

EPSRC

Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council



The World of Ageing Research

The Award Holders Workshop

27th March 2006

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Agenda

- Welcome
- Evolution of SPARC
- SPARC
- Awards Scheme
- Award Holders
- Our Hopes for You and SPARC
- Today's Workshop



Welcome



Ten Years of Ageing Research

- Early 1990s
 - White Paper “Realising Our Potential”; Technology Foresight
- 1995 OST announces EQUAL
- 1996 OST Briefing on Ageing
- 1997/8 Research Councils Announce
 - EPSRC EQUAL, BBSRC SAGE, ESRC GO
- 2000/1 House of Commons Select Committee
- 2001 NCAR, Funders Forum
- 2005? NDA
- 2004/5 House of Lords Select Committee
- 2005 SPARC
- 2006 Government Response to House of Lords



Top Down Failure Bottom Up Success

- Early 1990s
 - White Paper “Realising Our Potential”; Technology Foresight
- 1996 OST Briefing on Ageing
- 1997 Research Councils Launch
 - **EPSRC EQUAL, BBSRC SAGE, ESRC GO**
- 2000/1 House of Commons Select Committee
- 2001 **NCAR, Funders Forum**
- 2005? **NDA**
- 2004/5 House of Lords Select Committee
- 2005 **SPARC**
- 2006 **Government Response to House of Lords**

Ageing Research Thrives

- When older people, practitioners and researchers get together
- On grassroots “bottom up” enthusiasm of researchers and their supporters to make a difference to the quality of life of older people

Ageing Research Dies

- When it
 - follows a prescriptive “Top Down” approach
 - follows traditional approaches to agenda building and loses touch with end users
 - doesn’t have an up-to-date leading edge view of how science can meet the needs of older people
 - ignores the rules of good innovation and management of change

Making a Difference to the Lives of Older People

- **EPSRC EQUAL & BBSRC SAGE/ERA**
 - very successful and progressive programmes
- **Pioneering research**
 - understanding ageing
 - implications for policy and practice
 - improving Quality of Life of older people
- **Bubbly communities**
 - excitement
 - commitment
 - quality
- **Unhappy environment since 2001**
 - missed opportunities, lost enthusiasm
 - wasted investment



A New Beginning



SPARC

Strategic Promotion of Ageing Research Capacity

For the research community and its supporters in health, social and housing services, charities, voluntary agencies, local and central government, and amongst older and disabled people....*



Three to Four Years

- Early 2005 – early 2008
- EPSRC - £0.75m
- BBSRC - £0.5 - £0.75m
 - Design and engineering research
 - Biological research
 - All areas in between -
 - bio-mechanics/ergonomics
 - muscle/bone
 - cognitive/sensory issues
 - Assistive Technology



Three Key Activities

- Workshops
 - + International Workshops
- Advocacy
- **Small Awards Scheme**

Workshops

- ◆ Regular workshops showcasing the latest research and the latest developments
 - ◆ Eight a year for three years
 - ◆ Up and down the country
 - ◆ Hosted by the community
- ◆ A platform for all-comers
 - ◆ All stakeholders welcome and involved (aiming for fairly even split between researchers, professionals, older people) Ideal Max 80 people
- ◆ **Examples**
 - ◆ The Business Case for Ageing Research (hosted by Unilever)
 - ◆ The Biology and Business of Stroke (TVLSN)
 - ◆ Research and Development for Long Term Care (CCC)
 - ◆ Design for Older People (Bugatti Laboratory)



A Way of being Noticed

- SPARC is a partnership
 - it pursues workshop topics which the community wants to hear about and which hosts want to showcase
 - hosts meet basic direct costs of venue, refreshments etc
 - SPARC can meet some costs doesn't pay for everything but provides much of the organisational backup thus reducing much of the hassle
 - professional organisation
 - excellent networking
 - prestigious events, good PR value
 - SPARC is a major platform for you!



International Workshops

- Examples

- Significant International Symposium on Werner's syndrome

- BBSRC funded, October 2005

- Showcasing the work of young biological gerontologists at AAA conference in US

- BBSRC funded, June 2006

- **Several other events in the offing, for example,**

- Public Accessibility in the EU



Opportunities to Make a Mark

- **SPARC is a partnership**
 - it pursues topics which the community wants to develop at an international level and with which a volunteer is willing to take the lead
 - Volunteers bid to EP/BB for funds for expert workshop (or similar activity) with help from SPARC
 - Volunteers have their name on the bid and handle the money (important for RAE) but SPARC will assist with the organisation of the event
 - Usually funds cover travel, subsistence, hotel, other direct costs but full organisational costs are difficult to secure, hence value of SPARC involvement
 - *SPARC is keen on bilateral events with countries where EP/BB have agreements to cooperate so as to build long term relationships, joint research etc, but all links and proposals are welcome*



Advocacy

- Making the case
 - ageing research can and is making a difference
 - significantly improving the quality of life of older people
 - contributing to the work of professionals who provide services to older people
 - benefiting the public purse and policy development
- Lobbying
 - the media
 - policy makers
 - user representatives & intermediaries
- Can build on a good track record
 - Ministers and MPs do listen – sometimes!

Capacity Building Awards

small awards scheme for newcomers to
ageing research

85 proposals total value £3.1m
were considered in Summer 2005

13 were funded

for superior scientific excellence and capacity building

More to be funded in 2006



The Lucky 13 Winners



Supporting a New Generation of Ageing Researchers

- Modest funding plus
 - mentoring
 - rapid entry into research community
 - place on national platform
 - international opportunities
 - assistance with publication
 - promotion by SPARC secretariat

Our Hopes for You and for SPARC

- A Flying Start
 - Successful Projects
 - interesting good quality results
 - » for both academic and lay audiences
 - plenty of publications and other dissemination
 - timely completion
 - enthusiastic follow on bids which are successful
- Personal Enrichment
 - Lifelong network
 - Position on (inter)national platform
 - Career advancement
 - Beneficial influence on others, encouraging them to become involved with ageing research
 - Genuine rapport with other stakeholders especially older people and their representatives
- Ensuring that Older People truly benefit from the potential of Science and Technology
 - Ageing research into the mainstream
 - Not just contributing to the debate, but leading it



Our Hopes

- SPARC will be a success if:
 - The awards lead to mainstream applications to the major funding bodies and successful bids
 - The awards lead to significant publications and other outputs – academic, policy and practice-related
 - The workshops are recognised as being accessible and of value to a wide range of stakeholders, not just researchers
 - Ageing research is so buoyant that there isn't a case for continuing SPARC after three years of pump-priming



SPARC – a new approach to ageing research

We have to establish the credibility of that approach

We have to get more backers and supporters

You are the Pioneers



Today's Workshop

- Objectives
 - Briefing on SPARC – this presentation
 - Learning about SPARC projects – morning and lunchtime
 - What can SPARC do for you? – this afternoon
 - Networking, Getting to know you – all day
 - SPARC Award Holders and their Teams
 - Some EQUAL Consortia members
 - Advisory Committee
 - Research Councils
 - Building confidence in the belief that SPARC and its award holders can make a difference!



The Ultimate Aim



Introductions

- SPARC Award Holders and their teams
- Invited Guests
- Advisory Committee
- EPSRC and BBSRC
- Members of the Advisory Committee



SPARC Award Holders and teams

- Cells, Tissues, Muscles and Bones
 - Mark Bagley
 - Richard Hartley
 - Katrin Jennert-Burston
 - Matthew Lancaster
 - Elizabeth Ostler
 - Fiona Wyllie

SPARC Award Holders and teams

- Life in The Home
 - Philip Astley
 - Shaun Lawson
 - Al;aster Yoxall
- Getting Out and About
 - Mike Bradley
 - Greg Marsden
 - Charles Musslewhite
 - Richard Neale



Guests and RCs

- Guests
 - EQUAL Consortia
 - Jo-Anne Bichard
 - Gareth Chalfont
 - Hua Dong
 - Thomas Stone
 - BBSRC and EPSRC
 - Lesley Heppell
 - Colin Miles
 - Kedar Pandya



Advisory Committee

- Elizabeth Mills
- Lorna Layward
- Elizabeth White
- Deborah Dunn-Walters
- David Kipling
- Bernie Conway
- Kevin Morgan



Secretariat

- Verity Smith
- Richard Faragher
- Peter Lansley