

St Helena Research Institute Progress Report August 2019-September 2020

The St Helena Research Institute was formerly launched on the 12th November 2019 at dual events in St Helena and the UK. The St Helena event was hosted at Ann's Place and officiated by His Excellency Dr Philip Rushbrooke, with speeches from Mrs Wendy Benjamin, Director Education and Employment, Clint Beard, Chair Education Committee and Dr Rebecca Cairns-Wicks, Coordinator, SHRI, attended by approximately 70 invited guests from across Government and non-government sectors and including primary and Secondary school pupils and teachers. The Environmental Management Marine and Terrestrial teams and the St Helena National Trust produced displays for the event.



The UK event was hosted by SHG UK Representative Kedell Worboys MBE, supported by Glenda Bas and Addie Thomas, Tara Pelembe, Deputy Director Innovation SAERI and Kirsty Joshua. The Honourable Andrew Mitchell gave the keynote speech, with speeches from Kedell, Kirsty and Tara. Dr Dawn Cranswick, CEED and Martin George, ESH together with Tara represented the St Helena Research Institute at the event. Jonathan Clingham provided photographic and media coverage. The event was attended by over 30 invited guests and colleagues from across government, non-government and academic sectors.



Business Plan

A business plan for the establishment of the SHRI was produced at the end of August 2019 by Mirian Services Ltd following a business planning workshop attended by members of the St Helena Research Institute Steering Group and the St Helena Research Council and follow up meetings with the Rebecca Cairns-Wicks, Ryan Belgrove (ESH Representative) and Angie Benjamin. The Business plan sets out the business aims, key functions and activities of the SHRI, describing its operating environment, SWOT, implementation phase development, communications and financial plans.

The SHRI was launched with the following goals:

- To promote and expand reputable research on St Helena that contributes to sustainable development;
- To protect St Helena's people, heritage and environment;
- To ensure equitable benefit sharing, maximising benefits to St Helena and the researcher, and
- To promote ethical and responsible high quality research that respects, protects and benefits St Helena's society, culture, heritage and environment.

In August, 2020 a second workshop was held with members of the SHRI Steering Group and Research Council to agree the three year Vision and Mission statements for the SHRI, our core values and review the SWOT analysis undertaken in the Business plan. This exercise forms part of the SHRI's strategic planning process. A workshop to review and agree the SHRI's strategic goals will be held before the end of the year and a revised Business Strategy and activities will fall from this.

3 year Vision

Internationally recognised centre for the advancement of new knowledge and innovation on and for St Helena

Mission

Creating and promoting opportunities for research and innovation ensuring that research and new knowledge is accessible and used for the benefit of St Helena

Our Values

We will be:-

respectful; responsible – research should do not harm to St Helena or its people; innovative; credible; fair; open – default open; collaborative and community focused – St Helena is at the heart of our work

SWOT Analysis - (updated from Business Plan (August 2019) in August 2020)

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from SHG for developing the Institute as a centre of research excellence in the South Atlantic • Support from the sponsoring directorate • Committed team • Research Policy and a Research Institute Policy in place • Support from SAERI and our founding partners • Expertise/experience within the SHRI to draw on • Cross sectorial • Building credibility after a year in operation getting to know the business of science & research 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes time to develop reputation, presence and reach • Under resourced - there are resourcing challenges in the early stages e.g. staffing, staff time, leave and absence cover • Not an independent organisation • Reliance on external services for key inputs (e.g. Legal) •
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to focus and develop St Helena's research and innovation capability – R & I think tank • To address knowledge gaps • Opportunity to provide an improved service to visiting researchers; • Potential to inform government policy initiatives • Development of a local database • Opportunity for improved data management & research linked to access to the new telecoms cable • Opportunity to promote saint science and grow local capacity and exporter of knowledge • Revenue raising through fees and donation • Wider economic benefits for St Helena through visiting researcher spend • New academic partnerships and access to wider range of sources of funding for research • Funding bids • Marketing and expansion • Conferencing and virtual conferencing • Engaging and supporting Saint Helena's academic students – local science and citizen science – active participation in community science 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid 19 - Bankruptcy of Universities; research funding more targeted; loss of demand for services • Brexit – loss of access to funding, reduced funding from UK Government for research • DFID/FCO merger – changes to funding streams, eligibility and criteria • SHG restructuring, economics and loss of core financial support from SHG • Loss of key staff • Ability to sustain internal capabilities •

SHRI Core Functions and Activities

Promote research in St Helena

- To produce a communication strategy, including branding
- To promote research priorities
- To promote past and current research
- To produce an annual report
- To develop a SHRI website

Support research and researchers

- To develop research priorities
- To develop guidelines for researchers
- To produce an accreditation scheme/traning scheme for local guides
- To provide induction for researchers

Build and maintain partnerships

- To develop research partnerships and networks (local and international)
- To conduct research

To ensure research benefits the community

- To enable financial benefits for local businesses
- To take the lead on community engagement
- To develop learning opportunities for residents
- To facilitate collaboration between researchers, Schools and the SHCC
- To promote capacity building and co-authorship by local researchers

To provide support to the Research Council

- To provide support to policy matters
- To manage the licencing process

To provide data management services

- To produce data management guidelines
- To establish a database
- To track usage of SHRI data

Progress achieved towards target timeframes set out in the Business Plan (August 2019) for 2019-2020

	Action	Timeframe	Progress achieved	Review and revision
1	A fee structure for research applications agreed and endorsed by EC	April 2020	Completed Nov 2019	
2	A trading account established	April 2020	SHRI SG reviewed and decided to postpone until the SHRI had some financial statistics to base decision making on	Review 2021
3	SHRI website live	April 2020	SHRI website designed by Mark Yon, went live in January 2020	SHRI not communicating as much as it should. Whilst the website is up and running, it is not updated as regularly as required – Support for communication is needed.
4	Project funding for Data Manager sought	April 2020	Coordinator has been working with JNCC, SAERI, GIS and IT in the development of data management support for St Helena. As part of phase on support JNCC provided IT hardware to SHG, this included a computer for the data manager. Stage 2 was anticipated to be rolled out with external funding support. Sadly however, an application for DPLUS funding, Application Ref: DPR8S1\1071: Improving sustainable planning and disaster resilience in Montserrat and St. Helena lead by JNCC was not successful after the round two project submission end of November 2019. JNCC	It has proven difficult to secure the finance externally for a Data Manager for the SHRI. Alternative means have been pursued including, costing for data management support within different project proposals to start to make up a future salary. This isn't ideal, because we're committing to deliver a service that we've not got the capacity for and uncertainty about securing it given that we're only securing part of a salary and not a whole post. For example support for data management under the SHRI included in the Peaks Implementation Plan.

	Action	Timeframe	Progress achieved	Review and revision
			subsequently submitted two other proposals covering data management interests on St Helena but these have moved away from the initial post support.	
5	Recruitment for a new post Administration Assistant and Data Manager completed	April 2020	TORs prepared. Sheralee Yon appointed Administration Support Officer 7/10/19 in a part time role shared with Inclusion. She moved over full time to Inclusion on the 01/08/20.	Recruitment for part time contract staff currently underway. Staffing needs expected to grow in 2021 due to commitments in delivering projects/supporting research studies.
6	All research activities carried out routed through the Institute	April 2020	Since the establishment of the St Helena Research Policy, May 2019 and St Helena Research Institute Policy, all research is now routed through the institute which processes the applications for the SHRC.	Ongoing promotion and communication needed.
7	Official launch	November 2019	Successfully achieved	
8	SHRI membership package be developed with suitable fee structure	During 2019-2020	To be considered when trading account established	Review 2021
9	Applications for research funding	Immediate	Applications made – DPLUS (partnering 3 2019), Darwin Main (partnering 1, 2020 stage 1 application) Supported application from CEH (unsuccessful)	Ongoing
10	Pursue charitable donations – subject to having a trading account	Pursue on establishment of trading account	Review on establishment of trading account	Review 2021

Progress made towards delivery of core functions

Core function	Notable Progress Achieved
Promote Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHRI logo & SHRI website up and running • Women in Science articles for International Day of women and girls in science - 11th February • STRAWS study radio interviews (SAMS/St FM) • St Helena/Falklands Panel with SAERI, sponsored by ESH and engagement as an Ambassador – Virtual Islands Summit 2020 7-13 September. St FM radio interview. • St Helena Research priorities identified and promoted within areas of Natural Capital (project submissions and research opportunities explored), IT (Bridging the Digital Divide/VIS 2020), Climate Change (Draft climate change action plan & Peaks Imp Plan), Education & Health (research opportunities explored)
Support research and researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for Researchers produced under Research Policy together with Research Application & Research Protocol • 27 applications processed since Jan 2019 • Partner in 3 DPLUS project applications – 1 successful DPLUS103 Climate Change and Drought Warning Network led by ENRP in partnership with Connect St Helena Ltd, Arctium and SHRI. A second project is now incorporated into the Peaks Implementation Plan and is anticipated to go ahead. The third project – with JNCC and SHG relating to data management has evolved and a project was submitted for Darwin Main with JNCC and ENRP relating to NCAs. • Member of the Peaks Implementation Plan Development Group with responsibility for developing the research programme across the four programme pillars – Management, Biodiversity, Water Security & Socio-Economic.
Build and maintain partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close collaboration and working relations with SAERI. MOU with SAERI drafted. • Good working relations and collaboration built on Island with ENRP, ESH, Tourism, SHNT • Built on existing relationships to develop new project proposals with – JNCC, CEH – both project submission unsuccessful but JNCC resubmitted and CEH will resubmit next year. <p>New relationships being built with tangible outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NHM resulting in development of Doctoral Research proposal and contribution to the Peaks Implementation Plan. ➤ British Plant Pathology Society, CABI and Birmingham University Institute of Forestry resulting the in submission of a Darwin Main Application ➤ JICAS – St Helena Masters Projects for JICAS students/ JICAS bursary for UKOTS students ➤ Portsmouth University – with SHNT (lead) and EMD Marine – developing research projects, MOU and reciprocity opportunities

Core function	Notable Progress Achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plymouth - with EMD marine (lead) and SHNT developing research and support opportunities ➤ Island Innovation – VIS 2020. New networking opportunities to explore.
Ensure research benefits the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 Data Management Project funded by JNCC and delivered by SAERI provided beginners and advanced courses in QGIS supported by the SHCC 2nd to 13th March 2020. Among the attendees were people from the public sector, from private companies, the SHNT & SHRI. • SHRI secured sponsorship from Sure SA Ltd to increase the broadband capacity at the SHCC and Council Chambers that enabled members of the public to attend the VIS events - over 25 people attended during the week 7-11th September and for St Helena to participate in the Panel discussion – 457 people from over 84 countries and islands around the world listened to the discussion, including over 45 on St Helena (including at the SHCC). • Researchers visiting the Island will have contributed to the economy – 17 research visitors including University of Munich 10 Masters students plus supervisor. Not including the Discovery 100 cruise under the BBP • Pirata Cruise – invited guests on board but didn't stay on Island – guests included HE the Governor, Honorary Counsel Michel Martineau, Elizabeth Clingham, Leanne Henry, Rebecca Cairns-Wicks, Mia Henry. Exploring opportunities for next year's cruise.
Data Management	Excel spreadsheet of research data created and kept up to date
Provide services to the Research Council	Secretarial services to the SHRC and the SHRI SG Administration of the licencing process (see tables below)

Research Licencing – Summary of Research Applications Processed

Yr Jan - December	Applications processed SHRI		Licences awarded/recommended SHRC		Cancellations	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Natural Science	14	5	13	5	2*	1**
Earth Science	1	2	1	2		
Medicine & Health Science	1	(+1 in progress)	1			
Social Science	1	1 (+1 in progress)	1			1***
Humanities	1 (+ 1 in progress)		1			
	19 (+1 outstanding)	8	18	7		

*visit planned March – cancelled due to Covid-19, 1 withdrew no secured funding

** first visit went ahead February, second visit in March cancelled

*** visit planned March – Master's study, changed projects

Country	Applications received	
	2019	2020
St Helena	2	3
UK	1	2
Netherlands	1	
America	3	1
Austria	1	
Japan	1	
Switzerland	1	
Iceland		1
Germany	3	
Brazil	1	
South Africa	1	
France	1	
China		1
Nigeria		1
Total	16	9