First monthly bulletin: 9/09/2004

Since we received the news of our NEER success two weeks ago we have been busy making plans so that we will be ready for the establishment of the network once we receive ARC funding.

In an attempt to keep you informed without deluging you with correspondence the current NEER committee has decided to send you a monthly communiqué, of which this is the first.

1. First tasks.

The first task is to establish the Network Management structure. The UWA committee has begun to consider various models for this with a view to approving the definitive version at a symposium called for the purpose in early November. Once we have a management board, decisions can be taken.

2. Start time for ARC NEER

Information received so far suggests that the Funding Contract which will cover the grant will be forwarded to the UWA Research Office some time in September/October. Our Research Officer understands the project must commence by 31 December 2004. Another condition of the award is that a written agreement must be signed by all organisations/institutions receiving or providing Network cash funding.

This is all we know about the funding so far, and therefore no decisions concerning money can be taken.
3. Sharing the benefits of the Network

The application was specific in the detail of what we propose to do and you will see from the discrepancy between the sum asked for and the sum granted that there is a shortfall of some $300,000 and adjustment will be needed. However, the application document is the blueprint for the next 5 years and the main job of the management group will be to ensure that we deliver as best we can. No doubt the ARC will issue guidelines, but it is worth noting that the activities are not specific to individual university institutions, but to the network itself, and to its members. The funding is to support infrastructure which will be of benefit to all, such as the digital portal, the provision of workshops for postgraduates, the organisation of symposia and conferences, support for postgraduates and early career researchers, the digital catalogue of Australian Early European holdings, and so on. A digest of what we said we would do is attached to this email. I did send round full copies of the application - but if you need another e-copy, I can easily send you one; just email me to that effect.

4. Auckland ANZAMEMS conference and NEER.

During the months of uncertainty between late March and two weeks ago, we decided to press on with plans to operate as some form of network even if we had not secured ARC funding. This has led us to negotiate with the Auckland ANZAMEMS organisers - themselves on the register of network participants - and a NEER day has been included in the programme. This will be used to give people an outline of the network, followed by sessions on the e-consult scheme for postgraduates (called e-mentoring in the application, but rechristened last week), plans for postgraduate workshops, and full sessions on two of the themes identified for collaborative research in the application: Social Fabric and Cultural Memory.

5. Register of related organisations.

Several people have sent me information concerning organisations with which they are involved which have an
affinity with NEER. At present I am making a register of these, so that the management board, when it is constituted, can consider their relationship to and potential role within the network. If you have written to me, thank you. I am trying to respond to you individually, but this may take a little time.

**6. Interim Co-ordinator: Chris Wortham**

I'm sure you all realise that although you have been communicating with me as the anchor person, the Network leader is Dr Pam Sharpe. She will shortly be taking maternity leave, and in her absence, the leadership will be in the hands of Prof. Chris Wortham.

I hope this brings you up-to-date with where we are so far.

All the very best,

Anne

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