

arciss

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER 2007

What ARCISS offers

ARCISS is a membership organisation for research centres in the UK committed to rigorous social science research. About 70 research centres, both independent and within universities, are currently members.

ARCISS supports the work of its members by

- Organising seminars, workshops and conferences.
- Campaigning and representing their interests with government agencies and research funders.
- Developing good practice in the management of research centres.
- Facilitating networking for the exchange of information, experience and advice through the ARCISS mailbase and its Directory of member organisations.

ARCISS also hosts regular dinners at the House of Lords with a guest speaker

Forthcoming Seminars

Identifying issues: Sharing solutions

A workshop for managers and senior administrators of research centres

Thursday, 13th December, 3.30-6.00pm (followed by light refreshments)

Venue: NIESR, London, SW1

This workshop is intended to provide an opportunity for managers and senior administrators of research centres to discuss common issues and problems and share ideas about how to address them. The focus will be on finding practical solutions to common problems in a confidential and mutually supportive environment. In the first instance participants will be asked to identify the issues that are most pressing for them and then the group will be invited to work on 2-3 of these.

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Introducing ARCISS Office holders:



Chair:
Nigel Meager
Institute for Employment Studies
University of Sussex



Honorary Treasurer:
Jennifer Wilby
Centre for Systems Studies
University of Hull



Honorary Secretary:
Deborah Cox
Manchester Institute of Innovation Research
University of Manchester

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This workshop is a pilot; if there is sufficient interest then further sessions will be arranged.

The workshop will be facilitated by Janie Percy-Smith. Janie is an independent researcher, consultant and trainer, Visiting Professor at Leeds Metropolitan University and the Training Development Director for the Social Research Association. She has over 20 years experience as a social researcher and was formerly a member of the management team at the Policy Research Institute, Leeds Metropolitan University.

Recent events

Report on the ARCISS event on Evaluation

Mark Elliot

On the 27th September, ARCISS returned to the British Academy for a workshop on "evaluation". At first glance this might not have seemed most exciting of topics but the day was useful and stimulating. In the morning we were treated to two interesting talks. The first by Ian Diamond gave a research council view of the topic. Ian talked about the change in the reporting processes for research projects and a streamlining of research centre evaluation. He also spent time on the important question of what is to replace the RAE and considered the advantages and disadvantages of several bibliometric approaches. He left us with two key questions "how do we evaluate non-academic outputs?" and "how do we encourage innovation?" These were picked up in the afternoon discussions.

The second talk was from Martin Punaks of the charities evaluation service, who brought some useful insights from the third sector. Martin concentrated on the concept of quality assurance and in particular talked about the quality assurance system PQASSO which is used widely by small charities.

The afternoon was based around breakout group sessions in which 6 key topics were considered:

- Metrics
- Defining Research Quality
- Evaluation of Research Centre Performance
- How to measure outcomes/impacts (as opposed to outputs)
- How to assess non-academic outputs
- How to guide/encourage innovation in research

After vigorous discussion, the groups reported back and notes were taken for writing up with a view to possibly producing a report for wider circulation.

For further information about joining ARCISS or to register for events please contact:

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More details about ARCISS, its members, activities and events can be found on the website: www.arciss.ac.uk

COMING UP in 2008

ARCISS will be holding a seminar focussing on 'Motivating and Developing Research Centre Staff' at Leeds Metropolitan University in February 2008.

This will coincide with the ARCISS AGM and further details will be circulated shortly.