Relevance and Impact of the Humanities

December 15-16, 2008
University of Vienna,
Juridicum, top floor,
Schottenbastei 10-16, 1010 Vienna
PROGRAMME

December 15, 2008

9:00 - 09:30 am Welcome and Introduction
Georg Winckler, University of Vienna and European University Association
Shearer West, Arts and Humanities Research Council
Herbert Gottweis, Austrian Science Foundation
Milena Zic-Fuchs, European Science Foundation

09:30 - 10:15 am Key Note:
Walter Pohl, University of Vienna
Where do we stand and where do we go?
The Humanities and different meanings of relevance and impact
Discussion

10:15 - 10:45 am Coffee Break

10:45 - 12:30 am Impact studies and the use of metrics in the Humanities:
Concepts and limits
Carl Dolan (HERA - Humanities in the European Research Area):
The HERA Impact and Quality Assessment - Evaluation and benchmarking of Humanities research in Europe
Tony McEnery (University of Lancaster):
The use of research metrics and the economic, social and cultural impact of Arts and Humanities research.
Christine Kosmopoulos (CNRS-UMR Géographie-cités):
The prospects opened by Open Access
Discussion

12:30 - 1:30 pm Lunch

1:30 - 3:30 pm Relevance, societal impacts of research and public policy making
Jack Spaapen (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences KNAW):
Evaluating Research in Context - the ERiC Project
Alan Wilson (British Academy):
Punching our weight: the Humanities and Social Sciences in public policy making
Bob Frodeman (University of North Texas):
Integrating societal impacts concerns into Peer Review

3:30 - 4:00 pm Coffee Break

4:00 - 6:00 pm Podium discussion
Annemarie Bos (Netherlands Org. for Scientific Research) Chair
Andre Gingrich (University of Vienna)
Carl Dolan (HERA - Humanities in the European Research Area)
Rüdiger Klein (European Science Foundation)
Gerhard Budin (University of Vienna)
Henry Widdowson (University of London, Essex University and University of Vienna)

7.00 - 7.30 pm Guided tour through the University of Vienna

7.30 pm Conference Dinner
Vienna University Library
Teinfaltstraße 8, 1010 Vienna (ground floor)
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9:00 - 10:00 am  Making the Humanities count
Nina Kancewicz-Hoffman (European Science Foundation): Increasing visibility for a multifaceted Humanities research in Europe the ERIH approach
Alain Peyraube (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales): Evaluation of the Humanities at the ERC
Discussion

10:00 - 10:30 am  Coffee Break

10:30 - 12:00 am  Insights from the interface between Humanities and Sciences
Ruth Wodak (University of Vienna and University of Lancaster): Blurring of boundaries: Between Science and the Humanities
Natalie Sebanz (Radboud University Nijmegen): Between Sciences and Humanities – Methods, thinking traditions and communication patterns in the Cognitive Sciences
Richard Parncutt (University of Graz): Assessment of quality and impact at the interface between Sciences and Humanities: The case of systematic musicology
Discussion

12:00 - 1:00 pm  Closing Panel: Future prospects of the Humanities
Peter Kampits (University of Vienna) Chair
Milena Zic-Fuchs (European Sciences Foundation)
Alan Wilson (British Academy)
Ruth Wodak (University of Vienna and University of Lancaster)

1:00 - 2:00 pm  Discussions and Snack

2:00 pm  End of the Workshop

There is no charge for this event, but registration is essential as space is limited.

Please send your registration for the conference and the conference dinner to claudia.hopfer@univie.ac.at.
Relevance and Impact of the Humanities

Against the background of an increasing demand for transparent and appropriate instruments to assess quality and impact of various kinds of research and to ensure accountability of public money spent on it, the humanities get more and more under pressure. In the context of the ongoing debate on research evaluation, metrics, ranking and benchmarks, the very characteristics of the humanities and its specific thinking traditions, publication patterns, community sizes and resource requirements seem to be a natural contradiction to simple bibliometric indicators. For the future of humanities research different criteria should be developed which are more in line with their own research traditions. At the European level, important steps into this direction were recently undertaken both by the European Science Foundation with the development of an own journal index for the humanities (ERIH – European Research Index for the Humanities) and by the HERA network (Humanities in the European Research Area).

The workshop intends to reflect on this debate but to also enlarge the topic by the dimensions of relevance and impact. Therefore, the purpose of the workshop is threefold:

1. The workshop aims at summarizing the arguments pro and against the use of metrics in the context of humanities research as well as the attempts to formulate alternative common principles for the assessment of humanities research.

2. Furthermore, the workshop focuses on relevance and impact, in order to obtain a complete picture of the potentials of research in the humanities. Two aspects are substantial in this context: First the relevance to the advancement of knowledge in the discipline and science in general, and second the possible impact on the broader context of social, cultural and economic developments.

3. A deeper look into the very nature of research in the humanities shows that the distinctiveness of the humanities is not only true in the comparison with the sciences but also apparent at the level of the different disciplines. The workshop wants to investigate humanities’ thinking traditions and its relationship to the sciences. Does the old distinction between the “hermeneutic-appreciating” disciplines against the “explanatory-causative” ones hold any longer?

The workshop addresses humanities researchers, deans and presidents of research, funding agencies, librarians as well as national and international policy makers and council members.
Legende:

● = location Conference, Schottenbastei 10-16 (top floor)

X = location Conference Dinner, Teinfaltstraße 8 (ground floor)