

**‘Rising Powers and Interdependent Futures’:  
Principal Investigators Workshop  
Manchester, March 13-14, 2014**

*Summary Note*

**Overview**

The first Principal Investigators workshop of the ‘Rising Powers and Interdependent Futures’ programme brought together around 20 researchers associated with the 12 research projects funded under the programme as well as representatives of the ESRC. All of the projects were represented with one or more team members, out of which 9 were the Principal Investigators.

The main objectives of this first meeting convened by the programme coordinator in Manchester were for project teams to get to know each other and reach a better understanding of the different projects, to explore potential synergies and opportunities for exchange between projects and to explore options for joint communication and impact activities. While day 1 set the scene with short presentations on each of the projects, on related ESRC initiatives and on current communication activities, day 2 was dedicated to discussions around synergies and joint activities in plenary as well as in smaller working groups.

This note gives a brief summary of the discussions over the two days and of further joint activities that may be pursued in the future as an outcome of these.

**Day 1: Overview of programme, projects and opportunities**

Day 1 provided an opportunity for participants from the different projects and the ESRC to get to know each other and learn about their existing and planned activities.

The first sessions of the day highlighted the various research agendas pursued under the programme through **short project presentations** (*see separate powerpoint slides*), following a short introduction by Khalid Nadvi as the programme coordinator outlining potential synergies identified during prior visits to each of the 12 projects (*see separate background note*).

Furthermore, Glen Noble, as the ESRC portfolio manager for the programme, gave an overview of the Rising Powers programme and other **current and upcoming opportunities under the ESRC international strategy**. In particular, the ESRC can offer ongoing support for a joint communications and impact strategy among the 12 projects, such as advice on branding and logos or printing of banners, should projects wish to pursue this. Further, Glen would be happy to help disseminate any announcements or information on impact of individual projects via ESRC channels (twitter, newsletters, etc.). With regard to upcoming funding opportunities currently under design, the ESRC would welcome input from projects on the EU-India Platform for the Social Sciences and Humanities (EqUIP) and the transatlantic (T-AP) programmes and on the Newton Fund, including short project ideas and input on existing partnerships that could be built on, which can be submitted by email to Glen (glen.noble@esrc.ac.uk).

The following discussion clarified that the Newton Fund would most likely focus on development related projects in partner countries, such as research collaboration, training (conferences, PhD training), etc.; however, details are still being elaborated. For the first funding phase, projects were advised to identify existing initiatives and partnerships that could be built on swiftly. Further, apart from the Newton Fund, cooperation between ESRC and DfiD is likely to continue on initiatives for development related research funding.

Finally, participants discussed the future **programme website** based on a presentation by the programme coordinator and Claire Morris of the web design team. As the site will provide an overview of activities and links to the websites of individual projects, projects were asked to send any kind of input they would like to see on their pages, such as images, links to publications or twitter feeds, etc. A key aim of the website would be to leverage the reach of individual projects beyond their own disciplinary audiences.

## Day 2: Synergies and joint impact

Following from the presentations of individual projects the day before, day 2 was dedicated to exploring synergies and potential for collaboration, in plenary and smaller working groups.

A number of **issues of interest to most of the projects** were identified in plenary discussions, including for instance themes around politics and political economy in the rising powers, roles and forms of states and interactions between domestic processes in the rising powers and their international engagement.

Reflecting critically on the programme, the term 'Rising Powers' was perceived as problematic by several participants and will need to be used carefully in communication. However, changing the official name and branding of the programme, agreement on an alternative would need to be found among all 12 projects. Further, in its current composition, the programme has some gaps in its scope of analysis of the rising powers, for instance none of the projects has an explicit economics focus.

Further, **potential for exchange and collaboration emerged among smaller subgroups** of projects working on related topics, including the following:

### **Chinese – Russian borders**

Projects<sup>1</sup>: Deakin, Humphrey, Heathershaw, Shapira, White, Wolczuk

Several projects share an interest in interactions across the Chinese-Russian border and with neighbouring countries, for instance on customs unions, fiscal, financial and security aspects. This includes both physical border regions as well as wider issues around models and ideas transiting borders. For example, the group identified different ways in which Russia and China are responding to Western influences and models as a very rich area of discussion that could be explored further.

#### Potential joint activities:

Ideas for joint activities in this group include:

- A workshop on transborder issues on the Russia-China border (Central Asia, East Asia) coorganised by three projects (Heathershaw, Humphrey and Wolczuk), potentially with Chatham House or Wilton Park. David Lewis will take the lead on this.
- A larger workshop on the theme of models and borders coorganised by all six projects. A small pre-planning workshop for academics could potentially be held in Cambridge, and the actual 1-2 day event would be held with practitioners (finance, government, security, innovation) in London. Simon Deakin will take the lead on this.
- A bilateral workshop (Wolczuk, Deakin) on corporate governance and finance reform.
- Bilateral exchange (Humphrey, Wolczuk) on customs union and customs regulation will be continued.
- Possibly a joint panel at the European Consortium for Political Research in Glasgow in September 2014.

### **Developmental impacts and South-South interactions**

Projects: Manor, Nadvi, Power, Scoones, Shapira, Urban

Several projects look the developmental impacts of rising power engagement in developing countries in Africa and Asia, including on social and environmental dimensions.

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<sup>1</sup> By name of the Principal Investigator

### Potential joint activities:

Ideas for joint activities in this group include:

- A journal special issue on innovation and developmental impacts, with 5-6 papers focused on the rising powers. Frauke Urban will take the lead on this, liaising with Marcus Power and Henry Tugendhat.
- A journal special issue on broader developmental impact of rising powers, domestically and internationally. James Manor and Khalid Nadvi will take the lead on this.
- Events with the British Academy
- Events with UK government departments, such as DfID on broader issues and BIS or the technology strategy board on innovation (Power, Shapira).
- Possibly a joint dissemination workshop in Beijing.

### **Innovation**

Projects: Manor, Salter, Shapira, Power, Scoones, Urban

Several projects address transition processes, institutional structures and governance mechanisms around innovation, including technological as well as policy innovation. Some cross-cutting issues discussed in this group include the role of the state in governing innovation, different approaches such as top-down gigantism vs. participatory small scale innovation, different governance capacity across countries and South-South technology transfer. Two potential subgroupings might be around innovation processes inside the rising powers and around South-South interactions on technology and innovation.

### **Rules, norms and standards**

Projects: Deakin, Nadvi, Wolczuk (+ others?)

Several projects look at rules and norms from different perspectives. This includes tensions between formal and informal rules.

### **Inequality**

Projects: Manor, White

These two projects have a common focus on the theme of inequality in rising powers.

## Way forward

Looking ahead, ideas for a number of potential joint activities were summarized in the final session of the workshop.

- Thematic subgroups of projects may wish to continue discussions as outlined above, for instance around Chinese-Russian border issues, developmental impacts, innovation, rules and norms and inequality. Khalid Nadvi suggested to use the coordination funds for 2015 to help facilitate micro level meetings among projects where needed. Glen Noble will be able to provide support on dissemination and communication; additional ESRC funding may also be available under the impact acceleration funds for which projects would need to apply from their respective institutions.
- Khalid Nadvi plans to convene another meeting bringing together all of the projects in 2016, while for 2015 activities among smaller groups seem to be most relevant.
- Projects are welcome to provide material for populating the new programme website and the programme's twitter feed to Corinna Braun-Munzinger ([corinna.braun-munzinger@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:corinna.braun-munzinger@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)) and Natalie Langford ([natalie.langford@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:natalie.langford@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)).
- PhD and early career researchers associated with the 12 projects are invited to participate in the 'Rising Powers and Interdependent Futures' workshop to be held in Manchester on 5 June 2014. Further, Philip Shapira's team invites applications for a summer school on emerging technologies on 8 – 13 June 2014 in Manchester.
- The ESRC (Glen Noble, [glen.noble@esrc.ac.uk](mailto:glen.noble@esrc.ac.uk)) welcomes project suggestions on EQUIP, T-AP and the Newton Fund.