

# Institutional Perspectives on Research

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**ICE/IStructE/ACED Annual Meeting  
22 March 2015**

## Summary info on ICE

- Established in 1818
- >80k members in >150 countries
- Around 20% of members based overseas
- Strong engagement with/of academics - eg recent/future Presidents include Barry Clarke, Tim Broyd, Robert Mair

## Research is central to the ICE remit

- 3 main roles, including ‘to help the industry learn more and share our knowledge so we can maintain the natural and built environment’
- How we want to be seen, includes ‘a trusted source of advice’
- Structure includes an R&D Enabling Fund (chair Broyd) that reports directly to Council
- Structure includes a Research & Innovation Panel (chair Rogers) that reports to VP Learned Society

# Research needs to address real problems

- Civil Engineering is broad and multi-disciplinary – from environmental engineering to project management and aero structures
- ‘Real world’ problems are messy, and don’t tend to comply with narrow, man-made constraints
- Increasingly, Civil Engineers contribute to wider challenges, eg sustainable development, climate change adaptation/mitigation
- Increasingly, Civil Engineering researchers work in wide disciplinary teams

## Does Civ Eng Research have an identity crisis?

- RCUK is shifting to Grand Challenges requiring multi-disciplinary consortia – EPSRC is in vanguard
- Civil Engineer researchers are well placed to lead on these challenges
- All researchers are aware of the changing challenges of the REF, and identity challenges don't seem to be an issue
- The General Engineering REF Panel dealt with very broad submissions – no bias against Civil Engineering research was apparent

## Where is the REF likely to go?

- It is possible that there might only be a General Engineering Panel for the next REF
- That would probably favour Civil Engineering researchers
- If that is the case, the ICE should request that work covering highly multi-disciplinary topics (and published not in 'traditional' engineering journals) be identified, cross-referenced and included, and that the REF Panel includes people who are properly competent

## Where is the ICE likely to go?

- ‘Can you help me do my work today’?
- ‘I haven’t got time to think about the future – can you do it for me’?
- Research needs to be for real world value
- In a better world, industry would be commissioning and co-funding Civil Engineering research

## Where is the ICE likely to go? (2)

- 2016 – 2018: develop a more tangible academic community
- Strive to influence/improve the structure and operation of the next REF
- Aim to develop a broader research perspective akin to a Mgt Consultant – ie to provide direct value to industry organisations and people
- Also, to consider how RCUK activities might embrace a wider set of TRLs



Thank you