



REPORT FORM FOR NETWORK ACTIVITIES

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Confidential

1. Lead Applicant

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Present appointment and employing institution

Professor of Russian Studies, University of Bath
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Role in activity

Organiser and principal investigator

2. Activity details

Type and title of activity

Multidisciplinary workshop: "Russia in 2010: Sources of Stability and Change"

Location

University of Bath

Date 11-12 June, 2010

From:	9.45	To:	7 p.m.
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Brief Description of activities carried out (please include or attach a confirmed list of participants)

24 papers were given at the workshop, 17 by established academics and policy makers, 7 by postgraduate students. (Please see attached final programme and confirmed list of participants.)

The conference brought together political scientists, historians, economists, sociologists and scholars in Russian language, media and cultural studies to create an integrated picture of the new order in contemporary Russia, focusing particularly on sources of stability and change.

The political panels shed new light on the Putin-Medvedev 'tandem' and the role of the 'United Russia' Party, and an attempt was made to assess whether the current system in Russia can best be interpreted as a 'managed democracy' or 'competitive authoritarianism.' It emerged that, although there is little room for organized political opposition, serious problems still remain, giving rise to numerous social and political protests in recent years.

Several papers discussed the development of national, ethnic and gender identities in contemporary Russian society. During the last decade the state has continued to manipulate Russian national identity more than ever, and although not all Russian citizens accept the government's more conservative interpretations of nationhood, the majority now accept a multi-ethnic state within the current Russian borders. The resurgent Russian Orthodox Church is regarded by the government as a key national unifying force, but the Moscow Patriarchate has managed to assert increasing independence from the state. Whereas the most conservative proposed legislation to control sexuality and reproduction has not been accepted, sexual diversity can now be tolerated only in so far as it is confined to the private sphere.

Papers were offered on the achievements and problems of Russian foreign policy in relation to the UK, Europe, the USA, and the 'near abroad'. It was recognized that Russia is eager to reassert its 'Great Power' status in the world, but that, after a period of anti-Western feeling, the election of President Barack Obama has improved relations between Russia and the West. Some optimism was also expressed about the future development of the CIS as a common economic space.

The panels on economics and business suggested that the Russian economy continues to operate on the basis of a system of alliances between the state and "tycoons," and exposed the corrupt practices involved in the management of large state-owned enterprises. Opinion was divided on whether the Russian economy will manage to diversify and become more environmentally friendly, or will continue to rely largely on natural resources.

The panels on cultural themes suggested that, although the Russian administration has been concerned to harness 'Great Russian Culture' in the service of the state, and the media have been increasingly subjected to strict controls, literature, the arts, publishing houses, the Internet and, to a lesser extent, television serials, have provided some of the few free channels for the expression of alternative viewpoints and sometimes even oppositionist ideas.

Moreover, although the state has succeeded in re-establishing a dominant discourse in public discussions of the nation, the Russian language also continues to develop in its own, often unexpected ways.

3. Achievement of stated aims and objectives

Please summarise how the stated aims and objectives of the activities proposed have been achieved and how these have helped to further the aims and objectives of CEELBAS.

One of the most valuable achievements of the conference was its multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary content. As suggested above, papers were given on domestic politics, international relations, economics and business, society, culture and language from members of the CEELBAS network and beyond. This gave the participants an opportunity to attend panels that they do not usually attend at larger conferences, and to establish a precise and complex picture of contemporary Russia.

The conference was particularly valuable as a training experience for the seven postgraduate speakers, who were able to make contact with each other, and with experts in their fields.

Overall, the workshop achieved all the aims and objectives that had been set.

4. Outcomes

Please indicate the outcomes and 'value for money' of activities carried out.

Some of the participants sent abstracts which were distributed at the conference and are available on the University of Bath website. (Please see attached document.)

Peter Sowden of the RoutledgeCurzon Publishing House has shown an interest in a book proposal for an edited volume on the subject "Contemporary Russia: Sources of Stability and Change," based on the papers given at the conference. I have contacted the contributors asking if they are willing to put essays forward for consideration, and, if the proposal is accepted, I would envisage a deadline for completion of 31 March 2011 and a publication date of 2011 or 2012.

The workshop represented "value for money" for CEELBAS because, in response to the request by the CEELBAS Committee, I ultimately decided not to invite overseas speakers, but to invite more UK-based postgraduate students. This gave them invaluable experience in preparing and giving conference papers in front of an expert audience. I also managed to hire rooms in the University of Bath for free, instead of, as I expected, paying the full rate for outside conferences.

5. Breakdown of total costs for workshops (please attach evidence of expenditure)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Key speakers (Travel, accommodation and subsistence)	1,547-81: Travel 1,128-00: Accommodation 851-00: Subsistence
Postgraduate participation	7 speakers Travel and accommodation fully funded
Room/equipment hire	
Administration costs Administrative assistant + associated costs	473-19
Printing and publicity (including conference packs)	
Other (please specify)	
Total expenditure	4,000
Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS	4,000

6. Breakdown of total costs for projects (please attach evidence of expenditure)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<p>Staff costs</p> <p>Further information on the administrative assistant's costs will be sent by the University of Bath Finance Office</p>	
<p>Equipment/technical costs</p>	
<p>Administration costs</p>	473-19
<p>Other (please specify</p>	
<p>Total expenditure</p>	
<p>Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS</p>	

7. Dissemination and further research

Please give details of dissemination of the outcomes of the workshop/project and any further research planned.

See above for forthcoming book proposal. Some of the participants have already arranged for an earlier version of their articles to be published in refereed journals, but have offered an updated version if the book proposal is accepted.

It is planned to hold future seminars on contemporary Russia under the auspices of the “History, Memory and Identity” Cluster in the Department of European Studies and Modern Languages, University of Bath.

8. Signature and date

Applicant's signature
Rosalind J. Marsh
Date:
3/8/10

Institutional authorisation (if required)

Institutional CEELBAS Network Primary Contact
Professor Rosalind J. Marsh
Date:
3/8/10

This form must be accompanied by an invoice from the applicant's institution, supported by receipts or other evidence of the expenditure incurred.

Please send the completed form to: CEELBAS Administrator, SSEES, UCL, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT and by email to: ceelbas-network@ssees.ucl.ac.uk.

