

THE BRITISH ACADEMY

AN INTRODUCTION

HISTORY
LITERATURE & LANGUAGES
PSYCHOLOGY
ECONOMICS
LAW
MEDIEVAL STUDIES
ARCHAEOLOGY
CLASSICS
GEOGRAPHY
LINGUISTICS
SOCIOLOGY
AFRICAN & ORIENTAL STUDIES
THEOLOGY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES
PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS
HISTORY OF ART & MUSIC
ANTHROPOLOGY
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
EDUCATION & MANAGEMENT
POLITICAL STUDIES



BRITISH
ACADEMY

‘ Our purpose is to inspire, recognise and support excellence in the humanities and social sciences, throughout the UK and internationally, and to champion their role and value. ’

The British Academy published a five year Strategic Framework in 2008.
The full text is available at www.britac.ac.uk/about/strategic.cfm

INTRODUCTION

The British Academy is the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences. From Law to Linguistics, Psychology to Philosophy, and Economics to Ethics, the Academy aims to inspire, recognise and support excellence and high achievement across all its disciplines, as well as nurture curiosity and influence policy.

With a Fellowship of over 1,000 eminent scholars, the Academy is governed by an elected Council of Fellows, and operates from 10-11 Carlton House Terrace in central London. It funds national and international research, awards prizes and medals, produces academic and policy-related publications, and organises a wide-ranging programme of public events.

The British Academy is based at 10-11 Carlton House Terrace in central London

To sign up to receive our regular email bulletins, please go to www.britac.ac.uk/news/bulletin

A HISTORY

The creation of a British Academy “for the Promotion of Historical, Philosophical and Philological Studies” was first proposed in 1899 in order that Britain could be represented at meetings of European and American academies. The organisation, which simply became the British Academy, received its Royal Charter from King Edward VII in 1902.

Since then, many of Britain’s most distinguished scholars in the humanities and social sciences have been involved in the life of the Academy, including John Maynard Keynes, Isaiah Berlin, C.S. Lewis and Henry Moore.

In 1998 the Academy moved to its present headquarters at Carlton House Terrace. One of London’s finest Georgian treasures, the Terrace, overlooking St James’s Park, was designed by John Nash and built in the 1820s and 1830s. Number 10 was formerly the London residence of the Ridley family, and number 11 was from 1856 to 1875 the home of Prime Minister William Gladstone.

For more information on the history of
10-11 Carlton House Terrace, please visit
www.britac.ac.uk/about

THE FELLOWSHIP

Each year the British Academy elects into its Fellowship outstanding UK-based scholars who have achieved distinction in any branch of the humanities and social sciences. Scholars based overseas are elected as Corresponding Fellows of the Academy, and a small number of Honorary Fellows are also elected each year.

The Fellowship is at the heart of the intellectual life of the Academy. It elects the Council, which has overall responsibility for the policies and strategies of the Academy, and it provides expert advice on research funding, policy reports and current issues in the various disciplines.

The current President is the distinguished international relations specialist, Professor Sir Adam Roberts.

Six Academy Presidents *Gallus Gallus with Still Life and Presidents* by Stuart Pearson Wright. The commissioning of this painting coincided with the Academy's centenary in 2002, and depicts the six presidents of the Academy who were living at the time

Further details of British Academy Fellows can be found on the Academy's website – www.britac.ac.uk/fellowship

SUPPORTING OUTSTANDING RESEARCH

The British Academy seeks to champion and foster academic excellence and achievement, and to advance new ideas and developments in all of the disciplines it represents. The Academy currently channels substantial public funding into support for individuals and organisations pursuing humanities and social sciences research and scholarship in the UK and overseas.

Funding schemes are designed to aid scholars at different stages of their academic career; these include Postdoctoral Fellowships, Small Research Grants, Wolfson Research Professorships, Leverhulme Senior Research Fellowships, Conference Support Schemes and British Academy Research Projects.

In addition to public funds supported through the Academy's annual grant from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, sums from private funds arising from gifts, legacies, contributions made by Fellows and grants from research foundations are also used to support a range of research activities.

In total, some 1,000 research awards worth over £20 million are made each year to individuals based in over 120 different universities across the UK.

A British Academy Small Research Grant uncovered an unexpected link between texting and literacy development in children

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Promoting the interests of UK research and learning around the world is a vital part of the Academy's function. It works to develop the role of humanities and social sciences research in tackling global challenges by creating frameworks to support international networking and collaboration.

The Academy draws on expertise from a wide range of sources: its Fellowship; its seven Area Panels – for Africa, China, the Middle East, Europe, South Asia, and Latin America/Caribbean – which provide specialist advice on developing links around the world; and an extensive range of international partnerships including universities and academies overseas.

In addition, the Academy funds and coordinates a network of overseas institutes which provide local expertise, logistical support and often a working base for UK scholars. These include research institutes in Amman, Ankara, Athens, Jerusalem, Nairobi, Rome

and Tehran, as well as UK-based specialist learned societies which run strategic research programmes in other parts of the world including Africa, Latin America and South and South East Asia.

A marble head from an archaeological excavation at Portus, the ancient port of Rome, a project involving the British Academy-funded British School at Rome

Further details of the Academy's international work can be found on the Academy's website – www.britac.ac.uk/intl

EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The British Academy organises an extensive programme of public lectures, debates and conferences, ranging across the humanities and social sciences, open to all. Events take place both in London and in other parts of the UK, and recordings of many of them are made available on the Academy website.

The Academy also produces a wide range of academic publications, including monographs, conference papers, research series and the *British Academy Review*, a magazine which features articles on new scholarship across the humanities and social sciences, published three times a year.

Simon Schama lecturing at a British Academy event

For details of current and planned British Academy events go to www.britac.ac.uk/events and for publications to www.britac.ac.uk/pubs – where the latest copy of the *British Academy Review* can be downloaded or requested.

POLICY ENGAGEMENT

The British Academy is a powerful advocate for the humanities and social sciences and regularly provides informed advice on higher education and research policy to the Government or other bodies.

In 2009 the Academy extended its remit with the establishment of the Policy Centre, created with additional support from the Arts and Humanities and Economic and Social Research Councils. The Policy Centre engages academic expertise in the humanities and social sciences to shed light on contemporary social, economic and environmental challenges and provide independent, evidence-based advice and reports on some of the major public policy issues of the day.

The Rt Hon. Nick Clegg MP, one of the main speakers in a British Academy Forum on constitutional reform, October 2009

THE BRITISH ACADEMY AS A VENUE

10-11 Carlton House Terrace provides an exceptional venue for meetings, functions, corporate events, parties and weddings.

From the grand sweeping black marble staircase of no.10 which flows into elegant rooms with richly ornate architecture; to the intricate and classically English design within Gladstone's former home, no.11, there is a space to suit every taste.

Rooms are available to hire for all kinds of events, from small rooms for informal meetings to large suites for major conferences and receptions. Catering can be arranged to meet most requirements and audio-visual resources and advice are also available.

11 Carlton House Terrace, image courtesy of
By Appointment Only Design

**For further information, please see the
Academy's website: www.britac.ac.uk/venue**



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