

Institution: University of Roehampton

1. Context and mission

The University of Roehampton's distinctive research culture is driven by a commitment to advancing a socially just, sustainable and creative society. Our research mission emerges from the history of our four founding bodies (Church of England; the Roman Catholic Society of the Sacred Heart; the Southlands Methodist Trust; and the lay Froebel Institute) and their colleges, dating back to 1841, which sought to enhance opportunity across society by training a new cadre of women teachers. Our independent university status was granted in 2004. Our origins as the longest serving higher education provider to women in the UK continues to inform our ethos. We support students from diverse backgrounds to experience an education underpinned by research that places academic excellence at its core. The University is home to a diverse community of 223.05FTE (239 headcount) independent researchers in 11 units, across the arts, humanities, social and health sciences (and a small unit of ecologists; exemption). Our colleagues and their research are managed in seven academic departments and schools on a historical campus setting in the diverse Borough of Wandsworth in South West London. Our reputation for research, and the educational experience it underpins, is prized by our staff, students and the communities we serve, from local stakeholders through to our national and international networks.

Our confidence as an institution builds on the longevity and maturity of our research cultures. First as the Roehampton Institute, and then as the University of Surrey, Roehampton, we have made independent submissions across the liberal arts and health sciences to each RAE and REF exercise since 1992, including the last two as the University of Roehampton. REF2014 was a watershed, when we submitted 66% of eligible staff, and over two thirds of our research was recognised as internationally excellent or world-leading. Building on this position, between 2013 and 2020 we have invested in growing our reputation for research and impact. We have expanded the work of long-established units that were recognised for their high-quality research outputs (English Language and Literature; Education; History; Theology and Religious Studies). Our interdisciplinary focus on health research has been extended across distinct units (Allied Health; Psychology). We have radically evolved the foci of other research units to promote more inclusive research cultures that respond to societal and cultural needs (Communications, Culture and Media Studies, now incorporates researchers previously returned to Modern Languages; Sociology, now incorporates researchers previously returned to Social Anthropology). We have actively sustained research excellence in the performing arts, where our research continues to provide definition to the contours of the discipline (Dance), and where our focus on creativity has cultivated an international reputation for experimentation (Drama, Theatre and Performance). Research units that were embryonic in REF2014 (Business) have grown rapidly as a result of sustained investment in new staff.

Our research and knowledge exchange (RKE) priorities emerge from these units and respond to national and international challenges. We are developing a culture that focuses on the co-production of research priorities with international research collaborators, local government, and major civic institutions, to address societal needs through greater interdisciplinary collaboration and integration. These efforts have already been realised in the transformation of organisational units at the University (across the Arts and Humanities) to achieve greater critical mass, and new research foci (across the health sciences) in line with our academic strategy. These strategic changes have led to the concentration of investment and new priorities for our research units, to ensure financial sustainability. Further investment in areas of growth will focus on staff who complement and add interdisciplinary affinities to our existing research strengths, whilst catalysing new priorities within them, for example Health and Computer Sciences for the creative industries.

2. Strategy

We recently launched a Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy for 2020-25, built around core institution-wide themes developed in dialogue with our academic community, major civic organisations and community stakeholders. These themes – of social justice and inclusion; creative ecologies; healthy living; economic sustainability and environmental conservation and the

role of faith in society – align with our institutional values and will focus our academic pursuits. Our aim is to produce high-quality research in an enriching and inclusive research environment for staff and PGRs, and to deliver significant impact for our research users and local communities. To complement our existing portfolio of collaborations, we are extending our engagement with local government, community organisations, microbusinesses and SMEs, to ensure our research informs our civic role, socially, culturally and economically. Our membership of the Greater London Authority-funded South London Knowledge Exchange Partnership and BIG (Business, Innovation and Growth) scheme in South London, a sub-regional partnership between five London Boroughs and six universities to transform the local economy and society, is integral to these plans. Aligned with our institutional mission, initiatives to empower research leaders and attract diverse and talented researchers to our inclusive research community will be launched. Research infrastructure investment, both digital and physical, will support these ambitions. Curriculum developments and extracurricular opportunities will enable students to engage with and benefit from our research activities, including funded research internship schemes. Underpinning our ambitious strategy is financial sustainability, which will necessitate focused research investments, and the growth and diversification of our RKE income to increase research capacity. We intend to concentrate our research efforts in line with our strategic priority themes, building on existing successful income trajectories and increased capacity in senior research leaders, to deliver on an ambitious approach to large-scale research funding and an active knowledge exchange portfolio (KTPs).

Our new RKE Strategy, 2020-25, builds on the delivery of our strategy since 2013/4, which focused on sustaining research capacity in units recognised for their excellence, and building an international reputation for research and its impact. We sought to achieve this through: 1) supporting the production of high-quality research outputs with an international profile; 2) the growth and success of our doctoral community; and 3) generating increased external investment in our research. We have prioritised strengthening our existing research units through investment in academic posts (129 new staff since August 2013), across the whole life-cycle of research, from inception to impact, and across all career stages. We have also invested in institutional PhD studentships, and our commitment to match-fund PhD studentships is one of the means through which we have incentivised research grant capture. Our investment of QR, QR GCRF and institutional resources to respond to external opportunities has accelerated the delivery of these strategic objectives, and delivered concrete outcomes: 1) we have increased the volume and quality of our research outputs, with in excess of 2,800 outputs in diverse forms having been produced by research staff at the institution since 2014 2) we have also radically transformed our postgraduate research community, doubling annual PGR completions between 2012/13 and 2019/20 (336, including a further 59 PsychD completions between 2013 and 2016) and have actively promoted interdisciplinary research projects at a PGR level, supported by cross-departmental teams and external partners, 3) we have delivered strategic, sustainable growth of our research income since 2013/14, culminating in a 121% increase in annual research income in 2019/20 when compared with 2012/13.

Our impact strategy has focused on supporting units to consolidate existing collaborative networks and partnerships, and develop new ones, to better align our research and engagement activities with the needs of our key users. In addition to major relationships with policy makers, multinational corporations across health and media and international NGOs aligned to social justice, we have invigorated new public, third-sector and industry partnerships at an institutional level in South West London, including with Crystal Palace FC, Battersea Arts Centre, the Lawn Tennis Association, the National Trust West, and London Mental Health Trust. We have also launched innovative collaborations that extend the reach of our research, such as partnering with the University of the Third Age to enhance their provision and collaborate on shared-learning projects (we now host their annual national conference). In 2016, to coincide with the 175th anniversary of our oldest college, we launched Class of 2020 in partnership with British Telecom, to empower and raise the aspirations of 175 young women from 23 schools across London and, in 2019/20, we partnered with the Battersea Arts Centre to offer academic and PGR placements in their innovation hub, to drive new collaborative social impact projects.

Our investment in impact has included institution-wide and departmental leadership roles, complemented by dedicated Post-doctoral Research Associates and Research Facilitators who have been aligned to strategic impact projects. Additionally, approximately one third of staff are supported with enhanced workload allowances of up to 10% on an annual basis to pursue impact in line with strategic objectives. Proactive seed-funding has catalysed and accelerated impact, including through: the 'Sounds of Intent' programme, an evidence-based framework and curriculum for assessing the effect of music on children with learning difficulties, which is used in up to 80% of UK schools for children with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties; environmental conservation efforts in the Caribbean which have safeguarded sea turtle populations whilst supporting the local fishing and tourism economy; and an interactive theatrical experience based on research into the emotional and social meaning of libraries, which subsequently received AHRC follow-on funding. Similarly, our HEIF funding has underpinned interdisciplinary research-led innovation, including projects to improve accessibility to live art for hearing-impaired audiences, technological delivery of healthcare, and arts-based interventions to improve evidenced-based patient outcomes with age-related diseases, such as through music with Alzheimer's, and dance with Parkinson's, sufferers. We have helped build capacity across these activities by supporting staff through dedicated one-to-one training that is responsive to individual impact needs and which is accessible to all, and additional impact evaluation support. All 25 of our Impact Case Studies have benefitted from this specialist input.

The delivery of our research and impact strategies has been enabled by an open and collaborative research culture that prizes research integrity. Academic freedom is protected and no conditions are imposed on the subject of research. Robust procedures and policies have ensured that research integrity is embedded across units, including through a revised Code of Good Research Practice since 2019/20. We have complied with the Concordat for Research Integrity annually since 2016/17. Good Clinical Practice training has been mandatory for researchers in clinical settings since 2015/16, and Good Research Practice training was extended to all staff in 2019/20. We advocate for green open access (OA), and all staff are offered individualised support to ensure compliance. Since 2018, we have implemented gold OA agreements with Springer, Sage and Wiley. OA rates have increased year-on-year since 2015/16, reaching 91% compliance in 2019/20. Our repository is harvested by CORE and is registered with JISC's Directory of Open Access Repositories (openDOAR), and all PGR student theses are harvested by EThOS. Regular reviews of progress towards open research data are undertaken, and we provide best practice guidance for RDM planning, storage options and open access to data. Researchers are encouraged to deposit research data in free, openly accessible subject repositories, whilst high-capacity, secure storage facilities are available. Institution-wide open research initiatives include the launch in 2014 of Fincham Press, which publishes three open access journals, including *RoundTable*, a PGR-led initiative. We also support a range of projects to document and archive open data, including scientific and historical data, oral histories and performances. For example, a long-term British Academy-supported project, with the British Record Society, documents and disseminates 17th century Hearth Tax population data in an openly accessible format online. Ensuring that the outcomes of our research are as widely accessible as possible also drives our commitment to an open-source model wherever intellectual property allows, for example, through our maintenance of a free license to the NER-model (a live-subtitling quality control framework) which is now an international industry standard.

3. People

Since 2014, a clear and well understood university-wide staffing strategy has underpinned the delivery of our research objectives. Our people-centred approach has: driven investment in our existing staff base to facilitate successful research outcomes, including research allowances, sabbaticals and investment in new staff; focused on staff development and furthering individuals' research leadership capabilities, in order to retain and motivate high-quality staff through career progression; and attracted diverse talent with the ability to be highly-successful in research and leadership to grow our future research capacity.

Investment in the delivery of research objectives includes workload allowances of up to 40%, which are enriched by a one-in-six semester sabbatical system for all eligible staff, irrespective of fixed-term or part-time contracts. In addition to internal career development opportunities, all staff have access to dedicated departmental funds to support research development and delivery. Between 2013/14 and 2019/20 these funds totalled £2.15m. Individual academic units have autonomy over expenditure, which has underpinned the production and dissemination of research through research trips, conference attendance, and the development of impact. Further centralised funds, utilising overheads from externally funded research projects, have been redistributed through open competition to seed-fund research and impact initiatives.

All research staff meet regularly with an allocated senior mentor to discuss the progress of current projects and publications, upcoming bids, and career progression. Staff are also offered a comprehensive training programme, targeted according to career stage, discipline and strategic priorities. Since 2018/19 the programme has engaged over one third of the research staff base annually across 25 sessions. Career development mentoring and support, alongside robust research planning, has supported 35% of research staff through promotion internally since 2014, including 43 staff from Lecturer to Principal and Senior Lecturer (including accelerated promotion), 29 Senior and Principal Lecturers to Reader, and a further 15 to Professor on the research stream. A culture of internal promotion supports robust succession planning in research leadership. New progression routes for professional and technical staff recognise the breadth of expertise required to sustain our research community, supporting the transition from Research Officer to Research Manager, and from Research Facilitator to academic posts.

Our staff recruitment strategy prioritises high-quality research, aligned to core research strengths or areas of strategic investment. 54% of staff with a significant responsibility for research have been appointed since REF2014. Senior research management, including the Vice-Provost (Research and External Engagement), interview all research appointments with departmental research leaders. We ensure academic autonomy at all levels of decision making, and unit research priorities drive recruitment strategies within institutional frameworks. For example, in some units we have invested heavily in mid-career and senior posts during this period as an institution, in order to accelerate the delivery of our research strategy. This is most evident in our Business unit, where we have grown from 4.8FTE to 18.7FTE since 2013/14 with significant investment in the professoriate. Our English Literature and Language unit, on the other hand, has focused on developing Early Career Research capacities, recruiting 8 ECRs amongst 13 new staff in the period. In 2016-17, we intervened in the closure of Heythrop College, a 400-year-old Jesuit institution, to incorporate seven members of their academic staff within our School of Humanities to sustain our staff base in Theology, whilst providing a new home for that institution's important intellectual legacy.

Early Career Researchers are supported with ringfenced workload allowances and accelerated sabbaticals at the most appropriate point in the first years of their career, as standard. Professional development allowances of up to 30% can be requested by all new academic staff, and particularly those who have recently completed a PhD on the production of a suitable rationale, to facilitate their professional development. In 2019/20 we also launched ECAN, the Early Career Academic Network, and a coaching programme to support career development. Building on best practice in our School of Humanities, we are now offering dedicated ECR mentors within departments, and Honorary Fellowships to recently completed PGRs and all ECR leavers, in order to enable them to maintain institutional affiliation and access to academic resources whilst they progress their career. We are also expanding our Honorary Professor scheme to initiate key relationships to galvanise and catalyse interdisciplinary research or industry networks.

Postgraduate research students have been a major strategic focus during this period, and we recognise these future independent research colleagues as the lifeblood of our disciplines. The Graduate School supports over 370 PGRs and their research supervisors. All PGR students have a Director of Studies who is experienced in supervising PhDs to completion, and at least one co-supervisor. All new staff, and particularly ECRs, are incorporated into existing and new supervisory teams in order to build supervisory capacity and provide development opportunities. In recognition

of the diverse career paths for our PGRs, we also ensure that staff who have pedagogical, creative, business, or clinical practice are in place to support professional development where appropriate. Supervisors are required to have successfully completed SEDA-accredited supervisory training. All PGR students are supported with a guaranteed research allowance to support expenses and further internal grants are available (sponsored by Santander, Ede and Ravenscroft, and the Southlands Methodist Trust) to deliver additional research, conferences, and related activities over their three years of study. A development programme offers over 80 sessions annually, in person and virtually as a resource bank. Provision is responsive, following evaluation of individual needs, and includes training opportunities focusing on employability, careers beyond academia, and commercialisation. Since 2016, we have also participated in the ESRC doctoral training partnership, South East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS), which provides training to our entire PGR community. We also support PGR students pursuing academic careers to receive Associate Fellowship of the HEA through the SEDA Course and we provide teaching opportunities through the Brilliant Club, an award-winning university access charity. All intellectual property derived from PGR research is owned by the student, including where the research supervision is undertaken with other public or private organisations, providing the foundation for entrepreneurialism and the transition between academia and industry.

Since 2013-14, our PGR community in Arts and Humanities has been invigorated by our membership of the AHRC-funded TECHNE, and from 2019, TECHNE2 doctoral training partnerships, for which we organise all student training. We have received 52 TECHNE main competition studentships, and 6 CDA awards. Institutional investment in 50 Vice-Chancellor's PhD Scholarships was made in 2015, and scholarships have since been awarded to match-fund the support of major externally-funded research projects or to stimulate new research priorities. Since 2014, we have awarded over 70 fees and bursary VC studentships, including three fees-only awards. Five further major competitions, aligned with our research priorities, have been delivered in the period, including the Roehampton University Sacred Heart (RUSH) scholarship which provides opportunities for international PhD candidates from ODA-recipient nations whose work showed a commitment to social change. Since 2017, we have also funded two studentships as a member of Higher Education Scholarships Palestine (HESPAL) partnership between UK HEIs and the British Council, Palestine, to provide doctoral opportunities for Palestinian academics.

Our commitment to foster an inclusive research community incorporates PGRs and staff. Key initiatives, for example, accelerated research leave immediately preceding or following a significant period of parental leave, have been integral to providing an inclusive research environment. 27 nationalities are represented across our 239 research staff, and we continue to maintain a higher proportion of female academic staff than male academic staff, at 54% and 46% respectively, whilst 47% of our professoriate are women, compared to the sector average of 27%. Our PGR community of 371 students includes individuals from 52 nationalities, of whom 71% are women, and 30% identify as BAME, against sector averages of 49% and 19% respectively). 10% of our research staff identify as BAME. We are proud of the diversity of our PGR community, however, we also recognise that proportionately our 69% BAME UG students are not represented at PGR level, and of our BAME PGRs, those who pursue academic careers tend to do so outside of the UK. In order to address structural inequalities in the sector, we will launch a TECHNE-funded platform to encourage and increase PGR applications from BAME candidates in 2021, and a dedicated research fellowship scheme to support PGRs from underrepresented groups to transition to academic employment, providing crucial role models within the institution and sector. We operate a number of funded staff networks, including the BAME, Pride and Women's networks, respectively. All provide a safe space for colleagues and work with the University to identify improvements to policies and procedures. Equality Impact Assessments are completed for all new policies and strategies, and all recruitment panels are gender and ethnicity balanced. RKE Leads undertake unconscious bias training as a condition of their involvement in decision-making and advisory positions, and promote inclusive research cultures, for example ensuring that seminar series are representative. Our reflective practices foster a culture of continuous improvement, such as the recent adjustment of PGR regulations to mirror staff parental leave policy. The University was awarded an Athena SWAN Bronze award in October 2018. We are a Disability Confident Level 2 employer working towards Level 3, and provide a supportive research culture

for 3% of research staff who have declared a disability. In 2019, we achieved the single biggest improvement in one year of any institution (private or public) in the history of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, climbing 211 places from our 2018 position, to 188. Declared LGBTQ+ staff comprise 9% of our research community. We are a signatory of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and are implementing a corresponding action plan.

4. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Our research infrastructure and facilities reflect our research ambitions and the needs of our staff. RKE is led by the Vice-Provost (Research and External Engagement). A Director of the Graduate School and a Head of Research Services, provide further institution-wide research leadership and support. Research is governed by RKE Committee, Research Integrity and Ethics Committee, and Research Degrees Committee, which all report to Senate. RKE Committee is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and is comprised of institutional research leadership, and departmental RKE Leads. Research Integrity and Ethics Committee comprises departmental Ethics Representatives who oversee data, privacy, and good research practice with the support of an Ethics Officer ensuring compliance with the highest standards of research integrity. At a departmental level, Heads of Departments have responsibility for delivering the RKE strategy and are supported by RKE Leads in its implementation. Departmental leadership is responsible for all elements of RKE, including bidding, mentoring, research excellence and impact. We invest in dedicated research support services, to facilitate and enhance all research and research-related activity. Research Services provide developmental support for the full life-cycle of staff and student research, from inception to impact, and manage all research information, to ensure compliance and to inform strategic decision making. The services also support all aspects of the PGR experience, through to bidding, ensuring compliance with open research, and the delivery and evaluation of impact activity.

Our physical infrastructure for research has been significantly advanced since 2013/14. Capital projects are proposed by Heads of Departments through annual planning, and investment is aligned to strategic priorities, new staff capacities, and significant PGR opportunities. Since 2013/14, we have invested £100m (including a new RIBA-award winning library that opened in 2017) with dedicated research resources, including PGR and staff space and 14 special collections, two of which have since been digitized. We have invested £13m in a creative industries hub, the Sir David Bell Building, providing researchers with dedicated film studios and editing suites, newsrooms, resources for media, photography and sound production, computer facilities and a cinema. Major dedicated research infrastructure investments have been made in collaboration with other HEIs, including CUBIC, a research-dedicated 3T Magnetic Resonance Imaging scanner facility for the investigation of sensory and cognitive brain function, located at Royal Holloway, University of London, and owned and run jointly with Royal Holloway, Brunel and Surrey universities. Major upgrades include the research facilities for *in vitro* cell studies and metabolomics in health and disease, adding sought after laboratory equipment such as a Liquid Chromatograph Mass Spectrometer (LCMS) and live cell imaging microscopy as well as *in silico* labs for high performance computer modelling of molecular processes. In addition, we have invested in an environmental heat chamber to measure physiological responses and performance, and forms part of the Metabolic Assessment Unit.

Our digital infrastructure for RKE has also been significantly expanded. Cloud systems facilitate secure storage and transmission of research data between collaborators. We also encourage colleagues to make use of existing highly effective and secure repositories including the UK Data Archive. In 2015 we invested in PURE, our Current Research Information System, which acts as our repository for research outputs and is supported by a dedicated Open Access and Research Information Officer. Our in-house AV production team provides production support for researchers along with training in the specifics of video and podcast production, and the use of editing software to aid the public communication of research.

Drawing on this institutional leadership and infrastructure, our strategy to grow research income has delivered significant results, with over 850 discrete funded projects supporting 121% growth in annual research income. We have prioritised bidding through the investment of additional

workload allowances of up to 10%, and generous match-funding in the form of VC studentships awarded to support external grants since 2014. We have also supported inclusivity through ring-fenced studentships for candidates from ODA recipient nations, enhanced match-funding for initiatives such as the Daphne Jackson Fellowship, and targeted training and support for ECRs to obtain their first external grant. Internal peer-review panels for major grant schemes ensure that colleagues bid appropriately to career stage and that a high standard of bidding is maintained through selective approval. For all other bids, reciprocal mentoring and anonymised centralised peer-review occur prior to submission, which improves quality and supports inclusive practices. Dedicated teams of Research Development and Research Impact Officers provide one-to-one support for research and KE bidding and grant capture, and the design, delivery and evaluation of research impact, respectively. This support is available to all staff, alongside a dedicated annual programme of research and KE bidding training, that has been crucial in effecting a step change in grant capture. Looking forward, research and knowledge exchange income is a central tenet of our RKE Strategy 2020-25 as we seek to grow and diversify grant capture, increasing the capacity and profile of our research and knowledge exchange work.