

Approved by AHRC Council:

Author: Amy Smith

Minutes of the AHRC Council meeting of 09 September 2025

Date: Tuesday 09 September 2025

Time: 09:30 – 14:45

Location: SEC Newgate, London and via Teams

Council Members and Observers	
Ms Emma Kane (Chair)	Professor Ambreena Manji
Professor Christopher Smith (Executive Chair, AHRC)	Dr Bridget McConnell
Ms Zeinab Badawi	Saga Mohamed (AHRC Intern - observer)
Ms Anita Bhalla	Professor Sue Rigby
Mr Tim Gardam	Professor Adrienne Scullion
Ms Jo Guthrie (AHRC, Private Secretary to Christopher Smith – observer)	Professor Steven Spier
Mushtaaq Hassan (AHRC Intern - observer)	Professor Russell Viner
Ms Seetha Kumar	Sumaya Wagad (AHRC Intern - observer)
Attendees	
Dr Allan Sudlow (Director of Partnerships and Engagement, AHRC)	Dawn Greenberg (AHRC, Senior Investment Manager, AI – for item 10)
Ms Stella Power (Chief Operating Officer, AHRC)	Professor Ewa Luger (Co-programme Director of AHRC's Bridging Responsible AI Divides [BRAID] Programme – for item 10)
Tao Chang (AHRC, Associate Director of Infrastructure and Major Programmes – for item 9)	Professor Shannon Vallor (Co-programme Director of AHRC's Bridging Responsible AI Divides [BRAID] Programme – for item 10)
Joanna Dunster (AHRC, Head of Research Infrastructure – for item 9)	
Secretariat	
Mrs Amy Smith (Senior Governance Manager, AHRC)	
Apologies	
Dr Jaideep Gupte (Director of Research, Strategy and Innovation, AHRC)	

Introductory Items	
1.	Welcome, Apologies, and Declarations of Interest
The Chair welcomed Council members to the meeting and introduced the observers.	
The Chair noted no apologies were received.	
Council confirmed no new conflicts of interest needed to be declared.	

2.	Minutes, Actions, and Matters Arising
Council approved the minutes of 10 th June 2025.	
The Chair provided an update on actions.	
Updates and Operations	
3.	Executive Chair's Report
Professor Smith noted his report and updated Council on allocations, REF, AHRC's Strategic Delivery Plan and outcomes.	
Council discussed the challenges around funding and noted the focus on creative industries against more traditional A&H disciplines, input into the industrial strategy, collaboration and the inclusion of heritage, and international.	
4.	Executive Chair's forward look
Professor Smith noted his priorities moving forward.	
5.	Chief Operating Officer Update
Ms Power noted the AHRC dashboard and updated Council on the new online system implemented across UKRI, staffing, results from the UKRI Pulse Survey and assurance activities across AHRC.	
Council discussed the survey results, training, efficiencies, and highlighted that a review of whether the dashboard is still providing AHRC Senior team and Council members with the information they need should be considered.	
6.	Director of Partnerships and Engagement Update
Dr Sudlow updated Council on the Creative Clusters programme, creative content exchange, the strategic review of COSTAR that has taken place, creative industries sector plan and how both UKRI and AHRC input into this.	
7.	Director of Research, Strategy, and Innovation Update
Council acknowledged Dr Gupte's report and discussed the 'Focal Awards in Creative economy, and Arts and Humanities for a Healthy Planet, People, and Place' and the plans for phase 2.	
8.	Design Council Update
Council discussed the current and future funding and governance arrangements of Design Council noting the need for a self sufficient model to be implemented in the future.	
9.	Infrastructure Update
Mrs Chang and Ms Dunster provided an update to Council on the infrastructure portfolio.	
Council discussed the infrastructure budget, World Class Labs, risk, AHRC centre's and the infrastructure roadmap.	

Items for Discussion	
10.	Responsible AI Update
Professor's Vallor and Luger shared slides with Council on responsible AI and BRAID phase 2. Council discussed BRAID, the public perception of AI, equality of access, education and ethics. Council also discussed and noted the need to articulate AHRC's impact and outcomes in this area.	
11.	AOB
Professor Smith noted that Council member interviews have taken place and recommendations will now go to UKRI NomCo for approval. The next meeting will take place on 2 nd December 2025.	