

Funding Policies and Research Values: Strategies & Needs; Risks & Prospects

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ABSTRACTS

Session 1A: STRATEGIES

Donald B. Dingwell

Preparing for the unexpected: why tomorrow's greatest research will be individual, bottom-up, and global

The role of the public sector in the facilitation of research has grown to be a deciding factor in the intellectual achievements of cultures worldwide. Typically the choice of which activities are funded follows one of two approaches. The first involves some branch of the public sector, arriving at a set of priorities which should “guide” the potential applicant in their choice of research theme. The second involves the establishment of an institution of considerable autonomy which then undertakes to accomplish all further aspects of the administration of funding selection, monitoring, and *ex post* evaluation. In the daily life of a researcher largely supported by public sector funds there has no doubt been a shift in very many countries towards the first model over the second. This creeping programmatisation of the research “agenda” is sometimes argued to be the result of a fair and comprehensive canvassing of the research community itself. The European Research Council marks a new point of departure for the research agenda of the European Commission. The ERC is an unrivalled model for the support of the intellectual health of Europe. The key attributes to which its funding decisions adhere are: researcher-driven decisions, excellence of the recipients, individual initiative, high-risk projects and no thematic prioritisation.

Session 1B: NEEDS

Jürgen Mittelstrass

Why supporting the Humanities matters: the need of new models of research funding

The Humanities have a problem with their visibility both in the public sphere and in the academic system itself, and they have an organisational problem when compared with other sections of the academic system. They also have a funding problem, particularly in a European context, i.e. in the framework of the European research policy. The topic of the paper is the essential role of the Humanities when dealing with the European project, the framing of Europe. In this respect, in contrast to the natural and the social sciences, the Humanities need specific models of research funding, more individualised and of more interdisciplinary char-

acter. And they may need more multi-national centres for advanced studies on a European level, thus also solving their visibility and organisational problems.

Session 2a: RISKS

Carolyn Gianturco

Humanities at risk: Italy's support of its musical heritage in comparison with other European countries

The area of "culture" with regard to government funding in Italy, in particular the financing of research in the areas of music and music history, will be compared with reference to that of Spain and France, as well as of England and Germany. The current results are not optimistic in general in Europe due to the widespread financial crises, but it will be shown to be most discouraging in Italy where such financing has always been minimal in spite of world opinion that Italy has a rich musical heritage. Indications of the country's lack of attention to music culture will be put forth as well as possible reasons for it.

Section 2B: PROSPECTS

Maurizio Brunori

The additional value of the network model for multidisciplinary research projects: mediterranean cultures in dialogue

(Abstract)

As a Biochemist, my presentation is possibly justified by the role I played in positioning research in the Humanities within a network of academies of arts and sciences: the Euro Mediterranean Academic Network. In Arabic EMAN means faith, a promising introduction to my brief survey of the structure and activities of this vast international programme whose mission is to foster growth and coordination of a Mediterranean Science Area. Besides organizing Conferences largely on natural sciences, GID-EMAN engaged into an advanced training course on Mediterranean Archaeology which was held in Rome; a strategic multi disciplinary project at the interconnection between the humanities, the technologies and the socio-economic fallout.