

Arts and Humanities Research Council
Landscape and Environment Programme

Annual Review

2005 -06



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'Hiking' by James Walker Tucker © Tyne and Wear museums



Antikythera Terraces, Greece. Image from a smaller grant project entitled 'Landscape Capital and Fragile Communities on Antikythera, Greece'.



Grasmere. Sally Bushell from a smaller grant project entitled 'From Goslar to Grasmere: Moving Through and Dwelling in Wordsworth's Manuscript Spaces'

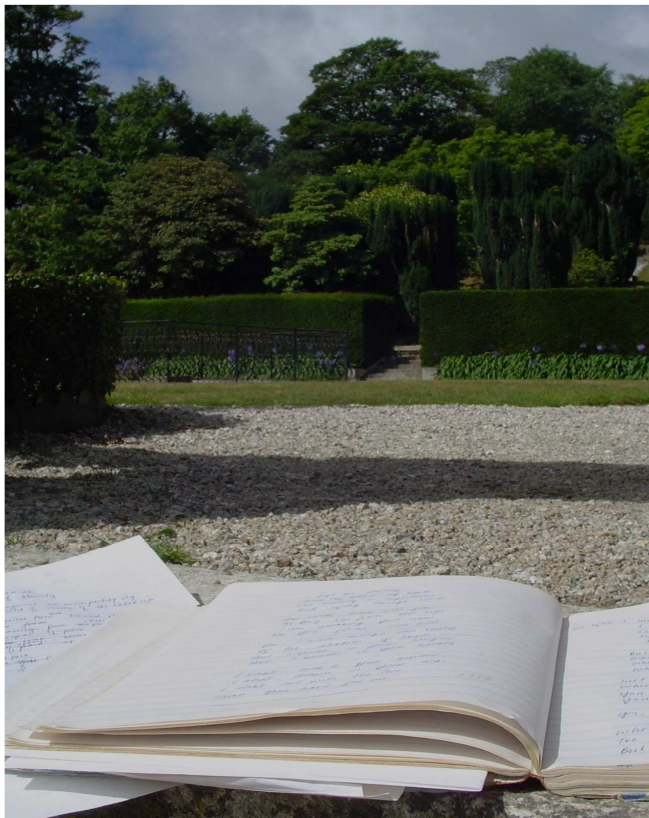
Images on the front cover from left to right:
(1) **Inca Altarniyoc.** Nicholas Branch, from a larger grant project entitled 'Inca ushnus: landscape, site and symbol in the Andes' (2) **Kelibit fishing.** Monica Janowski, from a larger grant project entitled 'The cultured rainforest: long-term human ecological histories in the highlands of Borneo' (3) **John climbing in Donegal,** Dan Shippesides, from a smaller grant project entitled 'Touchstone Test Piece'.

Introduction to the programme

Landscape and Environment are currently of compelling cultural significance, as fields of scholarly research, sites of artistic creativity and arenas of public concern.

As both imaginative representations and material realities, landscape and environment matter as a medium for the expression of complex ideas and feelings, about beauty, belonging, access to resources, relations with nature, the past and the future, making sense of the world and people's place in it. Such concerns are topical, but they are not new. In the mind and on the ground, landscape and environment are conditioned historically by sometimes far reaching cultural forms and processes, and in complex patterns and structures which demand a range of disciplinary perspectives to understand them.

The creation of the Landscape and Environment programme demonstrates the Arts and Humanities Research Council's commitment to a vigorous, interdisciplinary, international area of research. The response has been highly encouraging, in terms of the number and quality of applications, the rich range of projects funded, and the wider interest of scholars and non-academic stakeholders within and beyond the UK. The challenge for this programme is to advance knowledge, critically and creatively, of the cultural forms and processes shaping, and shaped by, landscape and environment.



Programme themes

Research of the highest quality, inventively conceived, rigorously pursued, imaginatively produced and well disseminated, will enrich understandings of landscape and environment at all levels, through a focus on the following themes:

- Images, values and knowledge
- Representing, making and meaning
- Time, space and narrative
- Settlement and movement
- Elements and ecologies
- Authority and access.

Programme aims and objectives

The programme aims to break new ground in bringing together a range of researchers to address the changing ways landscapes and environments have been imagined, experienced, designed, made and managed and communicating findings to a wide audience. The programme will extend the scope and deepen the focus of enquiry by examining landscapes and environments articulated in words, pictures, performance, patterns of building and cultivation and forms of conduct and livelihood. It will do so for a range of periods and places.

The programme aims to establish distinctive, innovative and engaging arts and humanities research perspective on landscape and environment through projects of the highest quality and international significance. Across the range of its activity, the programme will draw on a wealth of disciplinary expertise and resources to produce work which is critical and creative, collaborative and communicative, and seeking to change the ways landscape and environment are understood.

The Programme objectives:

- make a coherent contribution to arts and humanities understanding of landscape and environment through its thematic focus
- develop a research field in terms of theory, methods, sources, materials and case studies which will enable comparative analyses of landscape and environment to be undertaken
- explore new approaches for studying landscape and environment
- promote effective working between disciplines and build new connections and understanding as an outcome
- facilitate exchange between researchers, a wide range of individuals and organisations committed to increasing knowledge of landscape and environment, including those in the creative industries, the cultural sector (including museums and galleries), urban and rural communities, government agencies, public, charitable and voluntary bodies
- develop the research community by supporting new researchers and integrating them with established ones, including collaborating with researchers on organisations beyond the HE sector.
- contribute to public awareness of arts and humanities research on landscape and environment by disseminating findings and addressing current issues of public concern through outputs directed at a wide audience (including web pages, exhibitions, performances, public lectures and broadcasts)
- develop themes and approaches that are, or may become, embedded in the research agenda and resources of the arts and humanities
- make a significant international impact within the field of landscape and environment



J Langub and Kelabit, Monica Janowski, from a larger grant project entitled 'The cultured rainforest: long-term human ecological histories in the highlands of Borneo'



Mumbai, Matthew Gandhi, from a smaller grant project entitled 'Liquid City: water, landscape and social formation in twenty-first century Mumbai'

First year activities

Launch

The programme was launched with the public announcement of the programme specification in December 2005 and its call for applications to all funding schemes. The launch event was on January 24 at Tower Bridge, London, on the glass walkways, with spectacular views of the river and city, a fitting venue for the programme.



Tower Bridge, London

In his speech, Director Stephen Daniels set out the vision of the programme. AHRC Chief Executive Phillip Esler described how the programme was part of the Council's strategy. Director of Tate Britain, Stephen Deuchar offered an enthusiastic endorsement on behalf of the wider arts and humanities research community. The event attracted a wide range of interested parties and was reported in *The Guardian* Jan 31 2006 under the headline 'Landscape mode: its time to start looking around you'. The launch generated many enquiries in the run up to the February deadlines for the first three competitions which were *collaborative studentships*, *smaller research grants and networks and workshops* and also for the *larger grant* applications in April. The programme director was asked to speak about the programme at a number of venues, meeting with potential applicants and responding to their questions.

Setting up the programme

The priority in the first year has been to establish the main structures of the programme and to develop its content by funding projects under the four competitions -

- (1) Larger Grants,
- (2) Smaller Grants,
- (3) Networks and Workshops
- (4) Studentships.

Director

Stephen Daniels was appointed as Director in March 2005 and took up the post in September 2005. From April to September he worked with AHRC programme development officer Faye Auty and Associate Director of Programmes Chris Millward to prepare the ground for the programme specification. He participated in four pre-programme framework seminars (at the Universities of Sheffield, East Anglia, Nottingham and Royal Holloway, London) largely to attend to the interests and concerns of the participants and, on the basis of the consultation documents produced, to gather material for the programme specification.

Programme Office and Website

The programme office was established in April 2006 with the appointment of programme administrator Aoife Duggan (a part-time post). As well as dealing with day to day enquiries and organizing events and meetings her main task so far has been developing the website which was launched in early October 2006. Based at Nottingham, this has been granted an independent ac.uk domain name – www.landscape.ac.uk.



Committees



Wick Dive, Northamptonshire. Matthew Cragoe, from a larger grant project entitled 'Changing landscapes, changing environments: enclosure and culture in Northamptonshire, 1700-1900'

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was appointed in October 2005 and met the following month to help plan the first year of the programme, focussing on the programme specification which was discussed in draft. Their second meeting in September 2006 reviewed the first year's achievements, including a draft annual report, considered the timetable for the second year and the programme evaluation framework and discussed future developments.

Programme Commissioning Panel

The Programme Commissioning Panel was appointed in March 2006. It had its first meeting in April to decide on awards for the collaborative three year PhD studentships. Its second in June to decide on awards for *smaller grants* (between £20K and £100K fEC), *networks* (two years up to £30K fEC), *workshops* (one year up to £15K fEC) and on the shortlist of outline applications for *larger grants* (up to 3 years between £100 and 600K fEC). On these meetings the Director advised the panel on matters of programme fit and priority, themes, range and coherence; the Programme Manager advised on rules, funding and other formalities.

Steering Committee Members

Chair, Professor John Rink, Department of Music, Royal Holloway, University of London

Professor David Austin, Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, University of Wales, Lampeter

Professor Tim Barringer, Department of the History of Art, Yale University

Anne Boddington, Faculty of Arts and Architecture, University of Brighton

Dr Edward Impey, Director of Research and Standards Group, English Heritage

Professor Anne Janowitz, School of English and Drama, Queen Mary, University of London

Professor Philip Lowe, Rural Economy and Land Use Programme (Research Councils UK)

Professor Mike Pearson, Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, University of Wales, Aberystwyth

Dr Martin Postle, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London

Professor Richard Rodger, The Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester

Dr Fiona Watson, Freelance Writer and Honorary Research Fellow in the History Department at the University of Dundee

Applications

The programme attracted a total of 204 eligible applications. 37 awards were made, around the number expected.

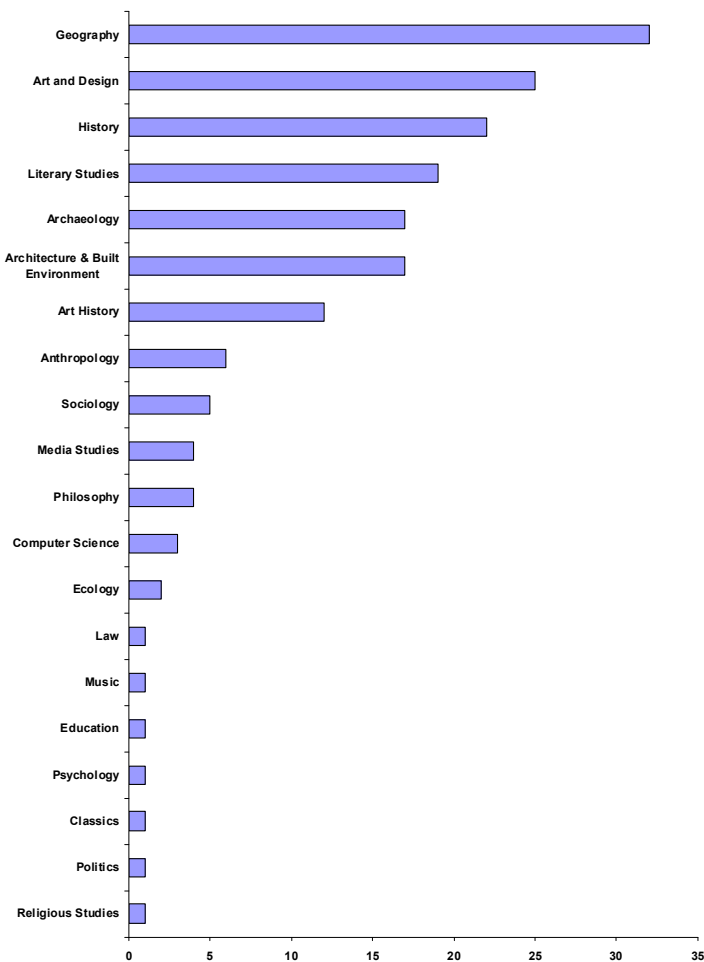
Larger Grants: By far the largest numbers of applications were for larger grants. Of the 124 eligible outline applications for these 27 were invited to make full applications. Full applicants were invited to liaise with the Director to develop their applications especially in the light of feedback at outline stage from the commissioning panel.

Smaller grants: The numbers of eligible applications for the smaller grants were 45, 9 were awarded.

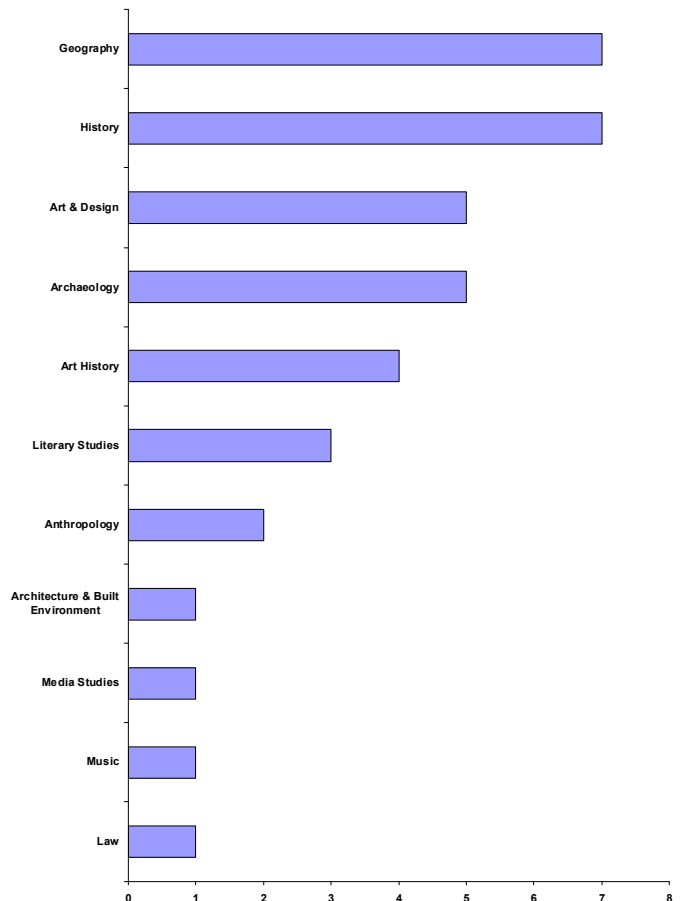
Networks and workshops: the number of eligible applications for the networks and workshops were 27 of which 11 were awarded.

Studentships: Of 8 eligible applications for collaborative studentships 5 awards were made. Also 8 of the 12 larger grant awards have studentships, which means that the programme as a whole has 13 studentships, realizing a programme aim of supporting new researchers and integrating them with established ones.

Applications by discipline of Principal Investigator



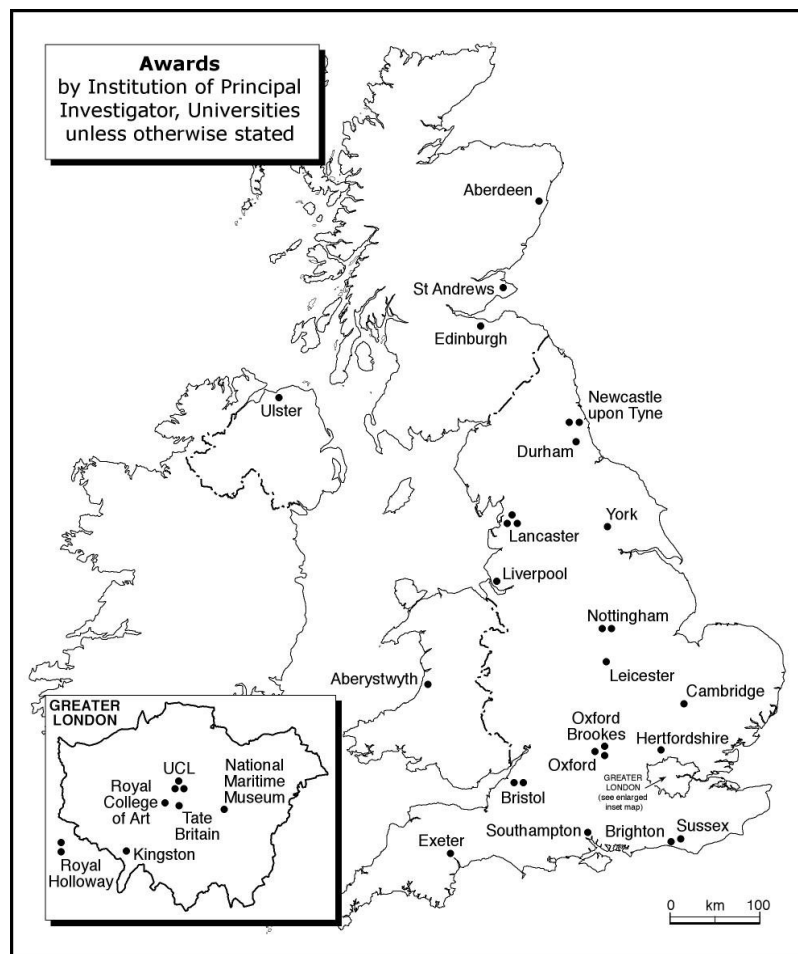
Awards by discipline of Principal Investigator



As the charts show the programme aim of drawing on “a range of disciplinary expertise and resources” has been realized, with the 37 awards distributed among 11 disciplines as Principal Investigators. Disciplines or subjects with an established research focus on landscape and environment like archaeology, geography (landscape and environmental) and history are well represented and unusual disciplines for this area are also represented such as music and law.

In the 207 applications 20 disciplines were represented by the affiliation of the Principal Investigator. Some, including sociology, religious studies and ecology are represented in successful awards by co-investigators, PhD co-supervisors, and members of advisory panels.

Awards have been made to institutions in all constituent parts of the UK (see map below). they include four post 1992 universities and two independent research organizations (formerly analogue institutions) which qualify to apply for AHRC funding, Tate Britain and the National Maritime Museum.



Research topics

The projects cover a broad range of subjects through an arts and humanities research perspective on landscape and environment. Some are historical in nature, others are more contemporary but all address specific research objectives and themes of the Landscape and Environment programme.

Looking specifically at the smaller grant projects the case studies cover a range of regions within and beyond the UK, Lincolnshire, mid-Lothian and the Lake District, Mumbai, the Eastern Mediterranean and Amazonia and their topics include gardens, farming terraces, rock climbs, spoil tips, river journeys and the poetry of place. An example of these is *TOUCHSTONE TEST PIECE*, a project that looks at how most cultural forms of landscape representation prioritise sight. Dan Shipsides, Project Investigator, states that “they define landscape through sight - through the lens of an eye or camera - it’s what is seen and the interpretation of what is seen. How much of the landscape is experienced through sight? What is missed through this ocular prioritisation? What is the landscape experience without sight? How can we develop narratives which address other senses of being in the landscape?” The *Touchstone* project regularly takes a blind person climbing over a long period of time and asks how can we use that accumulated experiential activity to learn more or construct new models of our experience of landscape and our representations of that space?



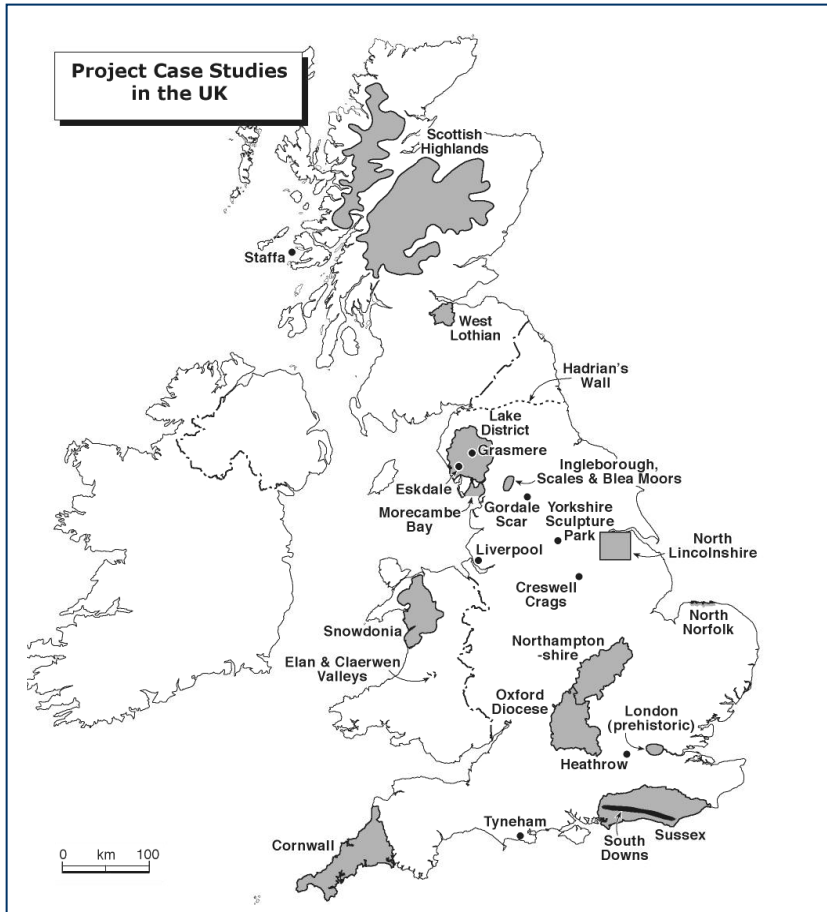
John climbing as part of Touchstone Test Piece.
Dan Shipsides.

Another project that illustrates the variety of themes is *INCA USHNUS: LANDSCAPE, SITE AND SYMBOL IN THE ANDES*. This larger grant project examines how the Inca Empire (c. AD 1400 – 1532) met the challenge of appropriating and modifying the Andean landscape to enhance its productive capacity and political power to create the largest native state in the Americas. Ushnus are a specific kind of Inca architectural construction and ranged from conspicuous, stone-faced stepped pyramids and platforms located in the central plazas of regional administrative centres, to smaller constructions placed at prominent visible points in the landscape. The first part of the project has involved fieldwork concerned with the excavation of five ushnus and has found that, importantly, there is the presence of multiple layers of topsoil and subsoil infilling the Inca ushnu structures, which suggests that this was a widespread practice, presumably of symbolic rather than practical importance.

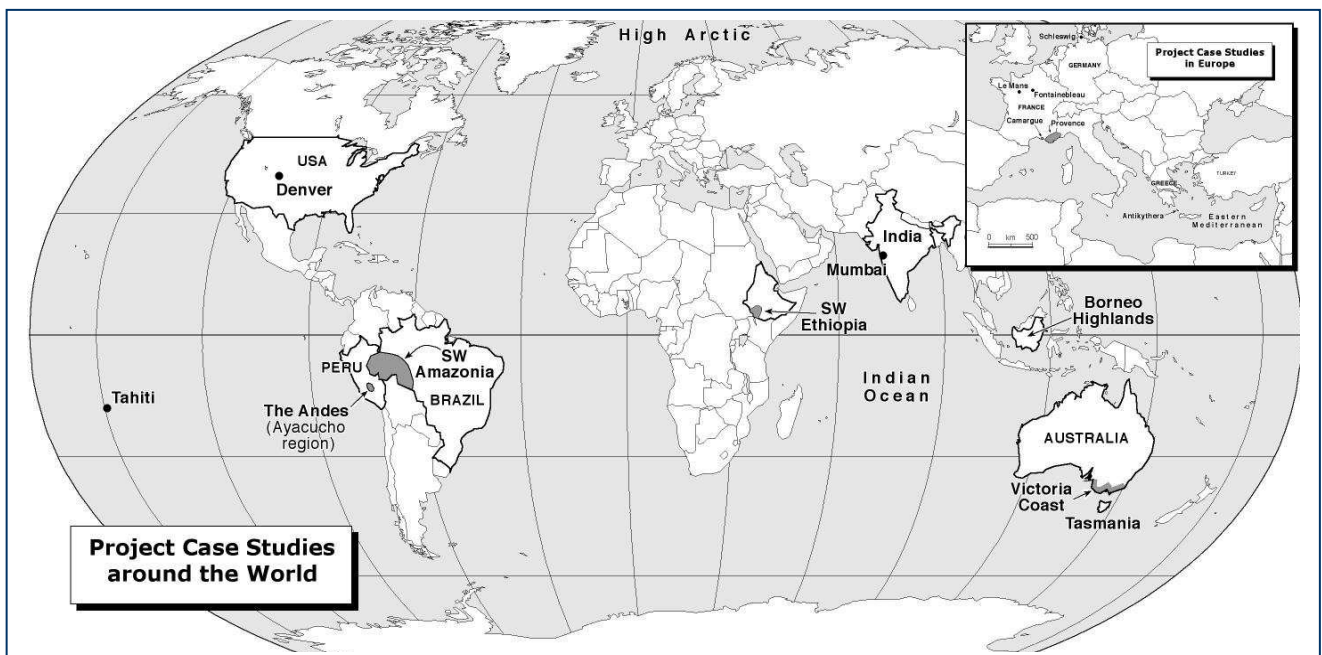


Inca Ushnus fieldwork. Dr Nicolas Branch, Project Investigator

Geographical project distribution



The maps here show the distribution of Project Case Studies within the UK and around the world illustrating the national and international spread of the programme.



Plans for 2007-2008

Projects awarded in all competitions will be underway during the year and Smaller Grants and Workshops will come to an end. During the first half of the year the Director will liaise with all projects to monitor progress and explore their potential for contributions to the programme as a whole. He will attend and participate in at least one event of all Network and Workshop projects, meet smaller grant holders and supervisors and students on collaborative studentships. Most Larger Grants start in June 2007. In the second half of the year the Director will liaise with Larger Grant holders, meeting as many as possible. Members of the programme Steering Committee will be active in liaising with projects close to their interests, in particular Larger Grants.

The first programme events will take place. Two are co-sponsored, a conference on *Literary Geographies* at the University of Nottingham in July and a conference session on *Liquid Landscapes* at the RGS, London in August. These will involve project holders and members of the steering committee and also contributions from researchers outside the programme.



'Illustration from Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (1621)' used to publicise *Literary Geographies: a multidisciplinary conference*



Garden; Andrew Church, from a smaller grant project entitled 'Writing the landscape of everyday life: lay narratives of the home Garden'

A Knowledge Transfer strategy for the programme will be developed, the Director working closely with steering committee members, project holders and non-academic stakeholders, especially in the museums and galleries and heritage and conservation sectors.

Engagement with international partners will be developed, following the Director's presentation to a successful ESF workshop on Landscape in Madrid in October 2006 and one to a symposium co-organized by the American Council of Learned Societies at the University of Virginia in June 2007.

With projects well underway, and so with delivered as well as planned research to report, the media profile of the programme will be raised. Longer term activities, including collaborations with cognate programmes, funded by both AHRC other Research Councils, will be planned.

The Director will begin drafting position papers on cross project themes such as theory, methodology, interdisciplinarity and knowledge exchange.

Timetable and milestones

Mar to Jul 2005	pre-programme framework seminars and consultations
Sept to Dec 2005	production of programme specification
Sept 2005 onwards	contact with interested researchers across the arts and humanities, in the UK and beyond, and stakeholders beyond the academy
Nov 2005	first meeting of Steering Committee
Dec 2005	launch of programme with first call for applications for 4 competitions
Jan 2006	formal launch event
Apr 2006	appointment of administrator
Apr 2006 onwards	development of website: www.landscape.ac.uk
Apr 2006	first meeting of Commissioning Panel - awards for collaborative studentships
Jun 2006	second meeting of Commissioning Panel - awards for smaller grants, networks and workshops; short-listing of outline applications for larger research grants
Jun to Jul 2006	liaison with larger research grant applicants to develop proposals
Sept 2006	second meeting of Steering Committee
Sept 2006 to Apr 2007	commencement of smaller grants, networks and workshops and collaborative studentships
Oct 2006	third and final meeting of Commissioning Panel – awards for larger grants
Oct 2006	meeting with AHRC Evaluation Team, draft evaluation framework
Oct 2006	international presentation: symposium <i>Landscape: Shaping the Future</i> , University College Dublin
Oct 2006	international presentation: European Science Foundation synergy workshop <i>Cultural Landscapes</i> Madrid
Jan 2007 to Jun 2007	commencement of larger grants
Jan 2007 onwards	meetings with project holders and attendance at selected Networks and Workshops
Apr 2007	third meeting of steering committee
May 2007	presentation to AHRC Research Committee
Jun 2007	international presentation: AAG/ACLS symposium on <i>Geography and the Humanities</i> , University of Virginia
Jul 2007	conference <i>Literary Geographies</i> University of Nottingham
Aug 2007	conference session <i>Liquid Landscapes</i> at RGS/IBG London
Nov 2007	postgraduate conference
Dec 2007	networks and workshops award holder workshop



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