

Paper identifier	Meeting	Date	Protective Marking
Paper 1	Sections	March 2023	Protected/ Sensitive (commercial)



Sections

March 2023

Chief Executive's Report: Paper 1

This paper is for noting
Purpose:
<i>To update you on key issues at the Academy not covered elsewhere on your agenda. This is not a full report of activities which is provided separately.</i>
Recommendation(s):
<i>None</i>
Author
<i>Hetan Shah, Chief Executive</i>

1. **Political and policy context.** After the turmoil of the latter half of last year the political context is a little more settled. In early February, in a surprise move, the Prime Minister created a new Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), with Michelle Donelan as Secretary of State, and George Freeman as Minister of State. We responded positively to this development as it signals the value that the Prime Minister places on the research and innovation agenda and a smaller department with a dedicated Secretary of State will have more focus, although we would have preferred that universities had also been reunited with research in this portfolio.

We are continuing to develop our wider political links. We held a Christmas parliamentary reception in early December and were pleased it was attended by George Freeman and Chris Skidmore as well as Chi Onwurah (shadow Science Minister) and Matt Western (shadow HE Minister). More generally the Academy is starting to plan for a General Election in the coming 18 months or so.

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2. **Horizon Europe.** Fellows will recall that association to Horizon Europe is tied up in the wider politics. There is some growing hope that there may be movement on the Northern Ireland Protocol, perhaps around the time of the anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement in April. This could potentially unlock association to Horizon Europe. The Academy continues to campaign for association to Horizon Europe. If we ultimately find we are unable to associate, the Academy has helped feed into Plan B schemes which we would help to deliver, but we have made clear this is a far less desirable outcome.
3. **Strategy.** Following rounds of consultation with Sections and Committees and other stakeholders, the new Academy draft strategy was signed off by Council in November. It is now in the process of being designed, and will include a series of case studies etc to illustrate our work and we will be launching it soon, ensuring it is circulated widely among the Fellowship, funded researchers and our stakeholders.
4. **Building transformation.** The building redevelopment is progressing on schedule with the building fully reopening in early 2024. We are not holding any events in the Academy building between January and April 2023 due to the lifts and downstairs bathrooms being out of use, but expect to be able to do more in the period after this. Fellows are still able to use the Fellows room (which is temporarily relocated to the second floor) although there can be dust and noise in the building and access is only via the stairs. The building is closing at 6pm every evening during this period.
5. A total of £7.8 million for our capital appeal has been secured to date with a remaining £1.8 million to be secured before the end of the year. The Fellows and Friends Appeal for the capital appeal was launched in January and Fellows will have received a package outlining various ways to support the transformation of the Academy into a more open organisation with the creation of the new spaces on the lower ground floors and improved access throughout the building. There is an interactive demonstration of the changes we are making in [this section of the Academy's website](#) dedicated to the project. This is a once in a generation opportunity to create the facilities and infrastructure to deliver our mission and we hope you will consider giving to this exciting project. For further information about the Appeal please contact the Development Team – Jo Hopkins or Jennifer Hawton will be happy to help.
6. **Enhancing the Fellows Room.** As part of our Building Transformation Project, we will be refurbishing and relocating the Fellows Room to provide a larger more comfortable space. The new space will be on the ground floor and so easily accessible from street level, in the Burlington and Cornwall rooms. This will more than double the size of the space currently used as a Fellows room. The two rooms have a dividing door so can be one space, or two. The Cornwall Room will provide an elegant, welcoming and accessible lounge furnished to include a comfortable seating area, 4-person meeting table and refreshment station. The Burlington room will be furnished to provide Fellows with a stylish, professional, and accessible meeting space to work quietly, meet informally or book for more formal meetings. The Academy's Art

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Committee will be involved in room design and furnishings, and we intend to display parts of the Academy's art collection in there. We would welcome any feedback from Fellows at the Sections meeting or by email to Graeme Appleby, Director of Resources at g.appleby@thebritishacademy.

7. **Researchers at Risk.** We have now supported 141 Ukrainian researchers, and a further 194 dependents, with two-year Fellowships. We have been working in partnership with Cara (Council for at Risk Academics). We have brought the Researchers at Risk Fellows together on two occasions to share their research and build the support networks with each other.
8. **Early Career Research network.** The network has three regional hubs in the Midlands, South West and Scotland, and has over 2,000 members in less than a year. We are pleased to have received continuation funding from the Wolfson Foundation towards this project and over the coming period will grow the network with the ultimate ambition of covering the whole of the UK.