

RSA

Scotland

June 2009 Newsletter

Governance is the final piece of the jigsaw to build a Society fit to face the future...

Welcome from the Chair

Engagement is the name of the game, and everywhere you look in the RSA, there are exciting things happening, whether it's the new Fellowship Council or changes to our governance. Here in Scotland, our work is really gathering pace, so please do take the time to read through this newsletter to keep up to date – and to get involved!

The core purpose of the RSA is Fellowship, so whether it is coming along to our Network evenings in Edinburgh and Glasgow (and soon in other cities); setting up your own Fellowship Network; getting involved in projects which are taking shape; signing up for our online discussions or attending one of our upcoming events, the opportunities abound. Our role as a Committee in Scotland is to create those spaces – it is up to you to populate them and make them work for you. Fellows across the country are sharing experiences and practice, finding inspiration in each others' approaches and stories and linking up on ideas and action, creating innovative solutions in local communities and further afield. It's one of the things I personally love about the RSA – it can be as much as you want to make it.

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I'm delighted to report that our work around Learning & Skills is taking shape, after spending time ensuring that the role of the RSA is clear and additional, and does not duplicate the innovative practice that is already happening within the sector in Scotland. Our project on design and sustainability is also moving forward, thanks to the involvement of an enthusiastic steering group of Fellows, as is our work on Food for the Future. Details are in this newsletter, and watch this space for more announcements about all of this work over the coming months.

Partnerships are crucial to our engagement work in Scotland, and this year has seen some incredibly successful developments. Our events at the Edinburgh International Book Festival, and the Festival of Politics look set to be sell-outs, and we are also planning for exciting speakers at the forthcoming AGM and Angus Millar Lecture – do keep your eye on the RSA Scotland web pages for details.

Talking of the web, if you haven't visited the RSA site recently, I'd commend you to do so – you can now listen live to all of the lectures held, or pick them up from the archive, and an increasing number are available as a webcast. With the forthcoming introduction of live video streaming, yet more barriers to engagement are coming down. So find yourself some "Fellowship Time", make yourself a cuppa, click on RSA Vision, and be inspired!

And if you have any ideas for events or speakers you could facilitate in Scotland, do just let us know – we'd love to hear from you!
Warmest wishes

Louise
Louise Macdonald FRSA

RSA Scotland Venture Fund

In early 2009 RSA Scotland announced the launch of our groundbreaking new RSA Scotland Venture Fund which is being seen as a model across the UK for supporting Fellows' ideas and energy. There have already been two rounds of applications and we have been delighted to receive so many enquiries and quality applications from Fellows in Scotland.

The RSA Scotland Venture Fund can fund a wide range of projects and activities and is open to all Fellows in Scotland. Your application must help us to achieve the aims of the RSA.

We are looking for projects, led by and involving RSA Fellows that:

- Tackle or remove the barriers to social progress.
- Inspire our network of Fellows and others to be a force for civic innovation and social change.
- Contribute to the challenging agendas around education and skills or design and sustainability.

The next deadline for submissions to the RSA Scotland Venture Fund is 14 September 2009. For more information about the winning bids so far read on.

Venture Fund Awards so far

The Panel met in April 2009 and was faced with an incredibly tough choice in determining which projects it would support. All of the proposals that were submitted had great potential, but in the end we are supporting the following projects:

Sue Roaf's Low Carbon Communities project, an initiative that will bring together groups in Scotland who are working to build low carbon communities in order to move the Low Carbon Communities agenda forward using a bottom up approach for Scottish Parliament.

Mark Hope's Woodend Arts Association: Go Local Campaign, an awareness campaign based in Aberdeenshire which encourages people to use their local arts centres rather than travelling further afield to attend events thus building audiences for the arts and reducing travel costs and CO2 emissions.

The winners of round two have been decided and will be announced in an upcoming communication.

We are very excited to see what all of these projects will deliver. To stay current with the latest developments, keep checking the website and newsletters. If there is a specific project that you are interested in hearing more about or connecting with, please get in touch.

If you are interested in developing a project in collaboration with other FRSA in Scotland, come along to a City Network meeting or get in touch with Judith.

RSA Fellows- Project Spotlight

Introducing an African Kitchen: fair trade, international development, public procurement and more

Tracy Mitchell FRSA, has been involved in fair trade initiatives for a number of years, through Shared Interest, www.shared-interest.com and now Just Trading Scotland – a new joint venture between two well established fair trade companies in Scotland.

Just Trading Scotland (www.justtradingscotland.co.uk) aims to supply quality foods and crafts from small producers in Africa and beyond. With its partners, it will work to ensure that there is an ethically verified supply chain linking the customer to the producers. In this way, the producers can get a just reward for their hard work and customers can use their purchasing power to help bring new life to the producers' communities. Just Trading Scotland seeks connectedness, empowerment and justice.



They are looking to widen their current market to provide additional benefit to the producers and would be interested in hearing from any Fellows who can help spread the word:

- Teachers or those involved in schools' procurement – Just Trading Scotland has supplied Schools with fairly traded rice with teachers' packs to facilitate a link to the curriculum
- Those involved in public procurement to help make links to possible sales outlets
- Those involved in the restaurant and catering trade that would be interested in serving these products in their outlets
- Those with wholefood cooperative connections
- Those with an interest in fair trade, international development or social enterprise
- And anyone who would simply like to know more and be added to their mailing list!

Please contact info@justtradingscotland.co.uk or Kellie on 0141 887 1881

ANY NEWS?

Communicating the activities of the Fellowship across Scotland is the first step to creating a dynamic Fellowship network. As an RSA Fellow if there is anything you are doing in your area which other Fellows should know about and can get involved in, please contact Judith Friedman.

We will only include items which relate to the goals of the RSA, where Fellows can get actively involved. Any decisions will be at the editor's discretion.

RSA – Changes to Governance

“Over the last three years, the RSA Board has reviewed every aspect of the Society's structure and operations and has made great progress. Governance is the final piece of the jigsaw to build a Society fit to face the future.” Gerry Acher, Chair, RSA

A new consultation document has been produced to share with the Fellows of the RSA the current proposals as to how the Trustees believe the organisation should be governed. It outlines the existing state of the Society's governance and why the Trustees feel there is a need to make changes. The key failing of the Society's governance arrangements has been the lack of a coherent mechanism for the contribution of Fellows. The Governance Working Group, set up by the Board to lead this latest governance review, has already recommended the establishment of a Fellowship Council (see below) to address this gap.

The Fellowship Council will be the key legacy of this review, and will allow Fellows to participate effectively in the governance of the Society. The establishment of the Fellowship Council is well under way and has been widely welcomed.

Trustees are now keen to share with the Fellowship the remaining proposals of the Governance Working Group. These are intended to strengthen the role of the Fellowship Council and its links with the Board. These proposals have been informed by feedback from Fellows, tested with Regional and National Chairs and considered by the previous Advisory Council members. The Governance Working Group now wishes to hear your views.

Following the establishment of the Fellowship Council, the main proposals are to:

- Replace two elected Trustees with two representatives of the new Fellowship Council. This will cement the links between the Board and the new Fellowship Council.
- Create a six-member Nominations Panel, jointly appointed by the Board and the Fellowship Council to review appointments of Trustees and members of the Fellowship Council. This will replace the existing Nominations Committee, allowing for the involvement of both the Board and the Fellowship Council.
- Modernise existing processes relating to cessation of office and the expulsion or suspension of Trustees and Fellows.

The introduction of the Fellowship Council is the key governance change, but the package of measures should be considered as a whole. The Governance Working Group recommends these proposals to the Fellowship and would like to receive any comments you may have by 5pm on Friday 10th July. These comments will be reviewed by the Governance Working Group and the Trustees. Additional soundings will be conducted and amendments made as appropriate in order to prepare the necessary resolutions for the AGM on 7th October 2009. Details of how to contribute are set out in section 4 of the document available on the RSA website: http://www.thersa.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/209635/RSA-Governance-Proposed-Changes.pdf

RSA Fellowship Council Update

The process for selecting the new RSA Fellowship Council is well underway. This is a new and exciting opportunity for Fellows to become more engaged with the work of the Society.

The new Fellowship Council will:

- Raise the profile and represent the interests of the Fellowship and the RSA
- Ensure that the Fellowship and the Society work together effectively
- Identify and encourage best practice for the development of Fellows' networks and activities
- Engage Fellows in the development of programmes, projects and activities

An early task will be to agree a new Fellows' Charter – outlining more explicitly the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of Fellowship. Download further information on [how the Fellowship Council works](#) (PDF, 84KB)

RSA Fellowship Council – At A Glance Guide

- The Council will be limited to 40 RSA Fellows:
 - - 20 elected directly on a regional basis
 - - 20 who will be nominated by Trustees
- Two members (normally the Chair and Deputy Chair) of the Council will serve as full members of the Trustee Board
- Nominations opened **20 April 2009**
- Nominations closed **22 May 2009**
- Elections (where necessary) began on **17 June 2009**
- Elections end on **7 July 2009**
- Trustee Board review Council Members late **July 2009**
- The new Fellowship Council will be endorsed at the 2009 AGM of the RSA in **October 2009**

It is hoped that membership of the Fellowship Council will be a rewarding and inspiring experience, with candidates demonstrating ability and commitment through having:

- Made a practical contribution to civil society through voluntary, social or community organisations
- Challenged current thinking; shown bravery or innovation in their actions; or pioneered positive change
- Used their expertise and enthusiasm to participate in RSA projects or wider work
- Participated in communities and networks, and shown a generosity in sharing ideas and resources.

The Nominations Committee have met to confirm candidates and elections opened on 17 June, closing 5pm on 7 July. All Fellows will be eligible to vote for Council representation in their region or nation. Regional Elections will take place across ten regions: four nations/regions (Scotland, South Central, North West and South East) do not require an election as only the required number of candidates stood, so are therefore unopposed.

If you would like more information regarding the Fellowship Council or would like more information regarding your potential Council representative, contact the Fellowship team by [email](#) or by calling +44 (0)20 7451 6826.

For details regarding the nomination process, which closed on **22 May**, download the [Call for Nominations for Elections to the RSA Fellowship Council \(2009\)](#) (PDF, 39KB) and the [nomination form](#) (PDF, 33KB).

Design and Sustainability

RSA Dialogues: Designing People Centred Cities in Scotland

At its November 2007 Conference, RSA Scotland identified Design & Sustainability as a priority area. The aim is to make an impact on Scottish society, according to the objectives of the RSA, by supporting design initiatives and demonstrating how design can be used to create sustainable solutions to the challenges facing Scotland.

Based on the RSA's rich tradition of challenging public debate, the Design and Sustainability group proposes a participatory lecture, in the form of a 'Fishbowl Conversation', to tap into, hear from, and challenge the diverse expertise of design and sustainability professionals and address local issues of sustainability and design. The event will highlight how design can be used to meet the challenge of climate change through the creation of people centred cities - taking into account the diverse, and sometimes diverging, interests of different stakeholders with the intention of bringing together sustainability, design, urban planning, transport, economy and people to answer the question: How do we put people at the centre of Edinburgh's city planning: Pedestrianising Princes Street?

The event will be a pilot for a series of RSA Dialogues exploring the issues surrounding design and sustainability in cities across Scotland through a form of debate that encourages stakeholders to engage in a productive, co-operative way. The format intends to stimulate dialogue amongst Fellows, and possibly the wider public, about design and sustainability in the light of the challenges facing cities vis-à-vis urban planning.

The event will take place in Edinburgh this Autumn and, if successful, will be replicated in other cities in Scotland.

For more information, please contact [Judith Friedman](#).



Learning and Skills- Let us know your views

Many Fellows have indicated their interest in this field and we have therefore set up a "Ning" website which makes it easy for you to contribute your thoughts. Bob Porrer, Deputy Chair of RSA Scotland, has started the ball rolling with the following note:

"... We should be taking a lifelong learning approach and looking at supporting skills development in schools, colleges and universities as well as community support for this. In reaching those in special need, such as the disadvantaged or disengaged we need to take a holistic approach. ... In essence we should be aiming to develop confident learners who are able to respond to changes in employment and personal circumstances by enhancing existing and developing new skills.

We can use the unique position of the RSA to bring together the wide range of stakeholders, and build partnerships with the various organisations representing these. ... We should invite the organisations represented at the exploratory seminar, and others, to consider how the RSA and its Fellows could help them with small or large projects. At the same time, with the RSA Venture Fund as a possible source of "seed-corn" funding, we should encourage small groups of Fellows to get involved in projects.

The further sharing of experience in Scotland and England (Opening Minds/Curriculum for Excellence), could also be beneficial, while we could also consider promoting the RSA Education Charter actively in Scotland.

We can aim to influence both policy and practice and now actively seek suggestions from Fellows on activities, projects, events and partnerships. Add your comments at: <http://rsascotlandeducationandskills.ning.com/>

Some dates for your calendar

Edinburgh International Book Festival: Douglas Coupland, 8pm 30 August The RSA Event

The RSA is thrilled to be partnering with the Edinburgh International Book Festival again in 2009. This year's fantastic event promises to be hugely popular and bring in an eclectic crowd to hear what the author has to say. "Witty, clever and entertaining, **Douglas Coupland's** international bestselling novels walk the tightrope between optimism and paranoia. *Generation A* mirrors his debut *Generation X*, this time with a near-future world where bees are thought extinct, until five people in different countries are stung on the same day. A hugely original contemporary voice." For tickets visit www.edbookfest.co.uk

Festival of Politics

Climate for Change – From Economic Crash to Eco Recovery? Nicholas Stern, Andrew Price & Nicholas Murray, 8pm 21 August

Louise Macdonald, Chair of RSA Scotland will be chairing this challenging panel. Not only has the recent collapse in the global economy devastated peoples lives, it appears to have pushed the ever-increasing threat of climate change from people's minds. Yet could the economic crisis present an opportunity to build a sustainable future? Join **Nicholas Stern** – renowned author of *The Stern Report* and *A Blueprint for a Safer Planet*, **Leo Murray** – media producer of *The Age of Stupid*, and **Andrew Price**, author of *Slow-tech: Manifesto for an Over-wound World*, as they discuss how our economically destructive past could become an environmentally sustainable future. For tickets, visit www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk/

RSA City Networks and Nings

Fellows in Scotland now have the opportunity to meet, collaborate with and connect with other Fellows through regular networking evenings held in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The **Edinburgh Network** meets regularly on the last Thursday of the month at **Le Monde Hotel**, 16 George Street, Edinburgh, 5-7pm. The next Edinburgh Network meeting is 25 June 2009.

The **Glasgow Network** meets on the second Tuesday of the month at **Café Gandolfi**, 64 Albion Street, Glasgow, 5-7pm. The next meeting is 7 July 2009.

The evenings will give you a chance to meet other RSA Fellows and will give you a chance to share ideas around the new RSA Scotland Venture Fund and anything else that you think that other RSA Fellows might want to work on.

Throughout 2009, we plan to launch RSA Networks throughout Scotland in order to provide more opportunities for Fellows to meet, to share ideas, and to find ways to make an impact. These events are free and non-ticketed and we only suggest that you bring lots of business cards and an open mind.

Members of the RSA Scotland committee and RSA staff will be present to answer any questions about Fellowship and getting involved with the work of the RSA in Scotland. If you have any questions prior to the event, please contact **Judith Friedman**.

Also, you can now continue your discussions online.
To connect with Fellows in Edinburgh: <http://rsaedinburgh.ning.com/>
To connect with Fellows in Glasgow: <http://rsaglasgow.ning.com/>

If you are interested in connecting with Fellows in another city in Scotland, please contact **Judith** to find out how.

RSA Networks

In order to help encourage Fellows to get together, collaborate and innovate, the RSA has revised its guidelines on Fellow-led special interest groups and local networks. These guidelines have been approved by the RSA Trustee Board.

The guidelines both support Fellows to generate opportunities to connect and share with each other and answer questions about how to do this. Fellows increasingly connect with other Fellows across a wide range of themes, areas and ideas.

The changes in guidelines for Fellow-led groups have been informed by Fellows' questions and concerns about RSA branding, reputation, financial disclosure and resources. The guidelines provide more specific parameters for engagement.

The RSA wants to encourage Fellows to establish the kind of environment that allows them to create, innovate and collaborate with other Fellows. The new 'General Conditions' encourage Fellows to produce 'Networks' with other Fellows with aims and ethos that are complementary to and consistent with the RSA. There is already one successful Network in operation, the "Media, Creative Industries, Culture & Heritage Network", run by Ann Packard FRSA

These Networks can be exclusively organised, managed and delivered by Fellows and will be open to any Fellows on a self-selecting basis. If you have any questions about setting up a Network or about getting in touch with like-minded Fellows, please contact **Judith Friedman**

Download revised [Policy and General Conditions for Handling RSA Fellows' Networks and Fellows' Activities](#) (PDF, 28KB)

Committee Call out

The RSA Scotland Committee is looking for Fellows who would be interested in joining the Committee, as part of the new session for 09/10. At the forthcoming AGM (September – date tbc), we will have at least two places available on the Committee, and we would be delighted to hear from any potential members. In particular we are looking for members from the business and education sectors, as well as those in the creative industries, but that isn't exclusive! What matters most is an enthusiasm for all of the work of the RSA, and a commitment to engaging the Fellowship across Scotland. We are moving to a model of Committee members taking on "portfolios", so as well as attending Committee meetings, additional input would be expected, though not onerous or excessive, as we appreciate this is a voluntary role.

For more information, or an informal chat, please contact the Chair in Scotland, Louise Macdonald m: 07900 493413/ louisem@youngscot.org

Nominate a Fellow

Fellows are passionate about joining forces to achieve positive change. Do you know more like minded people in Scotland – optimistic, innovative and engaged – who can help us build a better society together? Please [nominate them](#) to join! You will need to log-in and have your membership number handy to complete the form.

RSA Scotland Committee

Chair: Louise Macdonald louisem@youngscot.org
Deputy Chair: Robert Porrer porrer@blueyonder.co.uk
Secretary: Sue Hunter sue.hunter@morton-fraser.com
Treasurer: Helen Boath h.boath@sky.com

Members: Richard Adams, Patricia Armstrong, Steve Baldry, Gemma Bell, William Cairns, June Edgar, Frances Gallagher, Jane Kille, Andrew Milligan, Ben Spencer, Kathleen Stewart, Rob Wherrett

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