



# REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION

## 2015- 2016 Research Networks Handbook

### CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	p2
II.	Creating a Research Network	p2
III.	Prioritised research themes	p2
IV.	The RSA's expectations from Research Networks' organisers	p3
V.	Management and membership of Research Networks	p4
VI.	Financial guidelines	p4
VII.	Research Networks' activities, outputs and dissimilation of findings	p6
IX.	Application procedure and renewal process	p7

This handbook brings together the various policies, procedures and documents of the Regional Studies Association relating to RSA Research Networks awarded in 2015 and 2016.

*Revised February 2015*

## I. Introduction

Founded in 1965, the Regional Studies Association (RSA) is a leading global learned society in the field of regional studies and regional science. Through our international membership, we provide an authoritative voice, leadership and network for academics, students, practitioners and policy makers in the field. Our main activities are the publication of our journals *Regional Studies*; *Spatial Economic Analysis*; *Territory, Politics, Governance*; *Regional Studies*, *Regional Science*, our quarterly members' magazine *Regions*; our international conference and meeting programme, our Grant Schemes (Early Career Grants, Membership Research Grants, Fellowship Research Grants and Travel Grants) and our Research Networks' Schemes.

In 1985, the RSA Board agreed to introduce Research Networks (formerly referred to as Working Groups) to the Association's activity portfolio. A list of current and previous Research Networks is available at [www.regionalstudies.org/research](http://www.regionalstudies.org/research).

In 2015, the Association introduced an increased Research Network funding scheme which is part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Association and available in 2015 and 2016 only. As part of this Research Network Scheme, up to five Research Networks awarded based on quality are funded with up to £10,000 each in 2015 and an additional up to five Research Networks will be funded under the same scheme in 2016.

## II. Creating a Research Network

RSA Research Networks are formed by RSA members interested in meeting to examine an issue that responds to the aims and goals of the Association and of interest and concern to members of the Association as well as non-members. The issue needs not necessarily to have a direct policy focus but the examination would normally lead to policy related conclusions.

In considering whether to apply for a new Research Network, it is necessary first to review the areas already covered by current RSA Research Networks. If there is no existing or closely related Research Network then you will need to complete the application form available at [www.regionalstudies.org/research](http://www.regionalstudies.org/research) and send it to the RSA office via email [researchnetwork@regionalstudies.org](mailto:researchnetwork@regionalstudies.org).

## III. Prioritised research themes

Research Networks need to respond to the aim and goals of the Association. The Regional Studies Association's Development Plan highlights the Association's objectives which are:

1. to promote education in the field of regional studies by the exchange of ideas and information;
2. to stimulate and aid studies and research into regional planning, development and policy and to disseminate the results of such research.

The Association's aims are to:

- Lead the regional research, policy and practice communities
- Develop our members and support our community
- Deliver high quality regional research
- Influence policy debate and practice
- Innovate in publishing
- Acknowledge excellence in our field

The RSA Board has identified a number of themes which will inform its choices in relation to the selection of Research Networks. Research Networks aiming to work within those identified themes will be prioritised and the organisers will need to develop the relationship between their proposal and one or more of these research themes in their application form. Applicants with ideas outside these themes may still apply.

## Prioritised research themes

1. Austerity, risk and resilience
2. Urban and regional sustainability
3. Leadership and governance
4. Geo economy and geo politics
5. City region building and metro politics
6. Territorial politics and policy
7. Urban and Regional theory, methodology and data
8. Developing area studies
9. Socio spatial inequalities, ageing, demography and wellbeing
10. Innovation, agglomeration, evolution
11. Firms, Sectors and Global production networks
12. Local and regional economic development and planning
13. Identity, citizenship and lived differences
14. Cohesion, competition and smart cities
15. Infrastructures and built environment

## IV. The RSA's expectations from Research Networks' organisers

- The title of the Research Network should be "The Regional Studies Association Research Network on .....", be prominently displayed on all related materials and listed first if there is more than one source of funding;
- To acknowledge the financial support of the RSA in any publicity material for events;
- To provide the Association with suitable materials to launch the Research Network, including information on the events and activities for the Association's website and make suitable links from group member's websites to the Association's relevant web pages;
- To publically acknowledge the support of the RSA, introduce the Association, its aims and objectives and orally encourage participants to join the RSA via pro-active advertising during each event, preferably via the Power Point presentation and display materials provided by the Office;
- To promote the events organised to RSA members and non-members by issuing an open call for attendance. (The RSA office must be involved in the circulation of this to ensure that all members are alerted but this does not preclude the organisers making additional circulation to alternative additional networks);
- To provide plenty of notice of events and activities to the RSA office to allow time for membership and other materials to be despatched for circulation and display at meetings;
- To provide dissemination plans for the findings of the research via publication in professional journals, academic journals, books, journal special issues and trade press where relevant and to carry out this dissemination;
- All post event or activity publications should acknowledge support from the Association in a prominent manner;
- To provide detailed participants' names and contact information (postal and emails) in English to the RSA office provided that this does not contravene local data protection regulations following each event;
- To provide the full programme of each event including the list of papers presented;
- To provide detailed accounts, receipts and invoices for the Association's office for the reimbursement of funds via the claim form;
- To ensure that the Research Network operates within the overall policy and legal framework set by the RSA Board, including good financial management;
- To inform all delegates of the rules of claims and reimbursement prior to the event taking place;
- To encourage presentations from early career and student members of the Association;

- Because the Research Networks are part of the RSA's overall charitable activity, the Association's name and the phrase 'The Regional Studies Association is a registered charity (No. 1084165) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (No. 4116288).' should appear on all correspondence and publicity material that is sent to or may be read by a third party (for example on a letter to venues regarding room hire), whether in hard copy or electronic form. If you omit this information, you are committing a criminal offence and may be liable for prosecution. A legal disclaimer needs to cover any web-based communications (for example if you have your own website).

## V. Management and membership of Research Networks

The Research Network must be organised and managed by RSA members. All organisers must be and remain members of the Association throughout the entire duration of the Research Network. They should come from different countries and can be from any membership category. The Association will consider Research Networks proposed by students and early career researchers as well as those in the other categories of membership.

## VI. Financial guidelines

### Grant awarded

The maximum Research Network funding available for Research Networks agreed in 2015 and 2016 is £10,000 per Research Network for the duration of three years. If the costs of events exceed the awarded sum, the organisers will be responsible for covering the extra costs.

Where a Research Network is to be co-funded the applicants should indicate the level or expected level of co-funding and details of the co-funder and any specific conditions on their award of support.

The RSA Research Network grant is never intended to allow the organisers to make a surplus from an event and to do so would not be in the spirit of the scheme. The Association will consider applications in which a nominal entry fee may be charged to attendees but prefers that RSA members are not charged or if this is unavoidable are charged at a lower rate than non-RSA members.

The RSA will not reimburse invoices that exceed the sum of £10,000 as agreed in the Award Letter, expenses incurred by non-RSA members (at the time of the expense and of the claim) or invoices that do not follow the guidelines listed below. Any unused monies from the sum awarded will be kept by the RSA. When budgeting, please think of all possible expenditures.

### Eligible costs

Monies awarded under the 2015 and 2016 Research Network scheme can be spend only in the following ways:

Funds may be spent to cover the direct expenses incurred in organising events:

#### 1. Meeting costs

- Monies can be used to cover the costs of meetings' refreshments such as tea/coffee/biscuits, sandwich/buffet lunches, a modest evening dinner for participants. The award can cover alcohol to accompany one event dinner organised by the Research Network's organisers but will not cover bar bills of individuals and additional alcohol consumption apart from that dinner.
- Where it is impossible to avoid such charges monies may be used to hire meeting facilities. The Association normally expects these to be made available free of charge by universities.
- The monies may be used to hire audio-visual equipment where these charges cannot be avoided.
- The monies may be used to help with field trip costs such as coach hire etc.
- The monies may be used to cover modest charges for the copying of meeting materials such as handouts and the purchase of badges.

#### 2. Plenary speakers

From within the Research Network funding a maximum of £4,000 may be used for travel and accommodation expenses of plenary speakers. **Only those who are members of the RSA at the time of the event can be reimbursed.**

### **3. Provision of travel and accommodation bursaries to the following categories of RSA members who attend the meeting as delegates**

- any student member of the RSA
- any early career member of the RSA
- any associate (retired) member of the RSA
- any member based in a Band B, C or D country

For the purposes of clarity, only student and early career members based in a Band A country may make a claim for expenses through the Research Network scheme, members in any other category of Band A are not eligible. Any claim for expenses being made by a corporate member (Bands B, C and D only) should note that their expenses can only be refunded to the organisation holding the corporate membership.

All organisers are strongly advised to set a maximum ceiling for each participant awarded a bursary – this avoids financial shocks from unexpectedly large claims. Normally travel and accommodation bursary claims would not exceed £400.00.

The RSA will only reimburse economy class transport (train, plane, bus, underground and ferry), petrol costs met, and single rate accommodation. Claims for subsistence will not be met (i.e. you cannot claim for food or drink).

Organisers should inform all their delegates that bursaries apply only to participants who are RSA members at the time of the event. *Please note that claimants' membership status will be checked prior to reimbursement.*

The Research Network organisers may not claim their travel and accommodation expenses as this is not in the spirit of the scheme.

As part of this grant, Special Sessions at RSA conferences can be funded with up to £1,000 for travel and accommodation bursaries only.

### **4. Administrative support**

The Research Network grant allows organisers some administrative support (maximum of £1,500) but does not allow the employment of staff.

#### **Payment schedule and reimbursement Procedure**

The Research Networks' organisers will nominate a person when applying for the award, who will be responsible for all the claims throughout the Research Network. The organisers are expected to send the names of all participants awarded a travel and accommodation bursary to the RSA office. Participants who have been agreed by the organisers to receive a bursary will need to forward their signed claim forms and their original receipts to the person who will be corresponding with the RSA office for all claims.

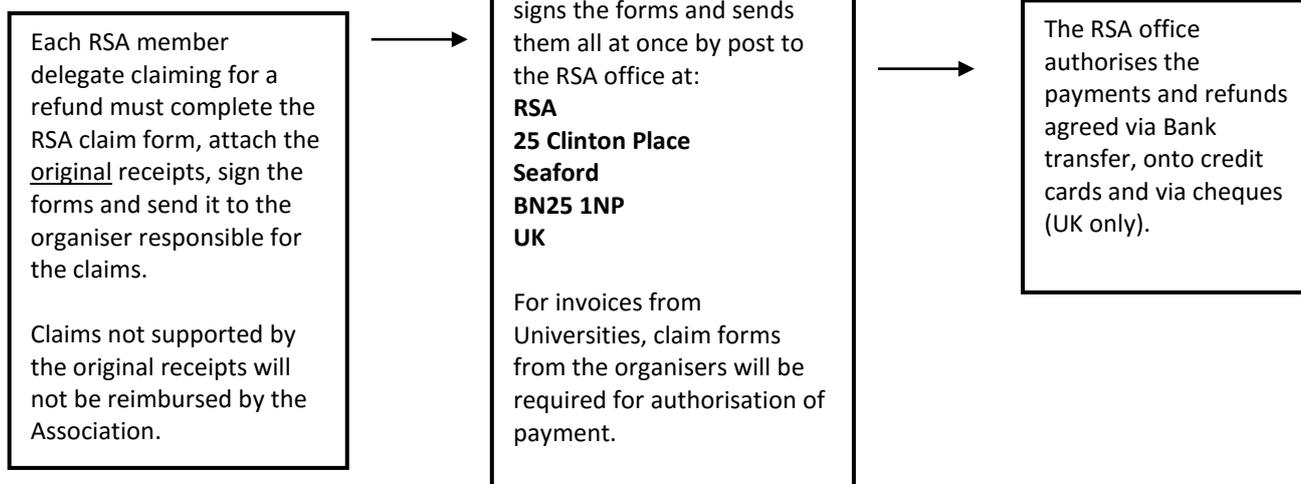
The Regional Studies Association holds the funds and reimbursements are made via the claim form or invoices, both supported by original receipts. It is important that invoices are made out to the Regional Studies Association and that you send the invoice to the RSA office for direct payment. The Association undertakes to make prompt reimbursements.

The last £2,000 of the Research Network grant will be retained until receipt and acceptance of the final report.

At the end of the Research Network, all unspent monies revert back to the Regional Studies Association.

Research Network organisers should ensure with their institution that the appropriate insurances are in place.

## Research Network claims procedure



**Please note that delegates are not to claim for refunds directly from the RSA office and each claim must be signed by the organisers of the Research Networks. Refunds will be made only if all the organisers are members of the Association and once the report of the event has been received by the office together with supporting materials.**

Please note that if a Research Network does not claim any refund within 6 months of its last event, claims will not be reimbursed by the RSA.

## VII. Research Networks' activities, outputs and dissemination of findings

Research Networks are expected to last for three years but longer lasting applications will be considered on merit. Grant holders may reapply for further funding. Continuation applications should demonstrate progression of the themes for discussion and a wider trawl for participants. Research Networks may only hold one award at a time.

Inactive Research Networks are a waste of both the RSA resources and those of the organisers and a poor reflection on the Association. The Board has therefore decided that, as a matter of policy, any Research Network which does not accept, sign and return the Award Letter within 6 months of its being sent to the organisers will be deemed obsolete.

Research Networks are expected to start their work in a timely way following the award and failure to do so may result in the closing of the award. Furthermore, if the Research Network does not provide its final report, the final payment for monies spent will be retained and steps may be taken to recover other monies expended. Of course, this would be a last resort and the Association hopes that it will not face such difficulties.

### Outputs and dissemination of findings:

- One introductory report for *Regions* on the new Research Network submitted to the next *Regions* issue published after the Award letter has been sent (submission deadlines for articles in *Regions* are 8<sup>th</sup> January, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 15<sup>th</sup> June and 8<sup>th</sup> October); other trade journals and magazines on the Association and other websites and via appropriate emailing distribution lists;
- To organise at least four Research Network events;
- To organise at least two Special Sessions held at one or two RSA conference(s);
- Event reports (including good quality photos) for each Research Network event need to be submitted to the RSA within 3 months after each event. A template for such reports is available at [www.regionalstudies.org/research](http://www.regionalstudies.org/research). These reports will be published on the RSA website and in the members' magazine *Regions*;
- To submit a paper to *Regional Studies*, *Regional Science (RSRS)*. The Article Processing Charge (APC) for a paper in RSRS will be covered by the RSA on top of the grant. For more details on RSRS go to <http://rsa.tandfonline.com>;
- Additional plans e.g. for a journal special issue or edited book are strongly encouraged, even if aspirational and should be clearly explained;
- To provide a final report at the end of the Research Network (within 6 months after the final event) of up to 750 words that summarises the Research Network and its activities;

- Any publications that flow from the research of the Research Network should acknowledge the financial support of the Regional Studies Association.

The RSA office team will support Research Network organisers in respect of advertising their events and activities to the wider membership and disseminating information following meetings. Award holders may always seek advice from the Office but have no direct call on the time of the staff team beyond this (i.e. the office staff will not be able to book rooms, arrange catering, book flights, staff the registration desk or otherwise support the activities of Research Networks).

## IX. Application procedure and renewal process

The application form is available at [www.regionalstudies.org/research](http://www.regionalstudies.org/research) and requires the following types of information:

- Title of proposed new Research Network
- Aims and objectives of the Research Network and where relevant, reasoning for any overlap with current Research Networks
- Link between the proposal and the Association’s prioritized research themes which are outlined in section III.
- Dissemination Plans
- Proposed plan of events and activities with dates and location and their anticipated outcomes
- Detailed budget

### Timing for applications

Closing date	Time	Anticipated announcement of decision	Earliest possible start
<b>31<sup>st</sup> July 2015</b>	16.00 (GMT)	End October 2015	1 November 2015
<b>31<sup>st</sup> July 2016</b>	16.00 (GMT)	End October 2016	1 November 2016

All completed applications are considered first by the Research Committee who may take references on the proposals and who will make a recommendation on funding to the Board of Trustees. The Board may delegate to the Research Committee or to one or more Trustees plus the Chief Executive any more detailed negotiations and final decision if it deems appropriate.

For renewals, an application form will need to be filled in and details of how the renewal proposal aims to develop the findings of the original or previous Research Network will be sought by the Research Committee and the Board. Proposals are considered by the Association’s Board which meets at regular intervals during the year. Renewal applications must be received in line with the application deadlines stated on the RSA website at [www.regionalstudies.org/research](http://www.regionalstudies.org/research).

If you require any further clarification or advice about setting up a Research Network, please contact the RSA via email: [daniela.carl@regionalstudies.org](mailto:daniela.carl@regionalstudies.org) or by phone on +44 (0)1323 899698.

Ends.