Visiting Professor Appointed: 1997

University of Edinburgh
School of Medicine
Biomedical Sciences
Honorary Fellow Appointed: 1995

University of Edinburgh
Biochemistry



Mailing Address

Department of Biomedical Sciences
University of Edinburgh
George Square
Edinburgh EH80JD
United Kingdom

Contact Information

Phone: +441316502720
Fax: +441316503711
E-mail: linda.alford@ed.ac.uk
Personal Home Page: <http://www.lms.ed.ac.uk/staff/lms/index.html>

Qualifications

Ph.D., University of Aberdeen, Biochemistry, 1969
B.S., Michigan State University, Biochemistry, 1965

A good example of a network delimited by discipline and region is the **Researchers Networking Database of Social Sciences and Humanities in South Africa**. Anyone can search this service via <http://www.hsrc.ac.za>. South African researchers in this field can add or update profiles here as well.

Anyone working in Europe, or interested in partnering with European researchers, will be interested in the European Commission-supported **CORDIS partners service**. Rather than profiling people, this database lets you search profiles (primarily of Commission-funded projects) that need additional partners, or add a request for a partner yourself. Anyone can add a record, and e-mail notification of new adds is available. Go to http://www.cordis.lu/src/i_002_en.htm to take advantage of this service.

K, the **Commonwealth Knowledge Network**, links tens of thousands of Commonwealth researchers. You can search for experts across the Commonwealth, and add your information to the network, at <http://acu.cos.com>. This network is a collaborative project of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and Community of Science (COS). All profiles in K are also included in the global COS Expertise network described below.

The largest and most comprehensive international expertise network is **COS Expertise**. COS Expertise profiles over 440,000 scientists and scholars from 1300 institutions in 125 countries. The network focuses on academic experts, who add their *curriculum vitae*-like profiles online. Unlike most networks, these profiles are edited and indexed before publishing to control for quality and make searches more efficient. Hundreds of universities, government agencies and corporations around the world use the network to identify potential collaborators. Go to www.cos.com to add your profile, or to search COS Expertise. Other research services available at no cost once you add a profile to the network include COS Funding News, discussion forums, and automatic CV generation in from your profile.

In an ideal world, everyone at your university could enter a profile just once and have it appear

NEW AWARDS GUIDE PUBLISHED

Staff seeking to increase the research profile of their institutions will be interested in a new funding guide, published by the ACU.

International Awards 2001+ is a unique guide for those seeking to undertake work in a country other than their own. It covers visiting and short-term appointments, conference and travel grants as well as awards for conventional undergraduate and postgraduate study. The book comprises 950 detailed entries, indexed both by geographical location and type of award.

Complementary copies of the book are already being sent to all ACU member institutions. Any further copies can be obtained from the Publication sales department at ACU (e-mail acusales@acu.ac.uk). The guide is priced at £40, or £32 for ACU member universities.

in all of the various networks available. However, the Web is still a pretty wild place, and you will need to determine where you want to focus your efforts to publicise your research.

Entering your profile in a large and well-established international network such as COS Expertise and K is a good start. Then do some Web surfing to find databases relevant to your field and your region. Look for a service that you would use yourself to find potential collaborators. Ease of use, quality and quantity of data, and evidence of dissemination are things to consider before investing the time in entering a profile. If you find it useful, it's likely that others in your field will too. Most importantly, once you find a good expertise resource, let your colleagues know. You determine these value of these networks!

CONTACT DETAILS

Christine Porter
Manager, European
and Commonwealth Office

Community of Science
cporter@cos.com

The Wellcome Trust is now one of the world's largest charitable supporters of academic research. Although based in the United Kingdom, its work has a strong international element. Here Dr Ian Scott, of the Trust, explains the background and current priorities of the Trust.

Background : What is the Wellcome Trust?

Research supported by the Trust accords with Sir Henry Wellcome's (the charity's founder) instruction, in his will, that his Trust should support '*scientific research which may conduce to the improvement of the physical conditions of mankind.*' Although its science expenditure is used mostly to support researchers in UK universities, the Wellcome Trust is free to fund excellent biomedically relevant science anywhere in the world. Currently the Trust spends about 10% of its annual expenditure (expected to be £600 million in the year 1999-2000) on research that is either pursued overseas, or performed by overseas visitors to the United Kingdom. Grants in the laboratory or clinic-based discipline are made almost exclusively to individuals with PhD (or equivalent) research degrees and to clinicians with research experience. Studies in the field of population studies or reproductive health, where many social science investigators tend not to have doctoral degrees, are also supported.

Overseas research

Support for research and research training activity in Commonwealth countries is guided by the Trust's interest in concentrating its overseas science funding on those parts of the world where human health remains under particularly serious threat – countries and regions which may be regarded as 'developing' or 'restructuring.' The Trust also tries to encourage internationally competitive science in regional centres of scientific excellence, which may be in developed (eg. Australia), or less developed countries (e.g. India).

One of the most important Trust schemes supporting science outside the UK is the Overseas Senior Research Fellowship. The OSRF is an internationally competitive award providing personnel, laboratory and equipment support for programmes of up to five years' research. From

its inception in 1985 until the present day, the scheme has operated only in Commonwealth countries (initially in Australia, from 1992 in New Zealand, 1996 in South Africa, and from 1999 in India) – not from any desire to restrict access to former colonial territories, but because of the excellence of scientists in those countries, and strong links to the UK research community.

Collaborative grants can support laboratory-based science in less developed commonwealth countries, through formal scientific and administrative links with institutions in the UK or Ireland, or with institutions in neighbouring countries with more developed science bases (e.g. South Africa in sub-Saharan Africa, and Australia/New Zealand in the Asia-Pacific region). Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have also had access to grants for major equipment – in recognition of the need to provide expensive instruments which cannot by virtue of cost be justified by a single focused study, but would be used by several groups in an institution working on separate pieces of research.

In the specific fields of tropical medicine (chiefly infectious disease), population studies and reproductive health, the Trust provides support



The Wellcome Trust Research Laboratory at the College of Medicine, University of Malawi, Blantyre. The WTRL (possibly the best-equipped biomedical research laboratory in sub-Saharan Africa, outside South Africa) is directed by Professor Malcolm Molyneux of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. The principal areas of research at the WTRL are on basic and clinical aspects of malaria, and viral and bacterial diseases.

for a number of units (usually linked to a UK university) and centres (direct support not involving a UK partner). There are tropical medicine units in Kenya and Malawi, and outside the Commonwealth in Thailand and Vietnam. The Africa Centre for Reproductive Health in Kwa-Zulu Natal is a major direct-funded Trust centre, dealing principally with the challenge of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and sexually-transmitted

disease in sub-Saharan Africa. The creation of units and centres is not possible through the Trust's normal response-mode funding. The Trust's tropical section can, however, provide project grants for direct support of studies in developing countries: fundamental biological research related to tropical medicine, tropical health services research, and projects and programmes addressing noncommunicable diseases through population-based methodologies. Direct funding of reproductive health and demographic/population change research (projects and fellowships) is possible through the Trust's population section, and is not limited to developing countries.



Professor Mphahlele was awarded a 300 MHz multinuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer for his work in the field of bioorganic and natural products research based in the Department of Biochemistry and Chemistry, MEDUNSA, and in collaboration with colleagues in other institutions in the North Gauteng region of South Africa.

UK-based research

The Trust supports postdoctoral visits to the UK from any country (except the USA) for periods of up to two years (Travelling Research Fellowships), for work in any discipline in the basic biomedical sciences. It is also possible to obtain support for brief working visits to the UK for between one week and a month (Travel Awards), and for short-term projects lasting up to six months (ideal for established scientists who are too senior to apply for TRFs). Visiting fellowships and travel grants are often the starting point for a longer-term link with UK scientists – through collaborative grants for home-country research.

Research development awards in tropical medicine enable research in Commonwealth countries in the tropics, with the investigator able to spend several months annually in the UK. UK-based training fellowships are available in the field of noncommunicable disease.

In the field of reproductive health and population studies individuals from any country in the world (except the USA and Canada) can apply for postdoctoral and master's-level research training fellowships.

How to apply to the Trust

Potential grant applicants are advised to visit the Trust's website for greater detail on the various types of grant available. Brief initial enquiries may also be directed to one of the email addresses at the end of this article. Then, to apply for support through a specific scheme, applicants need to submit an outline proposal. This can either be on a specific form (e.g. for the Overseas Senior Research Fellowship), or by sending information including:

- Full curriculum vitae
- Source of current salary
- Brief details on the project being proposed
- Outline of costs
- Letter of support from proposed sponsor (fellowships) or co-applicant (collaborative grant)

My colleagues and I look forward to receiving expressions of interest in research support from scientists and clinicians based in Commonwealth countries.

CONTACT DETAILS

www.wellcome.ac.uk
(Wellcome Trust web address)

international@wellcome.ac.uk
(International Biomedical Programme)

tropical@wellcome.ac.uk
(Tropical Medicine Programme)

population@wellcome.ac.uk
(Population Studies Programme)

*Establishing a new structure to support research activity requires a clear view of the balance between individual and institutional responsibility, the level of support needed and the ways in which this can be best channelled to make a difference to the output of the university as a whole. In this article, **Diana McCann** describes some of the issues considered during this process at the University of Natal.*

What is the purpose of having a dedicated research support function? This is not, as first appears, a redundant question. The answer will determine the way in which the function is set up and whether support is indeed a service to researchers or whether the office is perceived as one more bureaucratic obstacle course. It is a vital and complex task to manage the tension between the individualist ethos that is a distinctive feature of academia and the increasingly corporate ethos of research management at institutional level.

It is a truism that a university's reputation, nationally and internationally, is largely determined by its standing as a research institution. Well managed institution-level administration of research must make a positive difference in outputs such as;

- papers
- publications
- reports
- intellectual property protection and exploitation and inputs;
- peer review processes
- funding assistance
- incentives, particularly for research capacity building
- efficient provision of information about funding opportunities
- access to external funding and contract research sources
- efficient research proposal and contract processing systems

In South Africa in the past decade a world of opportunity has opened up after years of isolation, with formal linkages and access to international research programmes being a distinctive feature of the research terrain.

Nationally, it has been a period of quite dramatic change since the government has identified science and technology as one of the strategic drivers of the economy and the national development initiatives, while also decreasing the government subsidy to the higher education sector. Universities are actively seeking alternative revenue streams and providing attractive conditions for institutions, organisations and businesses to contract R & D to university researchers has become a strategic imperative. Perhaps the most dramatic trend change for university researchers has been the shift away, even on the part of the statutory research funding agencies, from funding of basic research toward applied and strategic research outputs.



A student in the School of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences (Faculty of Science and Agriculture, University of Natal Pietermaritzburg) uses a pipette to isolate plasmid DNA from a recombinant expression vector, whilst fellow students look on.

At the University of Natal, in recognition of these trends, a policy decision was made to set up an integrated research management function that provides both support and advice to researchers, and ensures that University research funding, resource allocation and utilisation is monitored at central, Faculty and School level. Studies were made of the research management systems at a number of overseas universities and a derivative of the UK model was adopted as most appropriate for local conditions. There was a realisation that the University has, in its staff, a rich source of intellectual capital which can be made accessible to a range of client organisations in a manner that is beneficial to individual researchers, the

University and its stakeholders. Research undertaken for external funders and clients is now correctly costed and priced using a simple formula and the University no longer unknowingly subsidises contract research and externally funded research programmes. Criteria and monetary values have been established for allowable subsidisation of research projects and programmes that bring clear benefits, in particular where the individual needs physical assets such as equipment, graduate support funding and strategic partnerships

After a lengthy period of consultation with academics and concurrent design of administrative procedures and systems, the University Research Contracts and Consultancy Office (URCCO), was opened and operates in tandem with the University's Research Office. In large part, the decision to locate URCCO in the research administration division rather than in the finance division was made on the basis that research management at institutional level is about brokering collaborative multi-institutional research partnerships and using university resources to leverage large research grants and contracts. A number of this type of initiative have already been concluded, including university-industry, and university-funding agency-industry research partnerships, at national and international levels.

URCCO interfaces closely with the academic management structures and the legal and financial support divisions. It was recognised from the policy formulation phase that 'buy-in' from the academic community was crucial to the success of managing contract research, and that efficiency in providing support for the often complex negotiations with outside bodies would be of vital importance. Accordingly the office offers a range of expertise in management accounting, contract and intellectual property law, negotiation and brokering services.

The administration of the complex workflow that is an inevitable part of contract research management is being handled effectively by encouraging the use of e-mail to circulate documents, and by way of linked electronic databases that have been customised to provide the type of information processing, storage,

QUALITY OF LIFE AWARDS LAUNCHED

In a new development for 2001, the ACU is launching a new category of 'Quality of Life' award. These grants are intended to support small scale collaboration between member institutions on projects of direct relevance to the quality of life in developing countries. Particular priorities are as follows:

***Health Studies** – particularly mother/child care and HIV/AIDS research;*

***Environmental Management** – with particular reference to the effects of deforestation, desertification and water supply;*

***Distance Education** – as a means of addressing problems of access due to gender, disability or age;*

*Modification of first world **technology** for appropriate use in developing countries;*

*The development of **indigenous knowledge** for the social and economic benefit of developing countries*

Although the focus is on work of relevance to developing countries, the awards are available to all member universities. Grants are up to a maximum of £5,000, with the possibility of renewal. It is expected that 10-15 awards will be made in the first round.

Further details have already been sent to Executive Heads of ACU institutions. The closing date for applications is 31 March 2001.

retrieval and management information reporting that is required by the research management, finance and legal divisions. Document control and document archiving is also handled by the system.

After a year of operation as the contract research support function, the crucial factors for success are evident : sufficient and appropriately skilled administrative staff, good quality information and specialist technical advice for the researchers who 'front' the initial approaches and proposal submissions, and lastly and very importantly, efficient information management systems.

CONTACT DETAILS

Diana McCann
Contracts Officer
University Research Contracts & Consultancy
Office
University of Natal
South Africa

e-mail: contracts@nu.ac.za
Web address: www.nu.ac.za

*In recent years, the EU has become a major source of research funding for European universities. Their current programmes, however, also contain significant provision for partnerships between universities in the EU and developing world. In this article, **Michaela Wright**, of the European Commission, explains the background to one such programme, and what opportunities it will generate in 2001.*

INCO-DEV (which stands for International Cooperation in research for development), is the name of the European Union's current programme to finance joint cooperation between EU scientists and developing country (DC) scientists in the field of research. The programme is managed by the Research Directorate-General of the European Commission and supports research projects focused on development problems.

The origins of INCO-DEV are to be found in the 1979 United Nations conference on S&T for development, which drew the attention of the world's political decision makers to the place of science and technology in development. The developing countries asked that instead of "technology transfer", a real cooperation should be established which would allow them to take part in defining the knowledge and technology necessary for development.

Unlike external S&T assistance which is brought in to solve selective local problems, or bilateral assistance favouring certain developing countries, the European Commission's approach has been to give a new dimension to North-South scientific relations with a programme which:

- favours equitable partnership;
- aims to make a major impact on sustainable improvement in living standards in DCs;
- stimulates researchers from the EU and DCs to work alongside each other;
- is open to all DCs;
- chooses projects for their scientific excellence and their relevance to development matters;
- deals with current problems common to all DCs;
- finances projects proposed by researchers and managed by them in scientific institutions;
- stimulates exchanges of researchers.

As with its predecessor programmes, INCO-DEV has a life span of approximately 4 years. It was launched in 1999 and will come to an end in 2002. Projects which are selected for support under



INCO-DEV may have a duration of up to a maximum of 48 months and thus may run beyond the programme lifetime. The total budget for INCO-DEV is 200 million EUROS (about £125 million GBP).

The objectives of INCO-DEV are: to undertake research to tackle the challenges posed to DCs; to mobilise the strengths, expertise and resources of the European scientific community jointly with DC research teams; and to use research cooperation to support EU development cooperation policy in line with current strategy.

The programme favours inter and multidisciplinary approaches in research

PLEASE NOTE !

Preparing INCO-DEV applications can be time-consuming – particularly in building the consortium of 2 EU and 2 non-EU partners.

To help ensure that time is not wasted on ineligible proposals, Commission officials are willing to pre-screen outline applications. Those wishing to use this facility will find advice on how to submit an outline proposal in the programme information pack, once the call for proposals has been published.

A positive response from pre-screening does not ensure success in final selection. It can, however, prevent time and resources being spent on proposals that have little prospect of being approved.

proposals. It is composed of an integrated scheme consisting of three levels of research: (a) policy research to determine the conditions for sustainable development involving the state, market forces and civil society; (b) systems research on complex issues involving many interacting components such as rehabilitation and management of natural resources or health care; and (c) research on specific scientific and technological problems to generate tools for sustainable development which can be used in a particular context of system management or policy development.



The priorities of INCO-DEV are focused on a regional basis following dialogue with DCs. The expected deliverables of research projects supported by INCO-DEV include:

Identification of policy options for research, for meeting basic needs and for use of renewable natural resources; Improved systems of renewable natural resources use in rural and urban areas and improved health systems; Cost-effective tools for improved health, agricultural and agro-industrial production and water management; Enhanced Europe-developing country and international policy dialogue; Strengthened EU-DC links, especially working partnerships among scientists and increased appreciation of commercial and other opportunities; Strengthened research base in Europe and developing countries, including training and institutional development.

The next Call for Proposals for INCO-DEV will be published in mid-March 2001, and will be available on the programme webpage at that time. The webpage address is: <http://www.cordis.lu/inco2/home.html> The deadline for submitting proposals will be in September 2001

(the precise date will be specified in the Call).

Research priorities foreseen for the 2001 Call publication are expected to encompass the following broad areas (the precise details will only be available when the Call is published):

- 1) **Policy research:** RTD in the global knowledge society; promotion of sustainable settlement patterns through planning, organisation, employment and rural-urban interactions.
- 2) **Systems research:** Managing the human environment and the rural-urban interface: health systems, water management and land use.
- 3) **Tools for sustainable development:** Market-orientated products and services in agro-food: adding value and meeting consumer demand; safe and efficient water management for plant production (low-investment and ecologically-suited environmental technologies for use, decontamination and recycling).

Proposals are submitted directly to the European Commission by individual researchers who are the coordinators for a consortium of research partners (proposals should be region-to-region in scope Research projects require a minimum of 2 different EU partners and 2 different DC partners. Guidelines are available in the information pack which is made available as soon as the Call is published).

CONTACT DETAILS

ACP countries: Mr Alain Darthenucq
(e-mail: alain.darthenucq@cec.eu.int)

Asia: Ms Michaela Wright
(e-mail: michaela-moya.wright@cec.eu.int)

Latin America: Mr Ernesto Perez
(e-mail: ernesto.perez-carbonell@cec.eu.int)

Mediterranean: Ms Nicole Bounaga
(e-mail: nicole.riveill-bounaga@cec.eu.int)

Alternatively you may write to:
INCO-DEV Help Desk
European Commission,
Research DG, Rue de la Loi, 200,
1049 Brussels Belgium

Evidence suggests that the extent to which universities are active in managing and promoting the research capabilities of their staff varies greatly between Commonwealth countries. In this article, Julie Stackhouse, of the ACU's Human Capacity Development Department, examines current practice.

How well established are the central research management functions of Commonwealth universities? To give a preliminary picture of the current position data was analysed from the ACU yearbook for which member institutions provide data each year on contact persons for various areas of responsibility. The two most relevant areas of responsibility that respondents were asked to give a name for were Industrial Liaison and Research. As these functions are often combined we looked at the number of institutions in each country and region giving a contact for either, both or neither. These are presented as numbers and percentages in the table opposite.

The figures show that institutions in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are more likely to not return a contact for either function; nearly 30% in Sub-Saharan Africa as opposed to only 6% in the 'Old Commonwealth' – taken here to be Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Similarly, while only 15% and 25% of institutions in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa returned contact names for both functions over half the institutions in the Old Commonwealth did the same. The Far East, with Malaysia being the biggest component, fared even better with nearly 60% returning a contact for both functions. In general the percentages of institutions in all regions returning a contact for Industrial Liaison were lower than those for Research.

This data, while giving a useful initial picture in advance of our survey, must be treated with considerable caution. Some Universities may have failed to include an appropriate contact. It seems very likely that when asked to provide a contact for specific functions some institutions will give the name of the same individual several times.

Thus the citing of a contact for Industrial liaison or research support does not necessarily imply any specific office for these areas. To look into this matter further we looked at the actual post titles of the members of staff named as contacts as well as the other responsibilities for which they are also given as contacts.

It was immediately apparent that some of the individuals given were designated heads of central research offices with job titles such as "Manager, Research Grants and Ethics Branch", "Manager, Research and Development Office" and "Director of Research and Enterprise". Others were senior individuals with an overarching responsibility including research, such as "Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)", "Vice-President (Research)" and "Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)". In each case, the title was likely to indicate the presence of some structure supporting these activities. Although there was considerable variation in all regions these types of post title were found more often in those regions already highlighted: Old Commonwealth and the Far East.

One of the most noticeable differences in region was the tendency of institutions in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa to have given Registrars and Deputy Registrars or in some case Vice-Chancellors as contacts for both Research and Industrial Liaison. On further analysis it was found that these were the posts most likely to have been given for a large number of responsibilities. In some institutions, for as many as, 10 –20 different functions. In such cases, it was less likely that a strong central structure is in operation.

The picture was similar for contacts given for Industrial Liaison. In the Far East, for example, there were some post titles that strongly suggested a centralised function such as "Director, Centre for Technology Transfer and Consultancy" and "Head, Partnership Development Office, Institute for Enterprise". In South Asia there were also a few similar post titles amongst the more general ones for institutions such as IIT Madras "Dean, Industrial Consultancy and Sponsored Research" and for Anna "Head, Centre for University Industry Collaboration". In Sub-

Saharan Africa however the contacts that were given were much more likely to be work placement officers and personnel officers. Amongst the few suggesting a centralised research function was that of “Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research Production and Extension) at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

This analysis was intended only to provide a starting point for our programme, and the results should be seen in this context. Nevertheless, it would seem to confirm that the centralised research management and industrial liaison functions are stronger in old Commonwealth and Far Eastern countries than other areas. Further research is necessary to ask direct questions about the functions that are actually carried out by which offices and individuals – such as how much time is devoted to a function and what activities this entails – and how the function has developed over time. We hope to make this the subject of a more detailed survey in the coming year, and to publish the results in a future edition.

ROYAL SOCIETY : FUNDS FOR INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION

The Royal Society currently operates a substantial programme of scientific visits to and from the United Kingdom. These comprise;

*Study Visits – of 2 weeks to 6 months duration
Fellowship Grants – which provide an opportunity for young scientists to undertake research in a different country for up to two years*

Joint Project grants – which provide funding over 24 months (or 36, in some cases) for exchange visits to take place as part of research collaboration between a UK and overseas research group.

The awards provide for accommodation and subsistence and – in most cases – air fares. They are intended for work in the natural sciences (including mathematics), engineering, medicine, scientific aspects of psychology, archaeology, geography and the history of science.

Eligibility and application arrangements differ between countries, and not all types of award are available to all. Further details can be found on the Royal Society web page at www.royalsoc.ac.uk.

Commonwealth Universities Nominating a Contact Person for Research or Industrial Liason, by Region

Region	Total Universities	% Industrial	% Research	% with both	% with neither
Caribbean	3	100.00	33.33	33.33	0.00
Europe	2	100.00	50.00	50.00	0.00
Far East	14	57.14	85.71	57.14	14.29
Old Commonwealth	85	56.47	88.24	50.59	5.88
Pacific	4	50.00	75.00	50.00	25.00
South Asia	195	20.51	47.18	14.87	47.18
Sub-Saharan Africa	82	30.49	64.63	24.39	29.27
UK	98	55.10	83.67	48.98	10.41

Programme News

The ACU Research Management Programme aims to help member universities develop their activities - through sharing experience and building closer relationships, both with each other and international funding bodies. In addition to the regular 'Research Opportunities' newsletter, it will contain opportunities for networking, benchmarking and in some cases hands-on assistance for those seeking to develop their own capacity. On this page, we preview some of our early activities.

NATAL HOSTS FIRST BENCHMARKING SESSION

The University of Natal, in Durban, has agreed to host the first benchmarking session under the programme, from 1-3 April. This initial seminar will primarily be aimed at a small number of African universities. It is aimed both as a 'fact finding' event, and as a preliminary for more substantial events in future.

It is hoped that the session will enable participants to compare their own activities and consider strategies appropriate to their local circumstances. The first day of the conference is intended to overlap with a meeting of South African research liaison offices, which should allow first hand insight into recent developments in that country. Findings from the event will also feed directly into planning future work under the Programme.

In view of the experimental nature of this event, attendance will be restricted to a small number of invited universities. A full account will, however, be published in the next edition of *Research Opportunities*.

SRA GOES INTERNATIONAL

The 2001 Annual Conference of SRA International, scheduled for Vancouver from October 13-17, aims to provide a unique opportunity for practitioners world wide to share their experiences. It is being organised under the theme of *Research Administration without Boundaries*.

According to organising Committee member Jim Hanlon, the international label has been added to recognise the growing number of countries represented at Society of Research Administrators events in recent years.

Discussions are currently taking place concerning the possibility of an ACU Programme event running concurrently with the conference. Those interested should contact John Kirkland at the address below.

PUBLICISING HIGHER EDUCATION : NEW SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Many universities are now actively seeking to maximise media coverage of their research activities. To help this process, the ACU is pleased to announce two new scholarships, jointly funded with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Chevening Scheme, for university staff in developing countries.

The awards will meet the full cost of study on the one year Masters course in Public Communications & Public Relations, at the University of Westminster, London. Additional support has been obtained from the University, International Students House and the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association.

The deadline for applications is 31 March. Further details and application forms are available from Teresa Anderson at t.anderson@acu.ac.uk

NEW E-MAIL LINK PLANNED

One aim of the ACU programme is to create a genuine network of practitioners in the research management field. To help this, we will shortly be setting up a new electronic discussion list. The list will be open to all in ACU member universities, funding agencies and other relevant bodies. To add your name, just return the form enclosed, or e-mail: j.stackhouse@acu.ac.uk

The editors welcome feedback from this edition, offers of articles, news items and suggestions for future activities of the programme.

Please contact:

Dr John Kirkland

Director, Human Capacity Development
Association of Commonwealth Universities

John Foster House
36 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PF

Tel: 44 (0) 207 380 6700

Fax: 44 (0) 207 387 2655

email: j.kirkland@acu.ac.uk

The ACU Research Management Programme gratefully acknowledge support from the Education Department of the UK Department for International Development.