IHA Humanities Interim Strategy Report

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

Across Europe today, higher education and research are major strategic focuses, as policy is increasingly shaped by economic as well as social and cultural imperatives, and as participation in Horizon 2020 is a key factor in the development of new research directions.

In Ireland and in Northern Ireland, a pressing need exists to address the central place of the humanities in these developments. The humanities in both jurisdictions enjoy an excellent international reputation. To preserve and enhance this position, the Irish Humanities Alliance (IHA) has engaged widely with the humanities community in member institutions on strategic issues that face our disciplines in both jurisdictions in order to ensure that humanities perspectives are represented in research and higher education policy-making discussions.

IHA Background

The IHA was formed in September 2013. It is a joint initiative of humanities scholars and researchers within eleven higher education and research institutions, including all of the universities, North and South, Dublin Institute of Technology and the Royal Irish Academy. Through our activities we seek to be inclusive of all individual researchers and academics in the humanities research community.

The Alliance is working to generate public awareness of the importance of humanities teaching and research in higher education and society at large. It is concerned also to inform and shape public policy in both jurisdictions and in the EU. The Alliance is committed to working with all public bodies and other stakeholders in support of higher education and research.

Three examples of policy work conducted in 2015 by the IHA are the consultations on Horizon 2020, the Consultation for Successor to SSTI and Impact.

> Horizon 2020 (EU): The Alliance has been consulted by Irish National Experts, Delegates and Contact Points in the development of work programmes for Horizon 2020. Most recently, the Alliance has undertaken a major consultation exercise at the request of the Irish Research Council, so as to advise national representatives on the relevant programme committees on key research themes for inclusion in the 2016 and 2017 calls in the Tackling Societal Challenges pillar. The IHA has continued to engage with national representatives through focus groups and other relevant channels.
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> Successor to the Strategy for Science, Technology & Innovation/Innovation 2020 (National): To see the consultation paper prepared by the IHA's Strategy Steering Group on the Consultation for Successor to SSTI please click here.
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> Impact and the Humanities: Impact has become a major focus in funding and the evaluation of research, and is a key performance indicator for researchers, policymakers and institutions. To see the policy recommendations from the IHA's 'Impact in the Humanities' workshop please click here.

1.2 THE STRATEGY STEERING GROUP

The IHA Strategy Steering Group is carrying out a consultation with the humanities community to identify strategic issues that face the humanities disciplines in both IHA jurisdictions. The overall aim of the initiative is to create a strategy for members of the humanities community to pursue collectively with stakeholders. The final outputs from this consultation will be: the all-island consultative forum in December 2015; a scientific strategy and policy paper which details the issues that emerge from the consultation and the forum; and an additional translational paper for communication and advocacy purposes. Communicating humanities perspectives to a variety of different target audiences is a central element of the remit of the Strategy Steering Group, and future outputs will reflect this.

This document reflects the initial consultation phase and submissions received by the Strategy Group.

The IHA Board requested the Strategy Group to bear in mind a number of guiding principles:
- To place at the forefront of this exercise the intrinsic and distinctive importance of the humanities;
- To take a modular approach (e.g. with focuses on social and cultural, economic, higher education, advocacy perspectives etc.), with modules decided by the Strategy Group in the light of the consultation exercise;
- To remain both progressive and realistic about the external context in tone and content, and include the arguments relating to economic value as well as social and cultural value; and
- To produce final papers that are public facing, with a view to informing public debate and policy development to 2020.

This project is coordinated by the Humanities Strategy Working Group of the IHA, whose members are: Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT); Dr Victor Lazzarini (MU); Professor Imelda Maher (RIA); Professor Patrick O'Donovan (Convener, UCC); and Dr Aoibhín de Búrca (IHA).

For more information please see the IHA Strategy webpage: click here.

SECTION TWO: INITIAL CONSULTATION SUBMISSIONS

The initial consultation was open to all individual researchers, institutions, disciplinary groups and networks and learned societies via the website of the IHA, in June and July 2015. The website consultation was complemented by a member-led consultation in IHA member institutions: meetings were convened by IHA members in their own institutions at which they gathered the views of humanities researchers. The responses were then compiled and reviewed by the Strategy Group. The responses will form the basis of discussion at the December 2015 consultation forum and are laid out in this Interim Report. We wish to thank all of those who engaged and submitted submissions, without which this would not be possible.

2.1 KEY POINTS AND FINDINGS

1. Strategy and policy planning

1.1 There is very strong demand for a humanities strategy and long term strategic planning for the humanities.

1.2 The current funding context dominates the discussion, but there needs to be longer term budgetary planning to ensure survival of the necessary range of disciplines, the sustainability of teaching and research in the humanities, and to protect quality.

1.3 The IHA wants to make the humanities a national domain of research with equivalent funding to EU counterparts and ensure policymakers understand the current contribution of humanities to the international standing of Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

1.4 The humanities community need to collectively advocate, lobby and strongly promote the value of the humanities.

1.5 There is a need to consult with the humanities community more broadly and fully, and at an earlier stage of scheme design, regarding research funding schemes in Ireland.

1.6 Embedding of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) is currently not working at the European level, but Ireland can gain strategic advantage if it gets this right at national level.

1.7 The 'Societal Challenges' based approach to research funding has merit, but there are many issues to resolve in order to ensure it operates adequately for the full range of disciplines which it is designed to address.

1.8 Forthcoming Open Access and Open Data policies are not humanities-proofed and the humanities need to develop policies regarding these areas.

2. Education, careers and training

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2.3 Rigorous career progression planning is desperately needed right across the sector, especially for Early Career Researchers.

2.4 Quality Doctoral Education cannot be sustained on the current funding levels.

2.5 Doctoral Education design needs to consider more fully the issues of employability and skills training, in line with the National Framework for Doctoral Education.

3. Infrastructure

3.1 A new Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions (PRTLI) is required.

3.2 Core research infrastructure is needed, including access to resources such as IReL and equivalent international resources for humanities in a digital context, as well as libraries and archives.

3.3 The success of Irish researchers in European Research Council (ERC) programmes is a testament to the quality of excellent basic research and the current national support system should be built upon.

3.4 Intensive engagement is required on the issue of interdisciplinarity between STEM and AHSS, and humanities academics must be central to the initial conceptualisation and design, as well as the monitoring systems and infrastructure for delivery.

2.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND POLICY PRIORITIES

Strategy and policy planning

There is very strong demand for a humanities strategy and long term strategic planning for the humanities. Humanities are the traditional and consistent strength in the Irish HEI sector, and contribute immeasurably to Ireland's distinctive cultural heritage and international reputation. The humanities are significantly responsible for the high standing of our universities in international league tables, contribute large numbers of the highly literate and creative graduates on which our international reputation as a knowledge economy is staked, but there is currently no clear strategy for devising mechanisms which deliver medium and long-term excellence in the teaching, research, training, innovation, and impact of the humanities.

The current funding context dominates the discussion, but there needs to be longer term budgetary planning to ensure survival of the necessary range of disciplines, the sustainability of teaching and research in the humanities, and to protect quality. Higher Education, North and South, is still facing very challenging funding issues. Although Ireland is now moving from recession to a post-crisis phase, Northern Ireland is in the midst of very severe cutbacks which will have long-term consequences. The impact of rising student numbers, reduced budgets and increasingly adverse staff/student ratios affect both jurisdictions. The continuity and predictability of funding is one of the largest challenges in the development of sustainable activity in the humanities. If there were continuity and predictability, such as multi-annual project funding, then it would allow for project planning that would support the establishment of a talent pipeline and the development of the full potential of the humanities.

The IHA wants to make the humanities a national domain of research with equivalent funding to EU counterparts and ensure policymakers understand the current contribution of humanities to the international standing of Irish HEIs. It is an aim of the IHA to lobby for a commitment to maintain funding in the humanities at the level of comparable EU states, with a formal commitment to establish the humanities as a national domain of research activity. In addition there is a need for a statement of policy regarding the humanities sector in terms of investment needs and availability of national funding opportunities to support career trajectory (Doctoral, Post-Doctoral, Research Fellow, Senior Research Fellow, etc.).

The humanities community need to collectively advocate, lobby and strongly promote the value of the humanities. The very broad range of current public engagement activities needs to be communicated much more effectively. The humanities have a very specific role to play in offering a greater understanding of differing perspectives on Irish culture and identity. Cultural heritage and the humanities have made an enormous contribution to Irish prosperity through education, language and communicative competence, all of which are outcomes of a highly literate and humanities-oriented educational system. The humanities also build social cohesion, underpinning the growth of a healthy society, rather than just an economy. The economic value of arts, creative activity, humanities and cultural heritage is also highly significant and international in its reach. Ireland is remarkable as a small island whose humanities, especially literature and music, have had a profound global impact.

There is a need to consult with the humanities community more broadly and fully, and at an earlier stage of scheme design, regarding research funding schemes in Ireland. There needs to be substantial investment in recurrent schemes, and recurrent funding. In addition there needs to be more advance notice of upcoming schemes, longer run-ins to application deadlines, and longer terms of funding.

Embedding of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) is currently not working at the European level, but Ireland can gain strategic advantage if it gets this right at national level. There has been a lack of delivery, and of structures to deliver, SSH embedding in the latest Horizon 2020 Work Programmes, 2016/2017, under the Societal Challenges and Industrial Leadership pillars. This follows the trend of the previous Work Programmes, 2014-2015. The centrality of SSH in the European research space must be reinvigorated, with recognition that they are a full partner in the process, and not simply regarded as an 'add-on', as is the case with the current programmes. Now more than ever the European Union requires the study of human culture, but recent developments related to Horizon 2020 funding programmes indicate that this is not happening.

The 'Societal Challenges' based approach to research funding has merit, but there are many issues to resolve in order to ensure it operates adequately for the full range of disciplines which it is designed to address. Despite the limited purchase for the humanities in the current Societal Challenge work programmes, the humanities community has nonetheless engaged energetically with the concept of interdisciplinarity. Many of the key social challenges of our era derive from very long term patterns (climate change, 'boom and bust' economic cycles, political conflict, social inequality and exclusion etc.) which can only be addressed by understanding social and cultural change, which the humanities are concerned with. But there is concern regarding the adoption of societal challenges-based approach to future national prioritisation exercises partly due to how this has unfolded in Horizon 2020 and also due to observation of current national funding programmes. However, submissions said it may be acceptable to pursue a societal challenges approach on the basis of transparent, regular and extensive engagement with the research community via recognized national representative forums.

Forthcoming Open Access and Open Data policies are not humanities-proofed and the humanities need to develop policies regarding these areas. There is broad and strong commitment in principal to open access publishing and data in the humanities, for both methodological and ethical reasons. While it is important to ensure the maximum possible dissemination of research findings, the implementation of a full open access model could have a detrimental financial effect on humanities publishers and journals, as well as researchers. Therefore it may be more appropriate to adopt the 'green open access model'. It is also important that project funding facilitates the development of datasets to complement major publications and that there be dedicated staff to support the design, implementation and maintenance of dedicated open data.

Education, careers and training

Humanities teaching in Ireland and Northern Ireland remains vibrant, rigorous, innovative and research-led, but the staff/student ratio is now a critical issue in many settings. Our humanities teaching is well regarded internationally but it is extremely difficult to continue to achieve and

sustain the quality of teaching with staff/student ratios that are vastly inferior to universities in the UK or US of comparable standing. It is recommended that the staff/student ratios be brought into line with those in competitor EU states. In addition, the submissions made a series of recommendations to sustain and improve humanities teaching, outlined below in the section on teaching. The message needs to be communicated to the public that investment is needed to maintain the standing of humanities degrees and the quality of future training.

Research plays a central role in humanities teaching and learning and this must be sustained. Research should be embedded in all years across the curriculum, and generating new knowledge for existing interpretations should be part of all curricula. Research can inform and sustain teaching by redefining the questions which we ask about the world and people, about their cultures and ideas, languages, belief systems and social practices, given that teaching and learning are centred on the organized exploration of these questions. Research also provides new primary materials on which we draw on in teaching and learning.

Rigorous career progression planning is desperately needed right across the sector, especially for Early Career Researchers. Progression planning is required nationally to ensure that there is a framework for early career researchers to develop their abilities in all aspects of academic life (teaching, research, administration) and to gain the skills required to progress. Progression planning also needs to involve the entire spectrum of early career stage academics that may be in a HEI, e.g. Lecturer, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Research Assistant, Contract Lecturer, etc., and provide each academic the opportunity to learn aspects of the other roles. Dedicated supports should be made available at national and HEI level.

Quality Doctoral Education cannot be sustained on the current funding levels. Higher levels of funding for doctoral students should be a priority. Financial resources are necessary to enable students to enter doctoral programmes; to support them through a period of study which may be extended by the necessity of acquiring one or more further languages (a particularly frequent situation in the humanities); to enable them to attend conferences or travel for other reasons (e.g. library visits to examine manuscripts); and to afford them opportunities for post-doctoral research as they seek teaching positions. The other main priority in terms of doctoral education is building critical mass through institutional arrangements for structured PhD education; inter-institutional collaborations; regional cluster building and access to national research infrastructure.

Doctoral Education design needs to consider more fully the issues of employability and skills training, in line with the National Framework for Doctoral Education. Given the current employment opportunities situation it may also be timely to consider the development of programme supports and specific Continuing Professional Development (CPD) initiatives to assist PhD candidates in mapping out a broader range of career trajectories outside of the academic sector. In particular students need to be prepared for employment in the non-academic setting through the integration of employment-based programmes at HEI level (this requires institutional or national plans). Doctoral education also needs to incorporate modules that will prepare postgraduates for careers outside of academia.

Infrastructure

A new Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions (PRTLI) is required. The value of large-scale investment through PRTLI must be recognised, the dividends of which are now becoming even more apparent. Therefore there is a pressing need for a new initiative, on the same scale of ambition, for larger and inter-disciplinary projects. PRTLI has proven to be a very successful model for the development of doctoral education in particular. Even modest investment could secure the sustainability of existing platforms.

Core research infrastructure is needed, including access to resources such as IReL and equivalent international resources for humanities in a digital context, as well as libraries and archives. An infrastructure is only as good as its content and cannot flourish unless sustained by funding of library holdings, archives, and space. Unique national collections have had their funding decimated, with serious consequences for research access and our international reputation. Although the recent funding announcement regarding the National Library of Ireland is very welcome, a properly funded policy initiative encompassing research libraries, digital infrastructures and teaching resources is urgently needed. Existing infrastructure needs to be placed on a sustainable footing, and new investment is needed to support extension of digital humanities to maximise opportunities for international collaboration.

The success of Irish researchers in European Research Council (ERC) programmes is a testament to the quality of excellent basic research and the current national support system should be built upon and expanded. Higher levels of early career research and mid-career funding are needed to remedy the opportunity gap experienced since 2008 and developmental fellowships to allow principal investigators to apply for very competitive Horizon 2020 schemes, e.g. to the ERC. It is recommended that a support scheme be established in the humanities, which matches the SFI ERC Support Programme with dedicated funding for individual principal investigators (a national mini-ERC).

Intensive engagement is required on the issue of interdisciplinarity between STEM and AHSS, and humanities academics must be central to the initial conceptualisation and design, as well as the monitoring systems and infrastructure for delivery. An interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach should be encouraged to emphasise that it is in these boundary areas that some of the most interesting research is underway. However, basic research within specific disciplines should not be disadvantaged as it is within, and from, a strong discipline base that other types of research can be grounded. Current research and innovation policy is far too instrumentalised and focused on marketisation within inadequate models for effective and sustainable research and innovation.

2.3 SUBMISSIONS BY MODULE

Introduction and context of the strategy

Humanities are the traditional and consistent strength of the Irish HEI sector, and contribute immeasurably to Ireland's distinctive cultural heritage and international reputation. The humanities are significantly responsible for the high standing of Irish universities in international league tables, contribute large numbers of the highly literate and creative graduates, on which Ireland's international reputation as a knowledge economy is staked, and feed directly into cultural heritage and cultural tourism.

However, when it comes to funding excellence in the humanities, this fact is often overlooked or taken for granted. There is no clear strategy at government and research-funding level for devising mechanisms which deliver medium and long-term excellence in the teaching, research, training, innovation, and impact of the humanities. This is increasingly visible in poor infrastructure, disadvantageous staff/student ratios, and the lack of sustained, recurrent funding mechanisms for humanities research.

The humanities are confronted with the major strategic issues of long-term consolidation after a period of financial crisis, and the adaptation of funding structures to new patterns of activity (e.g. blended and online delivery, deployment of new technologies) and must respond to these challenges.

In line with other areas in higher education and research, current challenges for humanities scholars include:
- Responding to the diversification of funding streams.
- Increasing dependence on private funding.
- Maintaining sustainability, especially in the context of increasing specialisation and the resulting challenge of achieving critical mass across the range of established and emergent disciplines.
- Developing long-term responses to internationalisation (e.g. in the context of declining share of world population in Europe).
- Changing literacies and expectations among students.
- Individualisation of learning pathways.
- Changing patterns in the delivery of teaching and learning.
- The 'impact agenda' and achieving more effective and better informed public policy.
- Effective cost recovery.

Another major challenge is the lack of research priority given to the humanities in public policy initiatives. This indicates a lack of understanding and communication of both the intrinsic value of the humanities' contribution to culture and citizenship, and to its instrumental value in the creative economy. In the current climate communicating these complementary values has become urgent. No less important is the challenge of making the full value of the humanities tangible across the spectrum of institutional and civil society stakeholders. This challenge could be met by developing

strong stakeholder relationships with the institutions that make decisions which influence our work (e.g. university management, government departments etc.).

The specific challenges being faced by Modern Languages were repeatedly articulated by the submissions and in the consultation workshops. Indeed such was the concern that the IHA and One Voice For Languages brought together Modern Languages academics in September 2015 to identify common positions for the Department of Education and Skills' National Foreign Languages Strategy. (The report of the workshop, which was submitted to the Department, is available online: click here.) The need for such a national languages strategy was reinforced, and given urgency, following the recent recommendations by the Task Group on Reform of University Selection and Entry regarding the place of languages in university matriculation. In Northern Ireland, the recent decision in Ulster University to discontinue provision in modern languages amply testifies to the strategic stakes at issue.

(Discipline specific-issues were also raised by Art History, Celtic Studies and Archaeology disciplines.)

In order to address many of the concerns and the lack of joined-up thinking there was strong support for developing a humanities strategy. Such a strategy can be an effective means of:
- Communicating the full contribution of disciplines in the humanities to knowledge and to the development of more informed, reflective and resilient societies;
- Integrating ideas which emerge from diverse points of view within the humanities, thus identifying shared opportunities and challenges;
- Participating in the complex debate in which the personal, social, cultural, scientific and economic roles of higher education and research are defined and redefined;
- Bringing an external point of view to bear on a national higher education system and of integrating work done in the humanities in Ireland and Northern Ireland into developments in Europe and beyond;
- Securing collaboration among humanities disciplines in responding to the range of challenges we face; and
- Facilitating a better system-wide convergence and enabling clear cluster-building across certain disciplines, mitigating the lack of critical mass in some areas.

Responses recommended that the strategy should support the development of infrastructure to enable collaboration between humanities researchers, cultural institutions and creative industries: there is a strong need for national initiatives in Ireland to develop innovation hubs which bring together humanities and arts/cultural practices, on a similar model to the one developed in the UK by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). This would directly feed humanities research into cultural institutions and fuel cultural engagement as well as cultural tourism initiatives.

A strategy should also contain specific supports for the humanities at a national level to sustain research excellence, especially a national platform for growing ERC projects in the humanities to the same scale as Horizon 2020 supported by Irish Research Council (IRC) initiatives. There is a practical case to be made that humanities in Ireland are extremely well placed to lead initiatives in research excellence. More should be done at national level to help build stronger relationships between the

humanities and cultural institutions (recognising that cultural institutions are at present subject to the same acute budgetary constraints as HEIs).

A. **Doctoral Education** (See also Research Infrastructures)

There are significant challenges to sustaining Ireland as a suitable location for excellence in doctoral education in the humanities, including the chronic underfunding of HEI and national libraries, archives significantly below the level required for research of international standard, the low number of postgraduate scholarships available, and the pressures on staffing research supervision given very adverse staff/student ratios for current university staff.

Higher levels of funding for doctoral students should be a priority. These funding streams should be designed so as to promote innovation in the design and delivery of doctoral education among providers. Higher levels of core funding are also important, so as to ensure the sustainability of the learning and research environments in which doctoral work is carried out. Financial resources are necessary to enable students to enter doctoral programmes; to support them through a period of study which may be extended, e.g. by the necessity of acquiring one or more further languages (a particularly frequent situation in the humanities); to enable them to attend conferences or travel for other reasons (e.g. library visits to examine manuscripts); and to afford them opportunities for post-doctoral research as they seek teaching positions.

The other main priority in terms of doctoral education is building critical mass through institutional arrangements for structured PhD education; inter-institutional collaborations; regional cluster building and access to national research infrastructure. Therefore a renewed emphasis on national doctoral platforms, building on the national framework for doctoral education, allied to a strategy for building and enhancing research infrastructure, should be a priority.

The Digital Repository of Ireland is now a key national resource to which many individual institutions have contributed. It can only flourish through a shared approach to resourcing and ensuring population of content. Development of training and expertise in the impacts of the digital technologies on humanities would also be very helpful.

Widening of access to appropriate research material has also been identified as a critical factor in improving doctoral education. Increasing online access to digitised content is an important mitigating factor. However, it must be noted that many humanities researchers still require access to the 'traditional' library and archival resources, such as books, journals and collections, which for various copyright reasons may not be available digitally. This could be offset by a sustained effort to enhance the availability of such material, principally by improving the co-ordination of research resources (including the purchasing of library resources) both within and between HEIs. This could be done in concert with the continuing improvement of access to digital resources, and could help to address the current imbalance in resource availability between Dublin/Belfast and the other institutions nationwide.

In the context of structured doctoral programmes, it would be desirable to define the kinds of competences, whether complementary to their main disciplines or defined by advanced research-led

developments, which doctoral students should acquire in order to equip them to achieve success in the expanding range of professional contexts for which they are destined (as facilitated by a greater appreciation of the value of doctoral students engaging with the community and with employers during their training/education).

In a European and national policy framework increasingly dedicated to the development of individual talent, doctoral programmes should provide as wide as practicable a range of outlets (e.g. discipline-specific, interdisciplinary, creative) in which research is the means to explore and extend individual competence. The expansion of doctoral funding programmes which support liaison with employers/the workplace (e.g. the IRC Employment based Programme and Enterprise Partnership Programme) would be welcome. In particular, a strategy would be useful as a platform on which to develop responses spanning the range of humanities disciplines to the curricular, stakeholder and funding challenges that new forms of doctoral education (e.g. performance-based, practitioner) will present.

There is a concern about the ethics of recruiting students to PhD programmes, given the unlikelihood of securing a position in academia and the low funding levels available during the PhD. Students need to be equipped for the transferability of their discipline to cognate and international areas, particularly as there are so few opportunities available to them in Ireland and Northern Ireland. In particular students need to be prepared for employment in the non-academic setting through the integration of employment-based programmes at HEI level (this requires institutional or national plans). Doctoral education also needs to incorporate modules that will prepare postgraduates for careers outside of academia, such as modules on project management.

Given the current situation it may also be timely to consider the development of programme supports and specific CPD initiatives to assist PhD candidates in mapping out a broader range of career trajectories outside of the academic sector. This could include the widening of career paths for PhD graduates in the public sector. The IHA, for example, could play a very strong role in directly informing the Public Appointments Service regarding the skill-sets of well-qualified candidates at doctoral level.

Other suggestions regarding doctoral education include:
- Doctoral programmes which focus on professional careers related to cultural and state organisations. These require the creation of stronger links between Masters programmes and structured doctoral provision;
- Providing students with the opportunity of doing 10/20/30 credit innovative professional certificates/diplomas while following the PhD programme, or as part of it, would help to prepare doctoral students for a wider range of employment, with a broader skill-set than they have acquired during their studies, instead of having to develop this post PhD. As part of this, workshops with external funding bodies would be hugely beneficial to show students how to apply PhD research to current employment opportunities, and would help create a clearer focus for PhD students when choosing career pathways;
- An incentivisation scheme for doctoral graduates to develop careers in primary and secondary school teaching, including a doctoral qualification grade or increment in teaching salary scheme; and

- An innovation scheme which enables doctoral students and graduates to partner with cultural institutions to develop career paths in cultural services and cultural tourism (the current Enterprise Ireland scheme is not fit for this purpose for humanities graduates as it requires partner institutions to pay one third of the salary cost, and is prohibitively expensive for cultural institutions).

B. Early Career Researchers

It is very clear that there are difficulties for early career stage researchers in achieving effective insertion into the labour market, whether in academic or other professional environments. This was the primary cause of concern voiced regarding employment and the future of the humanities. It was suggested that further development of the structured PhD model is a means to remedy this obstacle, as well as improved core and research funding. It should also be noted that at present the requirement that an applicant hold a post in a HEI is not necessarily well advised, given the very low levels of recruitment since 2008 in the light of the Employment Control Framework and other issues. There is a medium-term risk that the talent pool is being unduly restricted and deprived of opportunities for individual development, with obvious and worrying consequences.

There are opportunities in European funding schemes, however, where there are successful dedicated strategies which support early career researchers in establishing themselves as independent investigators. But the success rates are very low and there is no mechanism in place in Ireland for the re-insertion of researchers with this valuable international experience back into the Irish higher education landscape.

Progression planning is required nationally to create a framework for early career researchers to develop their abilities in all aspects of academic life (teaching, research, administration) and gain the skills required to progress. Progression planning also needs to involve the entire spectrum of early career stage academics that may be in a HEI, e.g. Lecturer, Post-doctoral Fellow, Research Assistant, Contract Lecturer, etc., and provide each academic the opportunity to learn aspects of the other roles.

The identification of funding in support of the development of a research identity and transition to an independent research career is a major issue facing early career stage researchers in all disciplines. While research programmes that support early career stage researchers have been developed by some agencies funding STEM research, this has yet to be the case for the humanities. To ensure a sustainable pipeline of talent from undergraduate to senior research level is nurtured, consideration must be given to the support of early career stage academics, including the dedication of funding at this level.

Dedicated supports should be made available to early career stage researchers, such as:
- Mentoring within departments, schools and institutes;
- Dedicated supports to engage with, and build, international networks;
- Grants for travel (e.g. to major research collections; in support of mentoring);
- Periodic opportunities to acquire new skills (e.g. up to ten years post-PhD); and

- Dedicated short-term fellowship awards (four to six months) to allow early career researchers to prepare for international post-doctoral schemes, e.g. Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions Global and European Fellowships.

The IHA, operating as an independent, all-island, multi-institutional network, has a crucial role to play in the formulation of effective strategic policy positions aimed at supporting early career researchers, and in effectively lobbying national and international policy-makers in support of these policies.

C. Funding

Ireland

The continuity and predictability of funding is one of the largest challenges in the development of sustainable activity in the humanities. If there were continuity and predictability then it would allow for project planning that would support the establishment of a talent pipeline and the development of the full potential of the humanities. Regular and multi-annual project funding is necessary for planning. HEIs also need to apply human resources at an appropriate level for teaching and research (e.g. not replacing professors with lecturers) and investment is needed in senior staff to ensure high quality of teaching and research in departments, and the mentoring fostering of junior members. The ratio of lecturers to students also needs to be improved to ensure the quality of teaching and learning, and to foster innovation (e.g. development of programmes attractive to non-EU students, development of blended and online delivery).

The sustainability of activity in the humanities is of vital importance. But there needs to be recognition of the need for smaller student groups required for certain teaching subjects and that research in the humanities, if it is to be of sufficient quality to earn international recognition, often takes many years. The appropriate investment of funding will fully exploit the potential of each development stage (Masters, Doctoral, Post-Doctoral) for both maximal economic and societal return, and the sustainable development of activity in the humanities.

It is an aim of the IHA to lobby for a commitment to maintain funding in the humanities at the level of comparable EU states, with a formal commitment to establish the humanities as a national domain of research activity. In addition there is a need for a statement of policy towards the humanities sector in terms of investment needs and availability of national funding opportunities to support career trajectory.

Europe (See also Societal Challenges)

Submissions stressed the need for continued funding of excellent science through the ERC; much more effective embedding of the humanities in impact-led funding; and a strategic priority to support research engagement with regions of the world other than Europe.

There should also be more emphasis on knowledge-based societies; since societies are data-drenched, but the means of verifying and choosing data for the formation of new knowledge are not

given enough consideration. The severe disconnect between public discourse and expert cultures suggest that the knowledge problem needs a separate category of focus in Horizon 2020. There is also a need for an interrogation of the value of the humanities and cultural production in and of themselves, in the first instance, and then their relationship to European society.

The centrality of SSH in the European research space must be reinvigorated, with recognition that they are a full partner in the process, and not simply regarded as an 'add-on' as is the case with the current programmes. While the IHA welcomes the European Commission's newly formed Scientific Advice Mechanism and the role it will play in science advice, it notes that the new mechanism has no humanities researcher/expert. Now more than ever the European Union requires the study of human culture (an area of urgency is migration/integration and a re-configuration of the European humanist tradition in ways that open it out to migration and integration), but recent developments related to Horizon 2020 funding programmes suggest this is not happening.

National research funding schemes in Ireland

There is a need to consult more broadly and fully, and at an earlier stage of scheme design, with humanities communities regarding research funding schemes.

In particular, the following problems should be addressed:
- There needs to be substantial investment in recurrent schemes and recurrent funding. Too often good ideas for recurrent events and partnerships are advertised on a one-off basis and research leaders have to chase different schemes to find ways of recurrent funding.
- Lack of funding and structural supports for long term projects of national significance.
- There needs to be more advance notice of upcoming schemes, longer run-ins to application deadlines, and longer terms of funding.
- Despite the stated commitment to supporting multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research, designated research areas within funding schemes lack the flexibility to achieve this goal.
- A significant gap in current funding schemes is the absence of a scheme similar to the AHRC Small Grants call, which enables the funding of excellence on a flexible basis, and encourages bottom-up innovation.
- Schemes need to be based on full economic costing: for example, Schools in some institutions are obliged to cover the cost of post-doctoral redundancy payments, which have to be sourced from already severely curtailed non-pay budgets. Another example given was the IRC's demand that projects publish outputs in open access, but without allocating a sufficient budget line for gold route open access publishing, with potential for diminshed international impact.
- A more diverse funding ecosystem is needed, supporting a range of projects from the small scale and individual to large scale, long term and collaborative research. To some extent this need was filled by the IRCHSS, and there is a need now to lobby the IRC to increase the proportion of research funding provided to the humanities.
- Practice-based research funding within the creative arts and media sector is required, having been long promised by relevant agencies such as the Arts Council and the newly named Screen Ireland.

Planning over the next 5/10/20 years

The value of large-scale investment through PRTLI must be recognised, the dividends of which are now becoming even more apparent. Therefore there is a pressing need for a new initiative, on the same scale of ambition, for larger and inter-disciplinary projects.

Specifically in terms of strategy for the next five years, requirements include: more balanced funding, with a higher core grant; targeted funding (e.g. to develop skills in digital environments and tools); and greater doctoral funding. Higher levels of early career research and mid-career funding are also needed to remedy the opportunity gap experienced since 2008 and developmental fellowships to allow principal investigators to apply for very competitive Horizon 2020 schemes, e.g. to the ERC.

Over the next ten to twenty years requirements include: improved information and digital infrastructures for research; and opportunities to extend research competences in mid-career. Capital and recurrent funding linked to the radically changing profile of big data and information services are also needed in the era of open research and open data.

As an example, in five years, ideally there would be the development and implementation of a dedicated research strategy for the humanities which would provide the foundation for the establishment of capacity in humanities research from which a more comprehensive programme of integrative and collaborative interdisciplinary activity could be realised for the next 10–20 years. In particular, mapping of activity (5 years) in emerging areas such as the Digital Humanities and collaborative activity with ICT, Bio and Energy disciplines will help to identify and anticipate the infrastructure required to support the development of next-generation activity in this area over those 10–20 years.

D. **Interdisciplinarity**

The maintenance of strong disciplinary training is essential to all areas of research, and the excellence of teaching and learning in humanities disciplines at third and fourth level has suffered greatly from funding cutbacks in the last seven years. In addition, disciplines are mainly funded through the block grant in Ireland, but the long-term sustainability of disciplinary research is jeopardised by the contraction of the block grant, a problem that needs to be remedied as a matter of urgency.

Both single- and inter-disciplinary approaches should be included in any national strategy, for maximal exploitation of the research potential in the humanities. A more coherent approach to interdisciplinarity is required, with support for training across AHSS and STEM, and equitable funding supports from both IRC and SFI. Should a specific breakdown be required, constant monitoring and evaluation of the research community and its activity would be required to ensure that approaches were responsive to the focus of the research community and emerging areas of strategic importance.

Social Sciences

In many senses, the humanities and the social sciences are closely bound together. A key strategic priority is the identification and support of shared educational and research focuses. Research excellence and innovation will benefit from cross-disciplinary contact with the social sciences; a commitment to long-term capacity for excellence and innovation in the humanities and social sciences is a shared strategic priority in an environment where STEM disciplines exert greater influence overall in research policy, innovation and funding. Oftentimes we are creating artificial divides based on different methodologies in humanities and social sciences. But these disciplines have more in common than in difference, as both work to extend the understanding of humanity. Therefore we need to encourage greater co-operation, while maintaining excellence in all disciplines. The role of collaborative activity with the social sciences is of significant strategic importance to fully realise the potential of the national research ecosystem.

STEM

In the short term, a strategic priority is intensive mutual engagement to define research problems and frameworks of common interest. There was some support for policies and structures under the rubric of STEAM. But as it stands, arts and humanities have been given little or no role in national research prioritisation, and there is little understanding of what the arts and humanities mean within STEM policy frameworks. It is also important to distinguish between applied and basic science. Current research and innovation policy is far too instrumentalised and focused on marketisation within inadequate models for effective and sustainable research and innovation.

The humanities have a key role to play in providing alternative discourses to the model of the economic production being adopted currently within research. The humanities also have a role to play in future-proofing research and should have a clear critical position in relation to techno-scientific prioritisation.

An interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach should be encouraged to emphasise that it is in these boundary areas that some of the most interesting research is under way. However, basic research within specific disciplines should not be disadvantaged as it is within, and from, a strong disciplinary base that other types of research can be grounded. Areas within culture and media studies in particular can form very close relationships with the social sciences and policy-supported research. However, it is important to be cognisant of the specific epistemological practices within humanities disciplines. The relationship with STEM should be one of a critical position regarding the role and impact of STEM in society, and in culture and cultural production.

The prioritisation of interdisciplinarity in research funding in Ireland currently fits the societal challenges model well, but there are several problems with the challenges model, and also with the apparent prioritisation of interdisciplinarity as a goal in itself. Namely:
- The challenges model does little if anything to advance a strong base of research excellence in the disciplines;
- In the current IRC New Horizons scheme, interdisciplinarity is narrowly understood, or at least narrowly enabled, as collaboration between AHSS and STEM subjects, and therefore

does not support interdisciplinary research on the basis of the excellence of ideas, methodologies or impact when it involves collaboration between an equally challenging range of humanities and/or social science disciplines. For example, there are novel and potentially socially impactful collaborations between drama and psychology which do not fit this model of interdisciplinarity;

- The complementarity of disciplines has also not been fully enabled: in the same IRC scheme, AHSS projects will only get funded when partnered with STEM researchers, but the equivalent scheme in SFI does not require partnership with AHSS researchers; and
- The career path for doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers working on interdisciplinary projects has not yet been established to any advantage: academic appointments of a permanent or long-term basis are predominantly, almost wholly, within conventionally recognised disciplinary specialisms.

E. Learning and Teaching

Humanities teaching in Ireland and Northern Ireland remains vibrant, rigorous, innovative and research-led, from first-year undergraduates to postgraduates, and has long been highly regarded internationally. Such innovations, however, are extremely difficult to achieve and sustain with staff/student ratios which are vastly inferior to any university in the UK or US of comparable standing.

In terms of further advancement there are some opportunities within the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning to sponsor new research into learning innovation for humanities. It would be possible to develop a programme of research equivalent to the kind of emphasis now on STEM education models. For example, how can learning and teaching foster innovation, support new modes of transdisciplinary thinking and extend aims and goals of responsible research and innovation to humanities disciplines?

However there are some challenges such as a certain lack of diversity; eurocentrism; lack of capacity in e.g. Arabic, Asian languages and cultures; and underfunding which in turn inhibits innovation. In addition:
- Each discipline is also expected to provide students with the full range of the discipline, which in turn leads to a movement away from specialisation.
- There is a reduction in the number of students coming through from second level, e.g. History has seen a decrease in incoming students due to government changes and perceptions.
- Students coming from second level are often not equipped to deal with the demands of third level education, and academic staff are often faced with the task of addressing these deficiencies in a system under-resourced for fulfilling a remedial role.

Undergraduate

The consultation asked how humanities graduates could be better equipped for the working environment and how the quality of undergraduate teaching can be sustained and improved. Suggestions regarding teaching and learning were: more project-based learning; improved writing

and communication skills; incentivisation to learn by collaborating, and inclusion of explicit ICT modules in curricula – even one module a year exploring cultural aspects of ICT or learning ICT skills would result in something that would provide a bridge to many work environments and that would likely be attractive to employers.

Suggestions regarding course design included:
- Awareness-raising of the value of intercultural skills and sensibilities with many international and multi-national companies, to include judgement, interpretation and dialogical thinking;
- Internationalisation to be part of every programme to increase employability attributes of graduates;
- Orientation toward 'cultural' and media industries in core curriculum, work experience, workshops etc. (film, publishing, heritage etc);
- Build on, and extend placements, to be both disciplinary and interdisciplinary, and work based; and
- Further development of learning opportunities encompassing both bachelor's and master's qualifications (4+1), with expanded cross-learning opportunities in the humanities, the social sciences and STEM (e.g. through learning opportunities in philosophy of science, science and society).

Staffing and the student experience were mentioned many times in the submissions. There is a need to bring staff/student ratios into line with those in competitor EU states. Undergraduate teaching can be sustained by allocating teaching models that ensure large classroom teaching is given proper recognition within the workload model and could be improved by ensuring all teaching staff have undertaken a PG Cert in Learning and Teaching. Also suggested was investment in digital infrastructure to enable greater collaborative teaching and learning, assessment of learning online and increased support to improve digital literacy for academic staff.

Postgraduate (See also Doctoral Education)

Career training for humanities students and graduates needs to be developed right throughout the undergraduate and postgraduate experience, enabling students to recognise the diverse range of professional careers to which humanities graduates have contributed.

In curriculum design, there have been a number of developments in the last number of years to ensure that employability is considered early on in the development of the curriculum. However it is necessary to point out that humanities education is not training towards a specific job but nonetheless provides an education which allows graduates to become well rounded participants in society. In careers where a PhD is required, it will be precisely those analytical, critical and discursive abilities of a proficient academic and researcher which are also needed in an industrial or organisational context. However, although there is an emergent awareness that a high proportion of PhDs will work outside of the academic sector, this has not impacted significantly on the PhD programmes offered.

It is incumbent on universities to develop policies aimed at encouraging greater interaction between internal career services, programme designers and individual PhD candidates. Greater engagement

with employment and enterprise partners is also required, e.g. joint projects and placements. These need to be supported through the relevant curricular developments and through dedicated funding, in part so as to optimize the transition to work for graduates, with explicit preparation, e.g. with regard to recruitment. Career preparation modules also need to be integrated into the core graduate training curriculum. In particular, students need guidance in relation to identifying the skills they have which are transferable to the workplace; they also need opportunities to develop their capacity to articulate the importance of these skills and, ideally, access to work placement opportunities to practice them. It is desirable also to support greater research into teaching and learning, especially at higher education level.

Role of Research in Teaching and Learning

Research should be embedded in all years across the curriculum, and generating new knowledge for existing interpretations should be part of all curricula. However, the current reality is that research and teaching are often disconnected at undergraduate level, due to the broad-based courses required and the number of students involved. At postgraduate level there is a stronger connection between research and teaching and there are clear benefits. Research can inform and sustain teaching by redefining the questions which we ask about the world and people, about their cultures and ideas, languages, belief systems and social practices, given that teaching and learning are centred on the organised exploration of these questions. Research also provides new primary materials on which we draw in teaching and learning. At postgraduate and doctoral levels, students are equipped to understand how productive research questions are posed and investigated.

F. Open Access, Publishing and Open Data

The humanities have benefited over the past fifty years from the intensive development of journal publication to support excellent research at relatively low cost; conversely, some monograph publication, though likewise a key factor in sustaining research ambition and excellence, has been subject to high overhead costs. The main policy priority should be to protect and develop publication systems which help to sustain excellent work.

There is broad and strong commitment in principle to open access publishing and data in the humanities, for both methodological and ethical reasons. In practice, however, open access publishing poses particular problems for humanities researchers, who need to publish books with academic presses which rely on having the commercial advantage of exclusive publication. It also poses a challenge for publishing work which includes copyrighted material, such as visual illustration or literary quotations, where rights holders do not wish material to be available through open access.

In addition, given how difficult it has become for early career researchers in the humanities to win book contracts for their first published books, a moratorium period on open access publishing of the doctoral thesis needs to be established as standard, to protect copyright and to enable publishers to retain some commercial advantage to publishing theses as books.

While it is important to ensure the maximum possible dissemination of research findings, the implementation of a full open access model could have a detrimental financial effect on humanities publishers and journals. There is a particular publishing ecology in the humanities in Ireland, and it is important not to undermine this. Therefore it may be more appropriate to adopt the 'green open access model'.

Wedded to this, it is important to ensure that data sets, archival collections and other historic print resources, which have been digitised, are made freely available for the benefit of all researchers, and that for-profit multi-national organisations do not exercise control of access to knowledge. The concerns regarding definitions in this area were clarified under the 2013 Copyright Review, carried out on behalf of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

It is also important that project funding facilitates the development of datasets to complement major publications (e.g. http://polis.stanford.edu/) and that there be dedicated staffing to support the design, implementation and maintenance of dedicated open data.

The anomaly in funding programmes, which currently require open access publishing as part of a researcher's output strategies but withhold funding for open access fees, needs to be addressed urgently.

The IHA Publications and Research Evaluation Working Group has been asked to convene a roundtable regarding Open Access in March/April 2016 and to produce a policy paper and statement on these issues.

G. Public Humanities

The most important cultural, societal and economic impacts of the humanities are those by which societies maintain robust structures for deliberation and debate, and support innovation in cultural, social and economic spheres. More specifically and more substantively: the humanities testify to the importance of plurality of modes of understanding and to the importance of qualitative assessments of individual and cultural meaning making, e.g. meaning making before, during and after the financial crisis. In brief, the humanities have a bearing on all levels of societal debate – through education, research, facilitation of public engagement – and all forms of knowledge creation.

It was suggested that the following arguments should be articulated and used to promote the value of the humanities.

Cultural heritage and the humanities have contributed in an immense way to Irish prosperity through education, language and communicative competence, all of which are outcomes of a highly literate and humanities-oriented educational system. This sense of cultural self-confidence is essential to a flourishing and productive economy and has been a remarkable feature of the Irish economy.

The humanities also build social cohesion, and the capacity to build social cohesion and underpin the growth of a healthy society, rather just an economy, is a key impact. The humanities are driven by the aspiration to create a better society, the goal of which is the creation of a better society.

The humanities support a critical and informed understanding: a fundamental contribution made through the education process is that of challenging future generations of innovators, and citizens. An urgent task of our time is to counter the increasingly pervasive instrumentalism and homogeneity in society that threatens the very basis of creative thinking. Broad-based education such as that supported by the humanities can help shape and develop the aesthetic qualities that the workforce of the future will require. Through its role in challenging orthodoxy and questioning established values, the humanities encourage a critical sensibility based on imagination and creativity.

The humanities also have economic impact. The economic value of arts, creative activity, humanities and cultural heritage is highly significant and international. The creative and cultural industries have been recognised as among the most important growth sectors of the European and global economies. The creative industries, in conjunction with digital technologies, offer a powerful motor of growth to advanced economies. They account for more than 7 per cent of the world's GDP and in OECD countries are growing at a rate of between 5 and 20 per cent annually. Wealth creation is increasingly dependent upon the capacity to create content, or new forms of widely distributed expression, which depend on human capital. The Cultural and Creative Industries in the EU (4.2 per cent of GDP of the EU and nearly seven million jobs) proved to be resilient to the crisis with innovative solutions, in no small part due to the humanities' involvement in the process of creativity generation and production. In terms of jobs, the Cultural and Creative Industries employ as many people as the Food and Beverage Service Industry does, and provides work for nearly two-and-a-half times more people than Automotive Manufactures and five times more than the Chemical Industry (IHA Impact Report, 2015).

The humanities are vital to understanding Ireland's identity precisely as an island; to understanding its distinctive cultural importance historically; and to explaining and representing these issues to audiences, internally and internationally. Ireland is remarkable as a small country whose humanities – especially literature and music – have had a profound global impact. It could easily be argued that, in the eyes of the world, the humanities are by far the most important resource that Ireland possesses.

The humanities also have a very specific role to play in terms of offering a greater understanding of differing perspectives on Irish culture and identity. The more we can do to develop an understanding of each of these perspectives the more we can do to build a better society, and share that understanding with divided societies globally.

The humanities have a very special role in the public imagination in Ireland, and we are well placed to turn this to strategic advantage with our European partners, if we can address the infrastructural impediments to supporting research excellence in the humanities. The reputation of Ireland internationally is deeply connected to the status of its cultural traditions and the arts, and the humanities are fundamental to maintaining those traditions and educating the next generation of artists, writers, dramatists and their new media successors.

H. Research Infrastructures

The existence of a national platform, in the form of PRTLI, has proven to be very successful model for the development of doctoral education in Ireland. Further funding for national doctoral platforms within the humanities should be an integral element of national research strategy, and regional strategy should be part of any national consideration. Even modest investment could secure the sustainability of existing platforms, and we should investigate the integration of or collaboration between existing platforms.

Current core research infrastructure needs include access to resources such as IReL and equivalent international resources for humanities in a digital context. Existing infrastructure also needs to be placed on a sustainable footing, and new investment is needed to support extension of digital humanities to maximise opportunities for international collaboration. It is also worth exploring the development of shared library storage facilities, with a view to enhancing the availability of print resources nationally.

Recognised and emergent areas delivering significant societal, heritage and cultural impact, such as the Digital Humanities, require sustained investment in infrastructure to build capacity and support international competitiveness. Targeted investment in appropriate infrastructure will support collaboration at a national and international level and increase Ireland's competiveness internationally. This should be part of increasing digital infrastructure and capacity, and a more inclusive approach to the development of research infrastructures to include non-traditional partners (archives, museums, small repositories). The humanities need to be central to this discussion.

The launch of the Digital Repository of Ireland has been an important step forward in terms of preserving Ireland's social and cultural data, but much remains to be done to make maximum use of existing digital collections and generate new resources as needed. Irish education, research and cultural innovation risks being seriously impeded in the absence of support for the development of web and mobile enabled digital cultural and historical content in keeping with international developments. An infrastructure is only as good as its content and cannot flourish unless sustained by funding of library holdings, archives, and space. For humanities researchers, excellence starts with research libraries of international standard. Unique national collections have had their funding decimated, with serious consequences for research access and our international reputation. A properly funded policy initiative encompassing research libraries, digital infrastructures and teaching resources is urgently needed.

It is also important to develop the infrastructure aimed at strengthening modern language provision at third and fourth level, in order to avoid the devastating decline in the uptake of languages other than English which has occurred elsewhere in the recent past. Language Learning Centres in HEIs, which have suffered in the environment of austerity, should be strengthened in order to facilitate scholars in all disciplines to engage with other societies and cultures.

A new research infrastructure idea proposed was the establishment of a Humanities Innovation Centre to promote collaboration between universities, cultural institutions and creative industries

which would enable the humanities in Ireland to contribute to local communities, collaborate with cultural institutions and artists, and partner with creative industries. The AHRC in the UK has committed £16 million during the period 2011/12 – 2015/16 to support four Knowledge Exchange Hubs for the Creative Economy. A proportional parallel scheme in Ireland could provide much needed support for the socially and economically important Cultural and Creative Industries. These hubs could draw on humanities researchers strengths in theory, scholarship and historical perspective to, for example:

- Enhance creative and social practice;
- Produce digital multi-media with cultural institutions and creative industry;
- Transform a space with visual/performance artists;
- Run para-academic events bringing communities, practitioners (writers, artists, musicians) together with academics, with online afterlife; and
- Integrate research innovation and teaching innovation, especially in relation to structured PhDs and post-doctoral training.

Participation in such projects will improve the employability of recent fourth level graduates and encourage intersectoral mobility, and a bursary scheme targeting unemployed or underemployed advanced graduates would enable this group to develop its potential for cultural entrepreneurship. An innovation hub for arts and humanities interchange, which enables coherent and sustainable links between universities and cultural heritage and cultural production sectors, would be a very effective addition to research infrastructure which would help to develop and promote Ireland's distinctive advantage as a cultural hub. There is considerable potential for partnership with urban and local renewal projects in these types of activities and the development of relationships beyond the university cities.

Europe

The humanities should be regarded as full and equal partners in all European research infrastructures, and funding for the extension of library resources at European level is critical. A major programme aimed at increasing access to important books and archival collections through digitisation would be especially beneficial (possibly based on the model of the French National Library's *Gallica* initiative).

At a lower level, supports could be developed to encourage researchers to collaborate with international counterparts through a university exchange scheme at doctoral and post-doctoral level, and the joint supervision of doctoral projects.

In the coming years metadata relating to major cultural collections and natural language datasets are likely to be increasingly important, and there will be a need to develop this as a European research infrastructure.

I.   **Research Prioritisation and Basic Research**

The humanities have suffered as a result of the increased emphasis on STEM disciplines under the research prioritisation framework. However initially justified for reasons of innovation and job

creation, prioritisation has unduly narrowed the research funding base, at the expense of the core grant (and/or PRTLI-like instruments). If prioritisation is to continue as a major policy instrument, the humanities must be included. There also needs to be some rebalancing of priorities in terms of promoting the value of fundamental humanities research, while not neglecting the contribution humanities can and should make to research across the sciences.

To best exploit the talent and potential from the national research ecosystems, the methods of prioritisation of research areas should encompass multiple approaches, including an opportunity for engagement by, and consultation with, all stakeholders.

There is concern regarding adopting a societal challenges based approach to future prioritisation exercises. This is based on the experience of Horizon 2020. Submissions said that this approach may in future be acceptable on the basis of transparent, regular and extensive engagement with the research community via recognized national representative forums. But it is important to remember at the same time that vital humanities research should continue to be undertaken on an altogether different scale, over the long term and often by individuals.

Basic research should continue to be the main paradigm for the foreseeable future. There is no research without basic research. Basic research in the humanities is by definition diverse, given its historical scope and the range of the cultures and value systems with which it engages. We will never be in a position to dispense with it, and its importance should be perennially affirmed and concretely recognised. It is fundamental to encourage curiosity-driven basic research, and many scientists would agree, although in recent years the emphasis on applied research has dominated.

The teaching dividend for maintaining research-based teaching at third-level is critical. Basic research both complements and supports the development of research across the spectrum. It is fundamental to the sustainability of a functional research ecosystem. The welcome success of Irish researchers in ERC competition is a testament to the quality of excellent basic research.

J. Researcher Careers and Researcher Mobility

A number of suggestions were made regarding career development for humanities researchers. They include:

- Improved access to mid-career training in new research and teaching methods and tools;

- Research into the optimal administrative organisation of humanities disciplines, so as to protect research time and to achieve economies of scale;

- The development of support in relation to career planning in academia and research would be hugely beneficial;

- Development of training programmes and the identification of appropriate partnerships and research programmes will support collaborative activity with all potential stakeholders; and

- The development of CPD and programme supports at institutional and research departmental level to assist PhD candidates and post-doctoral researchers with mapping out appropriate career trajectories, both within and outside of the academic sector.

Continued investment in the development of human capital, through programmes such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, is of significant importance. Increased visibility and activity at a national and international level will also support the mobility of researchers in the humanities. However, Ireland lacks supports for the re-integration of successful early career researchers into higher education in Ireland, with a consequent loss of their international expertise.

In recognition of the increasing internationalisation of research and the emphasis on international collaboration (e.g. consortium building), there needs to be an increased emphasis on funding for short and longer term research stays abroad, and institutional supports in place to facilitate mobility of research active staff. Access to language learning for research purposes would also be very useful.

The development of mobility could also come through the implementation of novel forms of academic contracts where academics and researchers can move between institutions more easily. There is currently a work load model in Sweden and Norway which allows for such mobility.

Mobility should also be more broadly understood as sectoral, as well as geographical. There can be very significant benefits to enabling researchers to move between different sectors (university and cultural institutions, for example), or even between different disciplines or departments within the same university.

Mobility is too often understood currently as a good in itself, without attention being paid to different research needs and benefits. It is also the case in some instances that mobility is used to make up for national deficiencies in research infrastructure – for example, time away from teaching and administrative duties to write books because there are no individual fellowships nationally which allow this to be funded. Mobility measures should be targeted for particular benefits – networking, particular archives or resources – of varying duration.

K. **Societal Challenges** (See also Funding)

Critical thinking is a valuable skill cultivated by the humanities. A society without the capacity for critical self-reflection cannot progress. In common with good science, good humanities research and teaching never abandons the question why? Our public value often derives from our function in questioning public values. Many of the key social challenges of our era derive from very long term patterns (climate change, 'boom and bust' economic cycles, political conflict, social inequality and exclusion) which can only be addressed by understanding social and cultural change in the very long term perspective.

Many of the societal challenges with which we are at present preoccupied in Europe and beyond — climate change, ageing, food, transport, security, health, to mention only these — arise from a heightened sense of the magnitude of societal risk in the next 50 to 100 years and from an awareness that the individual life-course is marked by very significant shifts from one generation to

the next. The humanities provide us with essential resources with which to understand and to respond to these risks and these changes. Directly and indirectly, the humanities also define many of the frameworks on which societies will draw in deliberating on the design and adoption of scientific and technological responses to these challenges.

What all of these societal challenges require is a continuing commitment to maintain and renew spaces of ethical debate, to which the humanities should make a decisive contribution; spaces of debate that inform our sense of what it means to be human at this time and in this place, and how a deeply technologically mediated culture is likely to influence what being human and what human relationships mean/are and what civic life could be.

The humanities community is responding creatively and energetically to societal challenges. However, too much emphasis is placed on meeting societal challenges, which tend to be based on short-to-medium-term needs in Europe, and do not reflect the need for funding the base of research excellence. Strong and well-supported disciplines are required to produce the kind of resilient, sustainable, and innovative interdisciplinary research which can address societal challenges.

More needs to be done at national and European level to promote challenges which fully utilise the capacities and strengths of humanities research. For example, there is an urgent and strong need in Europe currently for cultural and critical literacy, as defined by the [Cultural Literacy in Europe conference](): 'an ability to view the social and cultural phenomena that shape our lives – bodies of knowledge, fields of social action, individuals or groups, and of course cultural artefacts – as being essentially *readable*'. Cultural and critical literacy helps to promote social justice, understanding and promotion of cultural diversity, and active forms of citizenship. We need national initiatives to promote humanities research which addresses and builds capacities in such areas.

At the European level, embedding and integration of SSH into the Societal Challenges has not worked thus far. As the European Commission's own report on *[Integration of SSH in Horizon 2020]()* (Monitoring report on SSH-flagged projects funded in 2014 under the Societal Challenges and Industrial Leadership) shows, with:

- The humanities and arts accounted for 'only 9 per cent of funded projects with an SSH dimension' under topics specifically flagged for SSH;
- 29 per cent of projects funded under the SSH-flagged topics do not have SSH partners; and,
- '28 per cent of the projects funded under topics flagged for SSH do not integrate any contributions from the SSH' and 11 per cent of the projects funded under topics flagged for SSH were classified as weak (European Commission, 2015, pg. 10-16).

The Commission's report also recommends that future Work Programmes explicitly call for SSH contributions and for SSH to be an integral part of the solution. In addition it states that the range of disciplines invited to contribute needs to be significantly broadened, especially the humanities (European Commission, 2015, pg. 6). However on reading the current Work Programmes for 2016/2017 this is not evident. This is despite the reassurances and claims made by the Commission.

The IHA is committed to work with national and international partners, and research infrastructures to assist the Commission in its stated aims to improve the quality of topics, evaluations, feedback and communication surrounding the integration of SSH across the whole of Horizon 2020.

L. Urgent Research and Policy Issues

In addition to the policy areas already covered, submissions also mentioned new research areas and policy issues that should be considered by the consultation. In particular, there were a number of research areas proposed which have policy impacts:

- Ireland's Population Profile: Projected population growth, urbanization, and the growing multiculturalism of Irish society pose major challenges. Clearly there is a significant role for humanities to support greater intercultural understanding and to provide citizens and policy makers with the skills required to respond to change.
- Globalisation and Recession: Ireland's recovery from economic recession will continue to be a driver of change. Ireland's rapid social transformation from an inward looking society to an urban, cosmopolitan and internationally-focused one, and recent experience of deep recession, gives it a unique perspective on the impact of globalisation.
- Sustainable Development: This represents one of the greatest challenges of the future and is now a mainstream concern. Yet much of its agenda is supply-oriented, driven by perspectives from technology, engineering and science. There is an acknowledged need for a complementary demand-oriented perspective that considers issues of sustainable consumption, corporate citizenship, responsible trade practices and adaptation barriers (economic, behavioural and informational). Humanities disciplines have a central and crucial role to play in raising the profile of the debate about sustainability from a social and cultural perspective; in communicating the core message about sustainability, and in contributing to a greater public understanding of economic development in conditions of scarcity.