

## Appendix C

### Results of survey of 'top 300' charities

#### Background

As part of the research programme for this study, a questionnaire was sent to the top 300 charities. Other work included: desk research; case studies (charities and HEIs); focus groups; and another quantitative study with a sample drawn from charities outside the top 300 by size but with research in their objects. This element of the research was undertaken between April and July 2001.

#### Methodology

Most recipients of the questionnaire were drawn from the Caritas database; an amalgamated list of the top 200 charities by funds and the top 200 charities by income was produced. This yielded just over 300 names. Charities that obviously did not meet the criteria for inclusion as a charity in this study (e.g. The British Council, NHS Trusts) were then excluded. This reduced the list to 263, then 26 more charities were identified and added from 'The Directory of Social Change'.

The 'top 300' questionnaire was more detailed than a questionnaire sent to smaller charities, and the design built on some of the information gathered from the first questionnaire. On areas covered by both questionnaires, a similar format was adopted, where possible, to facilitate comparison between findings.

In total, 106 questionnaires were returned. One was a composite response from a number of charities in the same group (seven of whom had been sent questionnaires). A further 26 respondents telephoned or sent an email stating that they did not fund research. In total, the response rate was 48%.

The findings are based on analysis of the 97 questionnaires returned that were completed and which met our criteria for inclusion as a charity.

The table below shows responses received by area of operation. Some notable differences emerged between the top 300 charities and the smaller charities that had responded to the first questionnaire:

- The proportion of respondents that are medical charities is significantly smaller in the second survey (35%, compared with 57% in the first survey). This appears to be more representative of make-up of the charitable sector as a whole and may suggest that small to medium sized medical charities are more likely to have research in their objects than larger charities.
- Although not directly comparable, general welfare as a category (18% of respondents) featured significantly in the second survey when compared to the 5% of respondents involved in social science and social policy in the first

questionnaire, whilst education did not feature in the first questionnaire, even amongst 'others'.

- Perhaps not surprisingly, the largest charities are more likely to be involved in more than one area of operation.

Area of operation	%
Medical	35
Education	18
General Welfare	18
Heritage & Environment	11
Religious & Missionary	10
International Aid	7
Youth	7
Disability	5
Arts & Recreation	4
Animal Health & Welfare	3
Other	21
Not known	1

## Key findings

As the table below shows, there was a more even split between sources of funding than we found in the first questionnaire (where more than three-quarters of respondents claimed fundraising as their main source of funds).

Main sources of funds	%
Endowments	42
Public donations/voluntary income	39
Corporate donations/sponsorship	19
Other	37

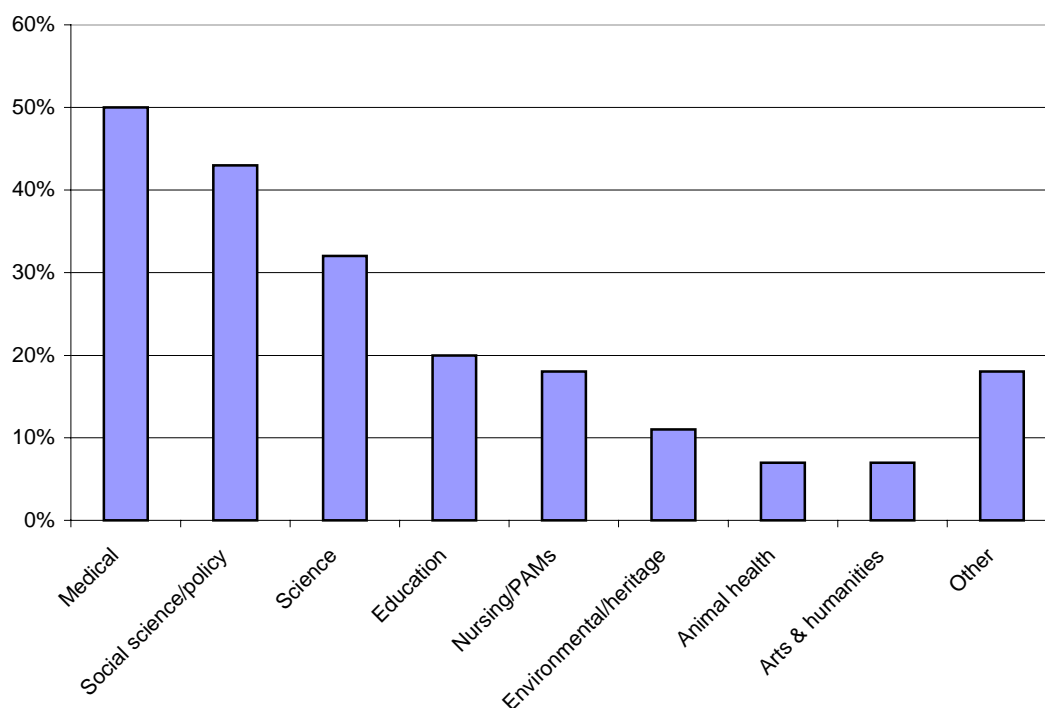
Amongst other main income sources named, fees and investment income were the two most frequently mentioned. 29% of respondents claimed more than one main source of income.

Of those who returned questionnaires, 58% funded research. However, when the 26 non-questionnaire responses are included, this drops to below one half of respondents (46%).

37% of respondents claimed they undertook research to inform the particular interests of their charity, whilst 30% undertook research to support science and knowledge creation and 14% undertook it for the purpose of education.

The figure below shows the discipline areas in which respondents are funding research.

Figure 1: The discipline areas where charitable research is funded



The figures shown are for those funding any research. On this basis, social sciences and policy and education have a higher profile amongst the larger charities than amongst respondents to our first survey. Also interesting was the number of respondents funding in more than one area. Of those completing this question, just over a third funded in one area; just under a third funded in two areas and the remaining third were split equally between those funding in three areas and those funding in four or more. This suggests that many of the larger charities funding research have a wider sphere of interest than was typical in responses to the first survey.

The table below indicates respondents' research spend and number of projects for the three year period from 1998 to 2000. (For the purposes of this analysis, one respondent whose research spend was more than three times as large as the remaining respondents combined has been excluded to avoid distorting the figures.)

	1998	1999	% YOY Change	2000	% YOY Change
Total spend (£'000s)	119,404	130,548	+9.3	159,629	+22.3
Av. spend per charity (£'000s)*	3,142	3,264	+3.9	3,470	+6.3
Total projects	1,512	1,583	+4.7	1,598	+0.9
Av. projects/charity*	44	47	0.0	44	0.0
Av. spend per project (£'000s)	79.0	82.5	+4.4	99.9	+21.1

\* Based on number of respondents undertaking research in each year.

The figures suggest that the number of projects per charity remained relatively stable over the three year period, with a small increase in the number of charities supporting research and stronger growth in the average spend per project. Unlike the first survey, which suggested a levelling out of growth in the year 2000, the larger charities saw substantial growth in 2000 in both total spend and spend per project.

However, the averages above hide a broad spread of research spends, as shown in the table below.

Research spend in 2000	%
None at all	42
None in 2000	2
Less than £10,000	3
£10,000 - £49,999	2
£50,000 - £99,999	4
£100,000 - £499,999	17
£500,000 - £999,999	2
£1,000,000 - £1,999,999	9
£2,000,000 - £4,999,999	5
£5,000,000 - £9,999,999	2
More than £10,000,000	4
Not known	4

Of the 54 respondents who answered this question, half used a combination of internal assessment and peer review to select projects; one-quarter used internal assessment; and one-fifth used peer review. No other methods received more than one response. This contrasts with the first survey where peer review was more popular, a finding that appears to reflect the greater dominance (in numerical terms) of medical research charities in the first survey.

Of those who responded to the question, just over half (52%) conducted most of their research in HEIs, with a further 12% conducting all their research in HEIs. This is comparable with the findings of the first survey. More than one-fifth of those conducting research conducted at least some in-house, with commercial consultancies and NHS hospitals receiving a number of mentions. Only four respondents who supported research made no use of HEIs. Six respondents claimed to fund some

research in overseas universities and six respondents funded research in other institutions overseas. Although these numbers are relatively small, some charities indicated that they might consider overseas research funding in the future.

Amongst those who completed the question (only one-third of all respondents), the proportion of their research budget spent with HEIs was almost three-quarters.

The table below highlights the areas of research respondents are funding. (The percentages shown are calculated for those funding any research, not for all respondents.)

Area of research	%
Blue sky	18
Basic	66
Applied	59
Clinical trials/testing	25
Desk research and surveys	46
Skills development	16
Individual researchers	30
Other	20

This suggests that two-thirds of those funding any research (38% of all respondents) are funding some basic research, followed by three-fifths (34% of all respondents) funding applied research and just under half (26% of all respondents) funding desk research and surveys.

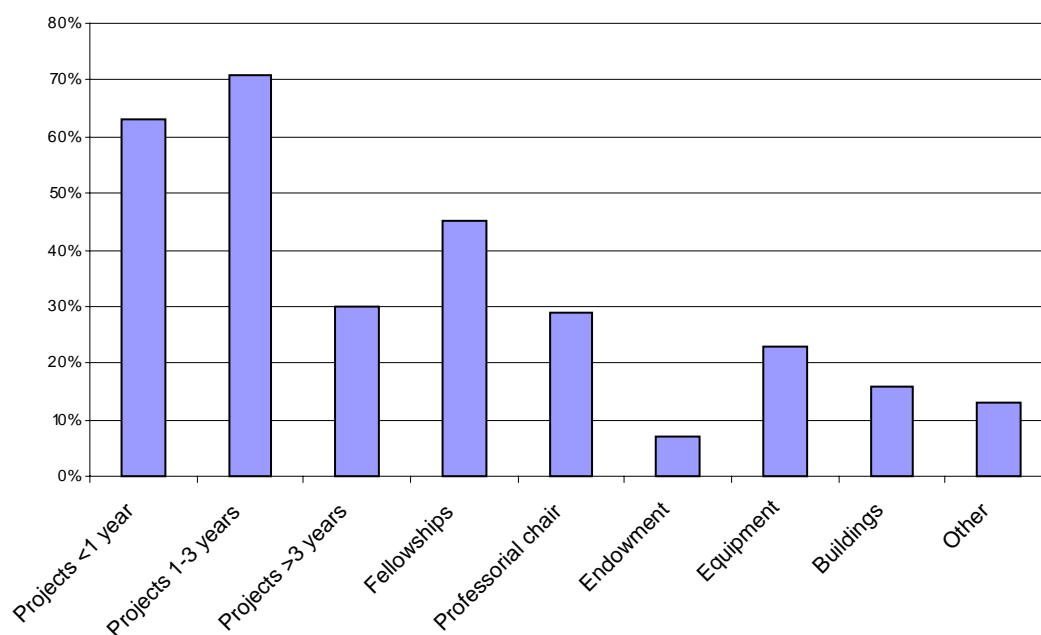
Figure 2 shows the type of research respondents are funding in HEIs. Again, the percentages shown are for those funding any research.

There was little difference between the duration of projects funded between the two surveys, with projects of less than three years duration tending to be more popular than longer programmes. However, the very largest funders of research were more likely to fund longer projects and felt that this was important in building longer term, effective links with HEIs.

Amongst respondents who completed the question, on average two-thirds (67%) of their research in HEIs was classified as 'collaborative'. However, this figure masks some extremes, with less than one-third of respondents giving a percentage other than 0% or 100%.

For the future, most respondents who answered this question (21 respondents), felt there was likely to be little or no change in the way they spent their research funds. Other responses receiving more than one mention were: increased research expenditure in general (5 respondents); planning an international research grants programme (2); may conduct more research in-house (2); will conduct less research in future (2); and a lower proportion of research spend will go to HEIs (2).

Figure 2: The type of research funded by charities



When it came to non-research links with HEIs, 80% of those who responded claimed to have these links. However, few specified the benefits of these links and there was little consistency amongst those who did.

The main benefits to charities of non-research links were felt to be access to advice and expertise (8 mentions) and networks (6). For HEIs the main benefits were thought to be access to additional funding (11 mentions), and kudos/credibility (6).

Respondents were asked what they saw as the main indicators of a successful research project. Their answers were wide-ranging and those receiving more than three mentions are summarised in the table below.

This question was related to research in general and suggests a strong focus on both policy development and practical, usable outputs.

When respondents were asked what they felt were the main benefits of using an HEI to conduct research, their focus was very much on issues related to quality, although again there was a wide range of benefits that received only one or two mentions.

This diversity in responses reflects the diversity of the charity sector itself and has been a feature of all the open-ended questions in both surveys, as well as of the focus groups and interviews. It has implications for institutions as it can make categorising the sector and responding to its needs in an effective manner more complex. However, there are sufficient issues of common interest to provide scope for action.

Success factor	No. of mentions	Av. ranking*
Input to policy/practice development	16	2.2
Benefits to users	14	2.5
Achievement of objectives/high quality	12	2.8
Relevance/contribution to charity's objectives	11	2.5
Practical applications	10	2.1
Cost-effective/value-for-money	8	1.4
Effective dissemination of results	7	1.9
Enhanced knowledge	5	2.2
Originality/innovation	5	2.0
Status/reputation of researchers	5	1.0

\* Respondents were asked to rank their answers in order of importance to them. The first response scored 3 points; the second 2 points; and the third 1 point. The average ranking is derived from this scoring system and the same system has been used for the tables on benefits and concerns.

The main benefits of working with HEIs are summarised below.

Benefit	No. of mentions	Av. ranking
Rigour/high quality work	11	2.7
Research infrastructure/facilities	10	1.7
Quality of researchers	9	2.7
Peer input/contact with other researchers	8	1.8
Reputation/credibility	7	1.9
Objectivity/impartiality	6	2.5
Depth of knowledge/expertise	6	1.5
Dissemination/more likely to reach public domain	4	2.2

The responses to what institutions could do to improve their project management showed even more diversity, as highlighted in the table below which lists all concerns receiving more than three mentions.

Area for improvement	No. of mentions	Av. ranking
Improved financial management	9	2.6
Better project management	4	3.0
Lower cost to charity	4	2.3
Wider dissemination to practitioners	4	2.3
Use more accessible language/plain English	4	1.3
Clearer negotiation of IPR/copyright	4	1.0

This suggests that the focus for improvements should be on management and administration, particularly on the finance side.

Respondents were also asked to say how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements, where ‘1’ was agree strongly; ‘2’ was agree; ‘3’ was neither agree nor disagree; ‘4’ was disagree; and ‘5’ was disagree strongly.

The statements were chosen to reflect issues raised in focus groups and interviews. Findings are summarised in the table below. The response rate to this question was relatively low, with between 36 and 42 responses to each statement.

For the most part, average scores are clustered closely around the middle ground, with only ‘universities and colleges usually manage our projects well’ and ‘payment of overheads on research projects is a divisive issue for charities and our colleagues in universities and colleges’ – at 2.2 each, showing a more marked trend towards agreement.

Although numbers are small and no firm conclusions can be drawn, it is worth noting, that the charities with the largest research spends were more likely to agree with the statement that ‘we are regularly asked to fund equipment that we would have expected to be in place in the past’.

For the future, three-quarters of those responding to the question (or one-third of all respondents) thought their research spend would remain about the same, whilst 12% (5% of all respondents) thought it would increase and 14% (6% of all respondents) thought it would decrease. This suggests that the growth experienced in recent years is unlikely to be maintained, a finding in line with findings from the focus groups and discussions, and from the first survey.

Statement	Average score
Universities and colleges usually manage our projects well	2.2
The research infrastructure in UK universities/colleges is generally strong	2.6
We are regularly asked to fund equipment that we would have expected to be in place in the past	3.2
It is getting harder to attract talented young people into research careers in my charity’s area of interest	2.9
A university department’s RAE score is a strong indicator of its ability to conduct high quality research in my charity’s area of interest	2.8
Research conducted by universities and colleges usually receives wider recognition than the research we fund in other organisations	2.9
Payment of overheads on research projects is a divisive issue for charities and our colleagues in universities and colleges	2.2
My charity would spend more research funds in universities and colleges if we received more A grade applications that met our needs	3.0

Three respondents felt there was nothing HEIs could do to increase their share of research spend. Two mentions each were received by: submit more competitive quotations; improve administration; and promote the value of applied

science/research. No other factor received more than one mention; this question had a low response rate.