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Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



# Relevance and Impact of the Humanities

December 15-16, 2008

University of Vienna,  
Juridicum, top floor,  
Schottenbastei 10-16, 1010 Vienna

- 9:00 - 09:30 am **Welcome and Introduction**  
**Georg Winckler**,  
*University of Vienna and European University Association*  
**Shearer West**, *Arts and Humanities Research Council*  
**Herbert Gottweis**, *Austrian Science Foundation*  
**Milena Zic-Fuchs**, *European Science Foundation*
- 09:30 - 10:15 am **Key Note:**  
**Walter Pohl**, *University of Vienna*  
**Where do we stand and where do we go?**  
**The Humanities and different meanings of relevance and impact**  
Discussion
- 10:15 - 10:45 am Coffee Break
- 10:45 - 12:30 am **Impact studies and the use of metrics in the Humanities: Concepts and limits**  
**Carl Dolan** (HERA - Humanities in the European Research Area):  
The HERA Impact and Quality Assessment -  
Evaluation and benchmarking of Humanities research in Europe  
**Tony McEnery** (University of Lancaster):  
The use of research metrics and the economic, social and cultural  
impact of Arts and Humanities research.  
**Christine Kosmopoulos** (CNRS-UMR Géographie-cités):  
The prospects opened by Open Access  
Discussion
- 12:30 - 1:30 pm Lunch
- 1:30 - 3:30 pm **Relevance, societal impacts of research and public policy making**  
**Jack Spaapen** (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences  
KNAW): Evaluating Research in Context - the ERiC Project  
**Alan Wilson** (British Academy): Punching our weight:  
the Humanities and Social Sciences in public policy making  
**Bob Frodeman** (University of North Texas):  
Integrating societal impacts concerns into Peer Review
- 3:30 - 4:00 pm Coffee Break
- 4:00 - 6:00 pm **Podium discussion**  
**Annemarie Bos** (Netherlands Org. for Scientific Research) *Chair*  
**Andre Gingrich** (University of Vienna)  
**Carl Dolan** (HERA - Humanities in the European Research Area)  
**Rüdiger Klein** (European Science Foundation)  
**Gerhard Budin** (University of Vienna)  
**Henry Widdowson** (University of London, Essex University and  
University of Vienna)
- 7.00 - 7.30 pm **Guided tour through the University of Vienna**
- 7.30 pm Conference Dinner  
Vienna University Library  
Teinfaltstraße 8, 1010 Vienna (ground floor)

December 16, 2008 **PROGRAMME**

- 9:00 - 10:00 am **Making the Humanities count**  
**Nina Kancewicz-Hoffman** (European Science Foundation):  
Increasing visibility for a multifaceted Humanities research in Europe  
the ERIH approach  
**Alain Peyraube** (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and  
Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales): Evaluation of the  
Humanities at the ERC  
  
Discussion
- 10:00 - 10:30 am Coffee Break
- 10:30 - 12:00 am **Insights from the interface between Humanities and Sciences**  
**Ruth Wodak** (University of Vienna and University of Lancaster):  
Blurring of boundaries: Between Science and the Humanities  
**Natalie Sebanz** (Radboud University Nijmegen):  
Between Sciences and Humanities – Methods, thinking traditions  
and communication patterns in the Cognitive Sciences  
**Richard Parncutt** (University of Graz): Assessment of quality and  
impact at the interface between Sciences and Humanities: The case of  
systematic musicology  
  
Discussion
- 12:00 - 1:00 pm **Closing Panel: Future prospects of the Humanities**  
**Peter Kampits** (University of Vienna) *Chair*  
**Milena Zic-Fuchs** (European Sciences Foundation)  
**Alan Wilson** (British Academy)  
**Ruth Wodak** (University of Vienna and University of Lancaster)
- 1:00 - 2:00 pm **Discussions and Snack**
- 2:00 pm **End of the Workshop**

There is no charge for this event,  
but registration is essential  
as space is limited.

Please send your registration  
for the conference  
and the conference dinner to  
[claudia.hopfer@univie.ac.at](mailto:claudia.hopfer@univie.ac.at).

# Relevance and Impact of the Humanities

Against the background of an increasing demand for transparent and appropriate instruments to assess quality and impact of various kinds of research and to ensure accountability of public money spent on it, the humanities get more and more under pressure. In the context of the ongoing debate on research evaluation, metrics, ranking and benchmarks, the very characteristics of the humanities and its specific thinking traditions, publication patterns, community sizes and resource requirements seem to be a natural contradiction to simple bibliometric indicators. For the future of humanities research different criteria should be developed which are more in line with their own research traditions. At the European level, important steps into this direction were recently undertaken both by the European Science Foundation with the development of an own journal index for the humanities (ERIH – European Research Index for the Humanities) and by the HERA network (Humanities in the European Research Area).

The workshop intends to reflect on this debate but to also enlarge the topic by the dimensions of relevance and impact. Therefore, the purpose of the workshop is threefold:

1. The workshop aims at summarizing the arguments pro and against the use of metrics in the context of humanities research as well as the attempts to formulate alternative common principles for the assessment of humanities research.
2. Furthermore, the workshop focuses on relevance and impact, in order to obtain a complete picture of the potentials of research in the humanities. Two aspects are substantial in this context: First the relevance to the advancement of knowledge in the discipline and science in general, and second the possible impact on the broader context of social, cultural and economic developments.
3. A deeper look into the very nature of research in the humanities shows that the distinctiveness of the humanities is not only true in the comparison with the sciences but also apparent at the level of the different disciplines. The workshop wants to investigate humanities' thinking traditions and its relationship to the sciences. Does the old distinction between the “hermeneutic-appreciating” disciplines against the “explanatory-causative” ones hold any longer?

The workshop addresses humanities researchers, deans and presidents of research, funding agencies, librarians as well as national and international policy makers and council members.

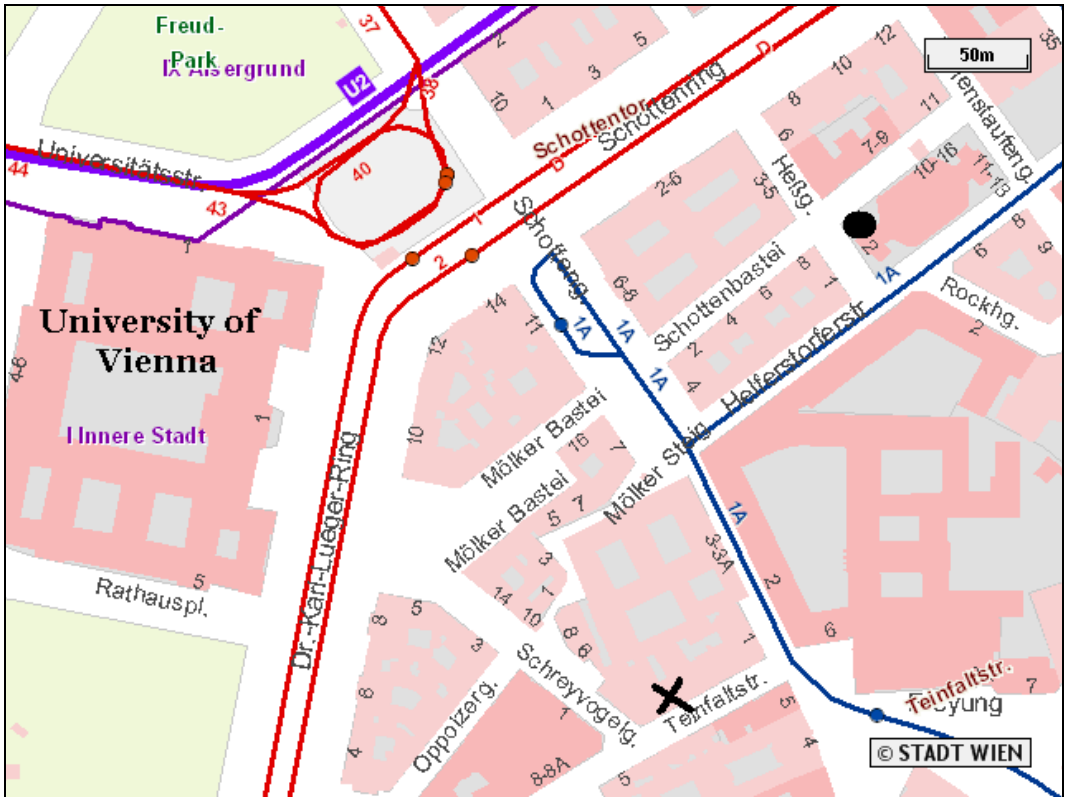
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Legende:

● = location Conference, Schottenbastei 10-16 (top floor)

X = location Conference Dinner, Teinfaltstraße 8 (ground floor)