

**EPSRC Balancing Capability**  
**Strategic Advisory Network (SAN) – Council sub-group meeting**

*9<sup>th</sup> November 2016*

A Strategic Advisory Network (SAN) and Council sub-group met on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 to provide assurance to Council that all of the material planned for the Balancing Capability publication had been reviewed and that the process undertaken was appropriate.

The aim of the meeting was to provide quality assurance of the 111 research area rationales before their submission to the EPSRC Council in December 2016, and to discuss the degree of consistency across rationales.

**Present**

Jenny Cooper, Energy Innovation Specialist

Alison Etheridge, University of Oxford

Anthony Finkelstein, UCL

Richard Jones, University of Sheffield

Allan Matthews, University of Manchester

Francesca Medda, UCL

Matt Rosseinsky, University of Liverpool

Philip Sharman, Evenlode Associates

Tom Rodden, EPSRC

Neil Viner, EPSRC

Samantha Francis, EPSRC

Nicola Goldberg, EPSRC

Katharine Moore, EPSRC

Natasha Richardson, EPSRC

**Points of discussion were as follows:**

- SAN and Council members discussed the 'our approach to Balancing Capability' documents prepared by each EPSRC Theme. SAN members were asked to comment on the clarity of the described process that each Theme had carried out
- SAN/Council members discussed the quality of all of the 111 research area rationales produced. The SAN provided feedback and advice for improvement on each one to make them clearer before publication
- Members were also asked to comment on the degree of consistency across research area rationales. There was some inconsistency in style between rationales and a copy editor should be consulted to improve this
- Where there is a strategy that cuts across more than one research area it should be accurately cross-referenced within the rationales

- The SAN/Council members were given an update on the communications plan for Balancing Capability. The group were then invited to give further advice on communicating the strategy
- We constantly review our research areas and if there are substantial changes as a result of external factors e.g. following the publication of the industrial strategy, then we will respond to these in partnership with the appropriate advice streams
- The group advised that including a foreword explaining the diversity of excellence and that evidence has been used in multiple ways would be helpful additional context to the rationales
- There was some discussion around the move towards UKRI. The consensus was that this process has been valuable to understand our portfolio in depth and the connectedness of it before UKRI is formed