

I'DGO TOO Launch 21st June 2007

SPARC

Building capacity for ageing
and disability-related research

Professor Peter Lansley

Director SPARC

Overview

- Recent history of research to enable inclusion
- SPARC
- The crucial role of Social Inclusion
- The future

Ageing and disability-related research

- EQUAL (EPSRC) - a voyage of discovery (especially 1996-2001)
 - Multidisciplinary, collaborative, user-engaged approach
 - Housing, urban design, accessibility, product design and more
 - Physical, sensory and cognitive impairment and ageing with/without disability
 - Especially important contributions in relation to vision, stroke recovery and dementia
- Many projects, several large consortia

Ageing and disability research

- A significant contribution
 - Major impact on British Standards, Building Regulations, Housing Corporation requirements....
 - Influence on best practice in a range of social, health, planning and design professions
 - Disproportionate contribution made by the design perspective

Evolution of I'DGO

- 1998, 1999 - initial projects
 - A Feasibility Study into Creating Accessible Environments within the Briefing Process
 - Bridging The Gap Between Theory & Implementation in Accessibility - A Best Practice Approach
 - Designing the External Physical Environment To Extend Quality Life For Older People With Dementia
- 2002 - consortia
 - Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors (I'DGO)
- 2007 - continuation funding
 - Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors 2 (I'DGO TOO)

Major players in the longest series of EQUAL projects

- Rita Newton
 - Marcus Ormerod
 - Elizabeth Burton
 - Catharine Ward Thompson
 - + others
-
- Accompanied by much influence on practice and policy and personal achievement

So much for the pioneers what about the next generation?

- 2002
 - considerable concerns in all disciplinary areas about impact of new national policies and loss of momentum and imagination governance of ageing research
- 2003
 - encouraged by research end-users (professionals and older people) a new approach was proposed
 - bottom-up, community led
 - at the leading edge of science, close to older people
- 2004
 - of the four relevant research councils EPSRC (Design/Engineering) and BBSRC (Biology) agreed to support this approach
- 2005
 - a SPARC was ignited

SPARC - a community led initiative

- Early 2005 – late 2008
- EPSRC & BBSRC - £1.6m
 - Design and engineering research
 - Biological research
 - All areas in between -
 - bio-mechanics/ergonomics
 - muscle/bone
 - cognitive/sensory
 - Assistive Technology, etc
 - And some on the sides
- Staffing
 - Two part-time coordinators
 - Two very part-time directors

SPARC – three themes

- Networking through:
 - workshops
 - international activities
- Advocacy
- Capacity Building through:
 - small pump priming awards

Twenty-seven workshops since January 2005

- **Examples of forthcoming workshops**
 - **A Walk a Day Keeps a Fall at Bay**
 - Joint workshop with London Borough of Camden Active Health Team
 - Falls Awareness Day, 26th June 2007
 - Lectures, briefings and practical exercises
 - Largely for older people, their carers and professionals who work with older people
 - **Understanding the ageing brain: linking cognitive and neural change across the lifespan**
 - Joint workshop with Centre for Speech, Language and the Brain, University of Cambridge
 - 26th September 2007
 - Largely for scientists and professionals

Workshops for All

- In one week in March 2007
 - *Ageing Research and Occupational Therapy: building partnerships, creating opportunities*
 - jointly with British Association of Occupational Therapists
 - *Anglo-Japanese Werner's Syndrome Consortium*
 - Tokyo
 - *Designs for a Caring Society*
 - British Polio Fellowship, Caversham Methodist Church Hall

International workshops

- **Examples**

- **International Symposium on Werner's Syndrome**, Sussex, October 2005
- **Workshop with leading European Experts on Accessibility**, Watford, May 2006
- **Showcasing the work of young biological gerontologists at AAA conference**, Boston, USA, June 2006
- **Werner's Syndrome workshop**, Tokyo, May 2007
- **Canada meets UK in design and Technology for Quality of Life in Old Age**, Toronto, June 2007

Advocacy

- Making the case that ageing research can and is making a difference
- Lobbying ministers, MPs, policy makers
- Developing a good track record
 - MPs do listen!
 - Two questions in Parliament on, Ageing Research and Older Workers
 - Ministers do listen (but Civil Servants don't!)



- » Royal Patronage
- » HRH The Princess Royal participated in *Ageing Research and Occupational Therapy: building partnerships, creating opportunities*

Capacity building awards

- Small awards scheme for newcomers to ageing research
- 185 proposals total value £5.7m were considered in Summer 2005 & Spring 2006
- **34 were funded at total value £1.25m**
 - for superior scientific excellence and capacity building
 - for more information see posters and www.sparc.ac.uk

Awards

- £20,000 - £60,000
- 1 year - 18 months
 - mentoring
 - editorial assistance
 - platform
 - national workshops
 - entree to international networks
 - Lifelong networks

From furniture design to stem cells

- **Projects**

- Life in the Home - 3
- Care Systems - 1
- The Older Worker - 2
- Product Design - 2
- Urban Design - 1
- Interface Design - 2
- Transport & Driving - 3
- Cognition & Communication - 3
- Vision - 3
- Activity, Exercise & Nutrition - 3
- Oxidative Stress & Ageing - 3
- Fundamental Mechanisms of Normal Ageing - 5
- Chemical Biology of Ageing - 3

- **People**

- 100 investigators and researchers
- 100 scientific and professional collaborators
- Largest Research Council activity in ageing in terms of numbers involved but the smallest in terms of funding



The crucial role of Social Inclusion

- At the root of I'DGO and SPARC is the philosophy of Inclusion
 - multidisciplinary, collaborative, user-focused
 - value of confidence engendered through working with users and with industry
 - widely acknowledged success of this approach
- Inclusion philosophy now also operating outside of mainstream ageing research
 - cleverly informing and influencing agendas for change in many areas especially environment, sustainability and regeneration

What must the Social Inclusion research community do?

- Greater public celebration of contribution
 - to independence and quality of life
 - to policy and practice
- Challenge current organisation and aspirations of ageing and disability research
- Remember
 - there is great support from many stakeholders in ageing and disability issues for socially inclusive design!
 - EPSRC is keen to support more in this area.

The background is a solid blue color. On the left side, there are several overlapping, semi-transparent blue shapes: a large circle, a smaller circle inside it, and a crescent moon shape that overlaps the bottom of the circles. The text is centered horizontally and positioned in the middle of the frame.

A peek into the future

The 34 SPARC award holders

