

Statement from the Arts and Humanities Alliance (UK; <http://artsandhums.org/>) on the vetoing of Australian Research Council grant applications in the Humanities.

The Arts and Humanities Alliance (AHA), an association of learned societies that work together to promote the interests of the arts and humanities in the UK, expresses its serious concern at the vetoing by the (former) Education Minister of Australia Simon Birmingham of applications to the Australian Research Council (ARC). As revealed in the Senate's Estimates Committee on 25 October 2018, and detailed in the Times Higher Education, the minister 'in an extraordinary departure from protocol', blocked the allocation of c£2.3 million in grants. The eleven blocked projects had been rigorously peer reviewed, considered by a Selection Advisory Committee drawn from the ARC's College of Experts, and recommended by the ARC's CEO for funding.

The AHA condemns political interference in decisions over research grant funding, and in particular the attack on the arts and humanities inherent in the ministerial veto, which only affected humanities grant applications. The AHA further expresses solidarity with the eleven research teams from across Australia whose funding applications were secretly vetoed despite the ARC's recommendation to fund them.

6 November, 2018

Professor Susan Bruce (University of Keele), co-Chair of the Arts and Humanities Alliance

Professor Martin Halliwell (University of Leicester), co-Chair of the Arts and Humanities Alliance

Professor Claire Squires (University of Stirling), Chair of the Association for Publishing Education

Dr Lucinda Matthews-Jones (Liverpool John Moores University) and Dr Jamie Wood (University of Lincoln), co-convenors of History UK.

Professor Simon McVeigh (Goldsmiths, University of London), President of the Royal Musical Association

Professor Claire Taylor (University of Liverpool), President of the Association of Hispanists of Great Britain and Ireland

Professor David Wood (University of Sheffield), President of the Society for Latin American Studies

Professor Marion Schmid (University of Edinburgh), President of the Association of University Professors and Heads of French

Professor Robert Stern (University of Sheffield) and Professor Fiona Macpherson (University of Glasgow), President and President-Elect of the British Philosophical Association

Dr Alex Thomson (University of Edinburgh), Chair of University English

Professor Bettina Schmidt (University of Wales, Trinity Saint David), President of the British Association for the Study of Religions

Maureen Galbraith (University of Glasgow), Economic History Society

Professor Jennifer Richards (University of Newcastle), Chair of the English Association's HE Committee

Dr Michelle Sheehan (Anglia Ruskin University), Linguistics Association of Great Britain

Professor Judith Still (University of Nottingham), Society for French Studies

Professor Brian Ward (University of Northumbria), Chair of the British Association for American Studies

Professor Jonathan Hale (University of Nottingham), Architectural Humanities Research Association

Professor Naomi Standen (University of Birmingham), President of the British Association for Chinese Studies

Professor Greg Woolf (Institute of Classical Studies, University of London), Chair of the Council of University Classical Departments

Professor Graham Smith (University of Newcastle), Oral History Society

Professor Margot Finn (UCL), President of the Royal Historical Society

Professor Judith Pallot (University of Oxford), President of British Association for Russian and Slavonic Studies)

Professor Angelia Wilson (University of Manchester), Chair, Political Studies Association