



RSA Scotland

Growth. Impact. Potential.

Introduction – A new Scottish Enlightenment for the 21st Century.

RSA Scotland is at an exciting time in its development. We have always had the belief and ambition that RSA Scotland could be a leading part of the global RSA, and now are seeing this become reality. Through the connections and ideas which our growing Fellowship brings to us, we are offering a dynamic space for RSA research activity to be delivered in practice; shaping policy in Scotland across a range of topics; and supporting the growth of the RSA's worldwide network through collaboration.

The list of groups we have collaborated with is diverse and expansive, representing a range of activities from research to events (a selection are highlighted below). We continue to be open opportunities to work with other organisations who have similar goals around a more enlightened society, and welcome the sharing and impact that this offers us.



We remain unashamedly committed to this vision of a new Enlightenment, one which can shape society in Scotland and further afield for the better. Working together we can make this a reality.

The RSA Scotland core team is comprised of:

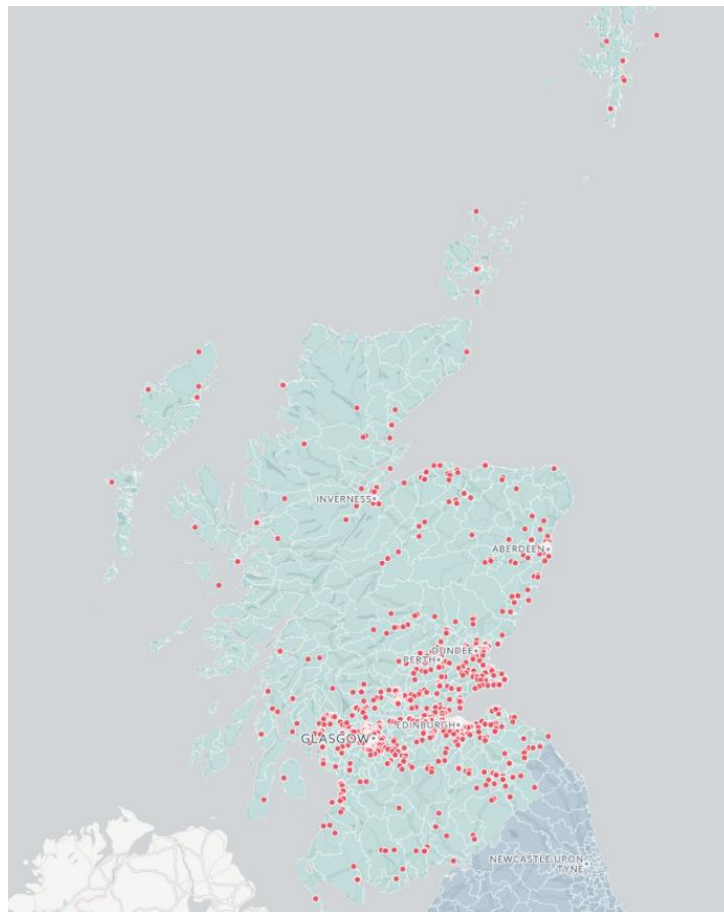
- Jamie Cooke, Head of RSA Scotland- jamie.cooke@rsa.org.uk, 07500 885473
- Lesley Martin, Fellowship Councillor
- Brian McLeish, Thematic Fellowship Councillor
- Neil McLennan, Fellowship Councillor

Fellowship – Enlightenment in Action

Our Fellowship in Scotland is a growing and dynamic part of the global RSA. We currently sit at just under 1,500 Fellows (1,467), a steady and consistent increase over recent years.

In the last financial year, the Scottish Fellowship increased by 49 (163 joiners, 114 leavers). In a break from previous years, the biggest form of recruitment of new Fellows was from website enquiries, followed by the more traditional methods of Fellow get Fellow and staff nominations.

As demonstrated in the map below, Scottish Fellows are distributed across the country. The biggest concentration live within the Central Belt, but we have a wide distribution across all parts of Scotland, and clusters in Aberdeen, Dundee and Central Scotland.



Fellowship activity has been taking place in a wide range of settings and contexts, ranging from events to projects.

Networks:

We now have a range of networks active in Scotland, both geographically and thematically focussed, with others in development. These networks allow Fellow the chance to convene around a shared place/topic, and look to collaborate around events and projects. The RSA Scotland team are committed to supporting the existing networks and developing others over the coming year.

Current Networks

- Geographic: Central Scotland; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Scottish Borders; St Andrews
- Thematic: Health; Media, Creative Industries, Culture & Heritage (MCICH); Wellbeing

In development

- Aberdeen; Highlands; Orkney; Shetland; Womens' Network

Events

Events remain a crucial part of RSA's programme of activity, offering a chance for Fellows to engage with a variety of topics and other Fellows. We had 29 events in 2017, and by the end of September 2018 had already delivered 29. Events are created from a range of sources – Fellows; Fellow-led networks; Staff and core RSA work; and partners. We have core events every year – RSA Engage, Angus Millar Lecture, Annual Conference – which represent consistent aspects of our programme. 2018 saw the Engage series expand to three events, with Dundee taking place alongside Glasgow and Edinburgh. We will look to continue with three Engages each year, with one that moves to a different location each year.

Fellow-led Projects

The RSA offers project support to Fellows in Scotland through the Catalyst Programme, event support, RSA Transform, crowdfunding and the resources available to the RSA Scotland team (details available from the RSA website and/or the RSA Scotland team). Over the coming year the team will be reviewing how this support is offered and advertised to Fellows – applications have been low from Scotland in recent years, and we are keen to connect more ideas into the support structures. We are proud of the role Fellow-led projects have in enhancing the reach and reputation of the RSA, and look forward to supporting more of those to come to fruition.

Challenges

Whilst we have seen steady growth of the Fellowship in Scotland over recent years, it is still the case that it lacks diversity – 70% of Fellows are male and less than 15% of the Scottish Fellowship is under the age of 45. These are similar challenges across the RSA as a whole, however are more pronounced in Scotland. The Scotland team would like to hear ideas you have for increasing the size of the Fellowship and its diversity – suggestions so far have included a new network for female Fellows; targeted recruitment campaigns to bring in new Fellows from underrepresented groups; and a New Fellows' Evening to support the process of becoming involved in RSA Scotland. This will also build upon the success of our collaboration with the Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities in bringing a cohort of Fellows with learning disabilities. We ask all Fellows to consider nominating any contacts who they feel would be positive contributors to the RSA – as our greatest resource, Fellows drive the work of RSA Scotland and we will benefit from an increased Fellowship.

Research

The RSA is a multi-faceted organisation, with our research arm, known as the Action Research Centre (ARC) internationally respected as an impact driven team. RSA Scotland is a key aspect of this research activity, offering local, national and international expertise and connections to expand the

reach and relevance of ARC's work. Some key projects which have been undertaken over the past year include:

Inclusive Growth

The RSA has been involved in the Inclusive Growth debate for years through work such as the City Growth Commission, Inclusive Growth Commission and Citizens Economic Council. Given the relevance of the topic in Scotland (it is a core pillar of the Scottish Government's economic strategy and is being developed through resources such as the new Scottish Centre for Regional Inclusive Growth), RSA Scotland has been actively involved within and without the RSA in taking work forward. As well as a Fellow-led Thematic Network on the subject, we have worked with a range of other groups to produce events and research on Inclusive Growth; have supported RSA US in launching the new global Inclusive Growth Accelerator Network, with intention to bring at least one Scottish city or place into the Network; met with high level stakeholders/decision makers around key developments; and provided speakers for relevant events.

Moving forward, RSA Scotland is exploring opportunities for funded project work on inclusive growth in Scotland and will continue to support the Fellow-led network.

Basic Income

Basic Income is an old policy which has rapidly moved from the fringes of debate to being considered for experimentation in Scotland, and the RSA has been at the heart of that progress, rapidly becoming recognised as the thought leader within the subject. The RSA was successful in accessing funding from the Omidyar Foundation to support work in Scotland around basic income, which means that we will be producing research materials and organising events over the coming months. Several basic income events have been produced over the year, including with leading international figures such as Professor Evelyn Forget from Canada and Professor Karl Widerquist from the US. The RSA has contributed to a significant number of external events, interviews, podcasts and media sources both in Scotland and globally. RSA staff were contributors to the Basic Income World Assembly in Finland in the summer of 2018, with the Head of RSA Scotland a plenary speaker. RSA Scotland also supported the launch of the new Cross Party Group on Basic Income at the Scottish Parliament, and is providing secretarial and content support to the group.

Priorities over the coming months will be in delivering the work with Omidyar and continuing to enhance the RSA's position as a thought leader on basic income.

System Design

The RSA's Theory of Change – *Think Like A System, Act Like An Entrepreneur* – has proven to have relevance for a number of settings and organisations in Scotland. The RSA secured funding from Innovate UK to explore innovation in the public sector, focussing on procurement in Scotland and hosting a summit in Edinburgh; RSA Scotland worked with the Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities (SCLD) on the refresh of the Keys to Life Strategy; RSA Scotland has contributed thinking to Scottish Government work around the new public health priorities.

Over the coming year we will look to expand the awareness of our theory of change and explore other opportunities for delivering it in practice with different organisations.

Planning

Much as with public procurement, planning is a system which can be seen as an obstacle, and yet which offers a huge opportunity for social progress if it can be harnessed correctly. RSA Scotland was invited to join the newly created Scottish Alliance for People and Place, a coalition of different groups in Scotland formed to help shape the discussion around the Planning Bill going through Holyrood. This has allowed us to have greater impact on the process than we would have had individually, and to collaborate with a range of like minded organisations in working with Ministers, MSPs, civil servants and interested parties.

Global Connections

RSA Scotland, through several of the thematic areas outlined previously, has developed a global role in a number of areas. In particular we have been developing close links with our fellow Fellows in the US and Australia/New Zealand, collaborating on areas of mutual interest. Highlights include:

US

RSA Scotland contributed to a major conference on the Future of Work, held by RSA US in Pittsburgh. This has built on influential work developed by a group of Fellows in Glasgow in building links between Glasgow and Pittsburgh as two similar post-industrial cities, and which is opening up a range of opportunities for future activity. RSA Scotland has also hosted a number of events in Scotland with RSA US, the US Consulate in Edinburgh, the Fulbright Commission and the British American Project amongst others. Given the strong historical, cultural and economic links between Scotland and the US, we will continue to develop these connections and opportunities in the year ahead.

Australia/New Zealand

To build our relationships with our Fellowship colleagues in RSA ANZ, we have started co-hosting webinars on different topics, bringing together Fellows and interested others from across the world. These have been fascinating discussions, and we plan to continue these as regular collaborations moving forward.

France

Working with the French Embassy in London, RSA Scotland contributed to a visit to Edinburgh by one of the French governmental academies, hosting a discussion event on basic income and social security in the UK. The Fellow-led MCICH network has hosted major events in partnership with the French Consulate in Edinburgh, attracting significant audiences for high profile speakers.

Moving forward

We are keen to build on connections that Fellows will have to different parts of the world, and are always looking to discuss ideas or opportunities for collaboration with other countries that you might have.

Media

The media coverage of RSA Scotland has increased significantly over the past year in Scotland and beyond. Fellow-led projects have been profiled in different settings, and RSA Scotland itself has contributed to TV, radio, print media, podcasts and online sources.

We are always open to contributing to different media formats, so please get in touch if you feel there would be a suitable opportunity to input, whether on the thematic areas we are working on, or more generally on the role and work of RSA Scotland itself.

Next Steps

This has been a successful year for RSA Scotland, but we are an ambitious organisation always striving to do more. Some key areas of focus or challenge lie ahead of us, including:

Capacity

Staff capacity in Scotland remains a challenge, due to having one member of staff. Over the coming year we will be looking at how to increase this capacity, so that we are able to both sustain and support the activity of the Fellowship; and respond to the significant opportunities for societal impact which exist for us.

A New Scottish Enlightenment

We are an organisation founded on Enlightenment principles, and strongly feel that we have an opportunity, and responsibility, to help create a new Scottish Enlightenment. This has been talked about in various places for years, but has struggled to come to fruition – at RSA Scotland we intend for 2019 to be the year where this make progress. We are working on ideas for a programme of activity next year around the theme, but are very keen for Fellows to contribute to this discussion. We will be looking to host a series of Fellowship discussion events to get your thoughts, but please do get in contact in the meantime if you have ideas to share.

Fellowship

Fellows are the heart of everything that the RSA does and is, and we are keen to further increase the size, diversity and engagement of our Fellowship over the coming year. This will take different forms, but we are looking for your contributions, nominations and feedback on how best to do this. Please nominate colleagues and contacts you think would be able to contribute to our work, and contact the team if you would like to discuss ideas for specific recruitment collaborations with organisations or projects.

Final Thoughts

2018 has been a successful year for RSA Scotland, and we are very grateful for all the contributions our Fellows, colleagues and partners have made to our work. It feels that RSA Scotland is on a tipping point, where it can move into a position of real and lasting impact in Scotland and beyond, where ideas can truly shape society by being put into action. Working together, we can make RSA Scotland the ambitious, collaborative, respected Enlightenment organisation that we should be – we look forward to your support and contribution with this, and to celebrating further success in future.