

HEFCE Quarterly Update on Islamic Studies: October 2009

UK Islamic Studies Network

In January 2009, the Higher Education Academy was funded to develop a UK Islamic Studies Network. Work on the first phase of the project has now completed, and phase two (October 2009 to September 2011) will shortly be getting underway.

During phase one, the HEA:

- Developed a working definition of Islamic Studies for the purposes of the Network.
- Produced a report on the provision of Islamic Studies in the UK at modular level, to be published by HEFCE in due course.
- Consulted the Islamic Studies academic community to identify priorities and needs for the network.
- Created a website to act as the focal point of the network and host resources.
- Appointed Professor Robert Gleave (University of Exeter) to chair the network's Advisory Group.

Some of the aims of phase two include:

- Appoint an Academic Coordinator for the network
- Develop an interdisciplinary network of academics involved in the study and teaching of Islam and Muslim Societies that is sustainable beyond the funding period.
- Provide opportunities for students and academics to network and share good practice, including an inaugural annual conference.
- Provide small 'network development grants' through open competition.
- Develop, with JISC, a gateway for Islamic Studies resources.

For further information on the Network, please contact Julie Anderson at the Higher Education Academy (Julie.Anderson@heacademy.ac.uk, Tel 0117 331 4290), or visit www.heacademy.ac.uk/islamicstudies

Digitisation of Islamic Studies Resources

Also in early 2009, HEFCE funded JISC to manage the digitisation of Islamic Studies resources, which will complement the UK Islamic Studies Network.

- A project to digitise PhD theses on Islamic Studies is underway by the British Library ETHOS service. This work should finish by the end of the year and over 800 theses should be available.
- JISC recently awarded funding to two projects through open competition for the digitisation of manuscripts and catalogues, which will finish in 2011:
 - The Wellcome Trust with the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt (Islamic manuscripts related to science and medicine, and software development)
 - The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge (digitisation of hard copy catalogues).

For further information contact Alastair Dunning – JISC Digitisation Programme Manager (a.dunning@jisc.ac.uk telephone 0203 006 6065), or visit <http://digitisation.jiscinvolve.org/2009/08/14/winners-of-islamic-studies-funding-for-digitisation/>

European symposium on Islamic Studies

HEFCE is working with the British Academy to host a European symposium on Islamic Studies in March 2010, in response to the Prime Minister's call for HEFCE to investigate the setting up in Britain of a European centre of excellence for Islamic Studies. More details will be available in due course.

Contact

For further information on HEFCE's work to support Islamic Studies as a strategically important subject please contact Victoria Waite, Project Manager (islamicstudies@hefce.ac.uk or telephone 0117 931 7254), or visit <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/aboutus/sis/islamic/>