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| Institution: University of Birmingham |
| Unit of Assessment: UoA26 Modern Languages |
| <p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>The Unit understands itself as a 'glocal' UoA within a civic university: its research and impact combine close collaboration with local community and cultural partners with a global outlook that takes seriously the need to interrogate and disrupt established paradigms, canons and modes of knowledge. All staff submitted (34.5 FTE) are based in the Department of Modern Languages, a constituent of the School of Languages, Cultures, Art History and Music (LCAHM) and, beyond, the College of Arts and Law (CAL).</p> <p>In REF 2014, six areas for strategic development were identified: building on existing research strengths; maintaining the breadth of research; supporting multi- and interdisciplinarity; contributing to and defining the research themes of CAL and the University; supporting individuals in meeting research expectations; and increasing grant capture. In 2016-2017, the UoA undertook a strategic review of its approach to achieving these aims. In a national context in which funding bodies and government policy place increasing emphasis on cross-disciplinary collaboration and inter-sectoral exchange, the review established that the core development goals identified in 2014 would be met best through refocusing the UoA's research around methodological – rather than thematic – groupings.</p> <p>In addition to the key objectives carried over from 2014 (interdisciplinarity, grant capture, supporting staff ambition), the UoA's revised strategy emphasises the development of new theoretical and methodological frameworks through cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral work. The strategy is implemented by uniting activities across languages and linguistics around three research streams (Forging Links, Intersecting Identities, and (Trans)forming Knowledge), brought together under the umbrella theme of Interconnections. The Unit created a new research management body – Advanced Research Coordination Hub (ARCH) – to oversee research strategy, practice, and activities across the streams. ARCH comprises the professoriate and Head of Department and is chaired by the UoA Research Lead.</p> <p>The success of this strategy is evident in significant investment by the University in response to this strategic redesign in the form of staff recruitment; substantially increased grant capture; development of multiple cross-disciplinary and cross-sector collaborations; and sizeable upturn in PGR enrolments.</p> <p>Research and Impact Strategy</p> <p>The concept of Interconnections thematically exemplifies and programmatically draws together the research undertaken in the UoA. It moves research in the UoA beyond a traditional language/area studies focus and beyond 'topics'/objects, towards interlingual, intermedial, and interdisciplinary work which is both local and international in its object and reach. The UoA strategy frames research around method and practice and places cross-disciplinary methodology at the core. The central benefit of this approach has been the generation of collaborations and synergies that might not otherwise come into view. Within the framework of Interconnections, our research is subdivided into the three research streams. All researchers within the UoA participate in the activities of one or more of the following streams.</p> <p>1. Forging Links</p> |

This stream focuses on ways in which linkages are conceived and imagined. The link, which can be physical, ontological, disciplinary, artistic or epistemological, is an element that structures flows and exchanges. The stream examines this dynamic phenomenon within a range of interdisciplinary, linguistic and transregional contexts. Researchers consider what is involved methodologically in adopting cross-border or globalizing views of **culture from outside of the modern Western canon** (Daoudi, Gould, Hardwick, O'Sullivan, Santos, Sèbe). They examine **theoretical questions of connections, translations, and transfers** (Brown, Ginger, Gould, Hardwick, Jones, Malamatidou, Saldanha, Yuan). This is exemplified by the world-leading expertise within the UoA on translation theory and practice (for example, Saldanha's co-editorship of the discipline-defining *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies* (3d edn, 2019)). Research in the stream **reframes questions of exile** (Jato, Klapper, Lough, Marcer, Rulyova), bringing a spatial perspective to how exile involves the conception and imagination of other locations (e.g., Jato and Klapper's, *Fractured Frontiers: Reconciling the Inner and Outer Exile Writing of Nazi Germany and Francoist Spain* (2020)). Finally, researchers in the UoA undertake a **renewal of approaches to linguistic structures** that underpin multiple languages across divergent schools of linguistic thought, firstly through a refreshing of comparative, formal linguistic approaches (Corr, Schifano) and, secondly, via a critical re-assessment and renewal of models of language from a cognitive perspective (Divjak and Milin). The stream is equally focused on forging links across sectors to foster significant change in the world. One major example is Jones's multiple co-operations with national Holocaust education providers, museums, galleries and artists which has transformed professional, cultural and pedagogical practice around the use of 'mediated testimony' (REF 2021 Impact Case Study).

2. (Trans)forming Knowledge

The stream develops methods for examining how knowledge is established, contested, appropriated, adapted and transformed across different types of text, media, and technology. The stream's research examines and applies **new and emerging ways of understanding, communicating, and disseminating knowledge** from the medieval period (de Ventura, Harris, Ward), through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to the present day (Abbott, Ardrey, Jones, Palmer, Wagstaff, Watts). Researchers within the stream explore the **interplay between present-day and historic ways of knowing**. Abbott and Ardrey, in their work on the AHRC-funded *Baudelaire Song Project*, discovered how our knowledge of song is realised through the digital analysis of the interplay of patterns in language and music. Research on poetry which carries a dimension of political and public praxis is carried out within the stream; for example, by Wagstaff who looks at how the medium of poetry can constitute a political intervention through the concept of attention, resulting in her major monograph *André du Bouchet: Poetic Forms of Attention* (2020). Significant impact has emerged from the research carried out within this stream: examples include the work associated with the *Estoria de Espanna Digital* project, which has resulted in the restoration of key manuscripts, transformation of public understanding of medieval manuscript culture, and skills development through crowd-sourced transcription (REF 2021 Impact Case Study).

3. Intersecting Identities

The stream brings together specialists in the study of multiple, intersecting identities and works to develop methods and praxis that are interdisciplinary and cross-cutting. Researchers examine the **ways in which identity is understood in and through language**, including sexual, gender, religious and national identity markers, and the intersections between them. For example, work on transnational sexologies (Downing, Ross) has produced significant outputs (Ross's *Eccentricity and Sameness: Discourses on Lesbianism and Desire between Women in Italy, 1860s–1930s* (2015); Downing's *Fuckology: Critical Essays on John Money's Diagnostic*

Concepts (2015)). Examinations of **embodied subjectivity in visual culture** (Evans, Ince) have led to major monographs (e.g., Ince's prize-winning book *The Body and the Screen: Female Subjectivities in Contemporary Women's Cinema* (2017) and Evans's *The Body in French Queer Thought from Wittig to Preciado: Queer Permeability* (2020)). Examinations of the **concepts of gendered normality, normativity, exceptionality, and extremism** (Downing, Evans, Karcher) have included Downing's monograph on *Selfish Women* (2019) and Karcher's work on militant feminism in the Federal Republic of Germany since 1968. The stream's research has led to impact in a range of cultural and social contexts. One example is Downing's co-creation of art exhibitions and the use of the methods developed in this co-creation to enhance psychiatrists' understanding of identity and unconscious bias. Daoudi's engagement with politicians, NGOs and cultural practitioners in Algeria has effected a significant transformation in the public understanding of gender-based violence during the Algerian Civil War in political, social and cultural spheres (REF 2021 Impact Case Study).

Impact

The strategic review of research in 2016-2017 identified two key pathways to impact for the cross-disciplinary work carried out in the UoA: cross-sector collaboration and public engagement (especially through artistic practice). It was also recognized that large challenges can only be met by co-researching with non-humanities scholars. The UoA's **impact strategy** focuses on building and enhancing these pathways. One aspect of this was the **consolidation of impact strategy across the School** of Languages, Cultures, Art History and Music. Embedding impact strategy at School level has allowed the Unit to foster a degree of cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral practice that would not otherwise have been possible, and thereby lay the groundwork for significant impact. Colleagues in the UoA (especially Jones as School Impact Lead and Watts as Chair of the School-wide 'Word Music Image' research theme) played a key role in defining and nurturing the LCAHM impact strategy. In common with the streams, the approach has interdisciplinarity and a focus on methods at its core.

The impact strategy centres around LCAHM's cross-departmental research theme **Word Music Image** (WMI), which identifies and **facilitates partnerships** with internal and external partners. This is complemented by three impact clusters that are internally focused and aim to **develop the skills required** to create meaningful change in the world: Creative Societies, Languages in Practice, and Arts of Understanding. The clusters are centred on a *method* of delivering impact (e.g., through artistic partnerships, education, public engagement); these clusters have been developed strategically from the 'ground up', that is, by identifying and nurturing existing synergies between the praxis of researchers across the School. The clusters offer CPD workshops focused a) around a particular theme within a cluster (e.g., cultural repair, migration, conservation of artefacts) and b) skills and knowledge germane to that particular method (e.g., creating and developing partnerships in the creative economies, using public engagement for impact).

The success of this strategy for the UoA is seen in the meaningful and diverse impact produced in the streams: **each stream has contributed one of the UoA's Impact Case Studies submitted to REF 2021** (see above). Since February 2019, WMI and cluster events have attracted more than 80 participants from across disciplines and sectors (27 from the UoA), including 20 different non-HEI partners. Collaborative projects led by researchers in the UoA and with the potential for significant impact are now emerging directly from these events. These include Roca Lizarazu's ongoing partnership with Salt Road artist group and her work around alternative citizenships (the subject of a UKRI Leadership Fellowship application); and Jones's

collaboration with local community organisations (Centrala, Creative Black Country) on a project combining memory and migration studies.

Future strategy

The UoA aims to build on the foundational work undertaken in this REF period and to progress the methodological innovation, cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approach that have become central to its practice. Two concepts have emerged as central areas of concern within the UoA and these will underpin the UoA's research and impact strategies in the medium- to long-term: **diversifying and refreshing**.

Questions of diversifying Modern Languages research have been a focal point of discussions within the UoA in this REF period. Diversifying is very broadly understood and includes a rethinking of Western epistemologies (within (Trans)forming Knowledge), a questioning of binary thinking (within Intersecting Identities) and a reconceptualization of Europe as a periphery in dialogue with other parts of the world (within Forging Links). Events planned for 2020 had the aim of disseminating these new perspectives at national level. Santos co-organised a major conference on the theme of Decolonising Modern Languages with the IMLR in London (planned for March 2020; moved online in September 2020). Santos, Jones and Corr were due to present a panel on impact, interdisciplinarity and decoloniality at the conference 'Where are we now?' in Durham in April 2020 (cancelled due to COVID-19).

The UoA's future strategy picks up these threads and embeds them within its research and impact practice. This will include asking difficult questions about how current research structures may work to exclude knowledge constructed outside of Europe or reinforce the use of language as a form of power. The UoA will explore how its impact and research practices can be further diversified by emphasising collaboration, exchange and focused listening, rather than a unidirectional knowledge transfer from academic to non-HEI. **EDI considerations are embedded at the heart of this rethinking**; structures that work to exclude research conducted on and in non-European languages and cultures, also work to exclude researchers and research subjects from outside of Europe.

A central part of this strategy will be to interrogate the **balance of language specialisms** within the UoA and, in particular, the role of non-European languages (currently Mandarin and Arabic are represented in research within the UoA). It is here that the UoA will seek to refresh existing practice, renewing its research and impact agendas to bring work focusing on different parts of the world into dialogue. An important part of this agenda is ensuring that colleagues at all career stages and with diverse backgrounds have an opportunity to contribute to deciding the UoA's future direction.

Diversifying and refreshing will be embedded within the existing research streams, and the UoA will continue to identify cutting-edge research questions and devise projects on the basis of them. Projects are characterized by (a) setting out large methodological positions in relation to the streams; (b) doing so in a cross-disciplinary way; and/or (c) involving practice at their core. Several funded projects will start in the next REF period: for example, Harris's Leverhulme-funded project on dissemination of knowledge between sixteenth-century Protestant reformers (awarded, £137k). Diversifying and refreshing will mean a strategic focus on non-European languages in terms of both **recruitment to new posts and support for grant applications**. The UoA has already begun to emphasise the latter, for example: Gould recently has submitted an application for a project on Islamic concepts of freedom (under review); Yuan has been supported in the development of an AHRC Research, Development and Engagement Fellowship

for a project generating a new theoretical framework for understanding interpreter identities with a focus on Mandarin-English interpreting (under review).

The UoA will continue the focus on developing larger-scale collaborative projects and intensify and further increase external research grant capture to underpin them. This will combine a number of large bids (in excess of £500k) with support for ECRs in building their profile through applications for smaller 'first' grants, as well as ensuring they are included as CIs and collaborators on larger grants where appropriate.

Open data and digital research

The emphasis on digital technologies that plays a major part in the work of the streams also provides the basis for the UoA's approach to Open Access. An explicitly OA policy for data and code was written into Divjak and Milin's project *Out of Our Minds*, and the first OA publications from the project are now coming out. Ward's publicly editable *Estoria de Espanna Digital* and Abbott's *Baudelaire Song Project* database are both underpinned by OA principles. Both are registered on GitHub with a DOI and OA license, making data and metadata accessible public resources. The Unit's OA strategy capitalizes on the procedures that the University of Birmingham makes available; UoB provides and encourages the use of electronic research data archives (The University of Birmingham Research Archive - UBIRA), which can be combined with an online repository for code such as GitHub or OSF. PURE provides open access to research, and academics publish where possible in open-access journals (REF 5a 2.2, 4.5). Researchers in the UoA showcase their research via the College's 'two-minute reads' feature, which offers short, layperson-oriented accounts of significant published research with links to the articles themselves (Divjak, Jones and Saldanha contributed 'two-minute reads' in the REF period). Staff also regularly produce research-informed articles for open-access publications with a wide reach such as *The Conversation*, *The Guardian* or the *Huffington Post*.

The UoA's commitment to the digital has enabled it to respond to some of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis especially well, and this learning will be taken forward into the next cycle as the UoA explores ways to sustain and enhance its collaborative and cross-sector approach to research and impact. Abbott's Language Coaching masterclasses for early-career performers from leading UK Conservatoires (RNCM, RCS, RCM, RAM, Guildhall) resulted in a Social DistanSong Spring Festival, brought online because of COVID-19. Divjak was closely involved with the organisation and delivery of the 'UK Cognitive Linguistics' conference, hosted by UoB and moved online-only in July 2020. During lockdown, Daoudi conducted a series of Facebook interviews with Algerian cultural practitioners whose work deals with the Civil War of the 1990s, attracting almost 12,000 combined views. The School impact clusters ran a number of brainstorming impact workshops exploring experiences of and best practice for moving impact and engagement work into the online environment (Ward, Abbott and Ardrey presented at these events). The UoA put robust plans in place – including the creation of a Research Resilience Lead – to ensure that research activities and events in the 2020-21 academic year are held digitally, enabling maximum staff engagement and addressing potential EDI barriers to participation.

Research integrity

The UoA's research environment has been designed to support staff and PG research in following University-wide ethics committee standards and ensuring that research practices are in line with UUK's Concordat on Research Integrity (REF5a 2.2). Training on ethics standards and review procedures is built into researcher support at all levels. It forms part of the annual Developmental Needs Analysis and training for all PGR students and probationary training for

ECR staff, while regular updates are provided to all staff via online CPD. Reflections on best practice are shared at informal research lunches and in-person CPD sessions.

2. People

Staffing strategy

The University has made a **substantial investment in the UoA** in response to the revised research and impact strategy, with appointments made to consolidate and build on identified areas of excellence. The UoA made 4 new professorial appointments (Abbott, Ginger, Gould, Divjak) and 10 early-career appointments (Ardrey, Corr, Evans, Karcher, Palmer, Santos, Schifano, O'Sullivan, Yuan, Zaramella). Daoudi moved from a teaching and scholarship to a teaching and research post in this REF period. New appointments include 2 staff members appointed via the Birmingham Professorial Fellowship scheme (Divjak, Gould). These schemes are designed to attract high-performing researchers to the University, who are given concentrated time for research activities in the first five years of their contract (REF5a 3.4.1). Divjak has additionally brought the Leverhulme-funded project *Out of Our Minds*, which includes the appointment of an SL colleague, Milin. The majority of Category A staff in the UoA have been appointed to open-ended posts (34 out of 35). Roca Lizarazu was appointed to a 3-year Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship in 2018 and is now being supported by the University in an application for a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship. If successful, this would include the appointment to a permanent position.

In line with the aims of Interconnections, the UoA recruited new staff on the basis of a targeted effort to develop and build a concentration of **expertise in comparative studies** and to enhance the **focus on interdisciplinarity** across languages, linguistics, culture, and theory. The UoA has made significant investment in **linguistics**, growing capacity from 0 to 4 permanent specialists in this area (Divjak, Milin, Corr, Schifano). Abbott and Ardrey were recruited to add to growing strengths in the **digital humanities**, complementing the work already carried out by Ward in this area. Evans and Karcher have enhanced and expanded the research already carried out by Downing, Ross, Ince, and others in the area of **Modern Languages-led sexuality studies**. The appointments of Ginger and Gould at professorial level, and of Santos, O'Sullivan and Yuan at lecturer level, have lent critical mass to, and expanded areas of excellence within, the Forging Links stream. The emergence of a significant mass of mid-career researchers, focusing on a broader range of geographical, methodological, and linguistic areas, is **driving the strategic review and programme of diversifying and refreshing** outlined above.

The UoA has a vibrant community of non-Category A **postdoctoral research fellows** (PDRF) within the UoA, most attached to projects led by senior researchers. Jato and Klapper's Leverhulme project *Fractured Frontiers* allowed the recruitment of two PDRFs (Windsor and Arnold); Windsor returned to the UoA as PDRF on Jones's *Knowing the Secret Police* project (AHRC); Divjak and Milin's *Out of our Minds* provided Leverhulme Trust funding for 3 PDRFs (Ez-zizi, Romain and Sun); Abbott's AHRC-funded *Baudelaire Song Project* brought PDRF Rolland to the UoA; Karcher's major ERC grant on *Urban Terrorism in Europe* allowed the appointment of a PDRF Geerts; Gould's ERC Starting Grant on *Global Literary Theory* has brought with it four PDRFs working on Turkic (D'hulster), Persian (Quay, Askari) and Arabic (Rashwan) literature. The UoA carefully nurtures the careers of Research Fellows and ECRs and these colleagues are central players in innovating and implementing the research strategy (with plans to increase their strategy-making power as described above). Roca Lizarazu has helped co-ordinate and lead day-long multi-partner, multi-sector impact events within Word

Music Image; Ardrey, who joined UoB as a researcher on Abbott's AHRC Baudelaire Project grant, was later appointed to a full lectureship and is innovating in research and practice on digital humanities.

Staff development

Staff development is supported at all career stages through an environment that fosters collaboration, creativity and impact. The UoA has inaugurated and holds regular **Research Lunches** (approximately twice per term), at which researchers at all career stages engage in a range of research-supporting activities, including reading key texts of cross-stream interest, debating key and emerging concepts in the discipline, sharing best practice in research, and carrying out work-in-progress peer-review of outputs and grant applications. The aims are, firstly, to strengthen outputs in progress; secondly, to explore key concepts and original research questions collectively; and, thirdly, to provide mutual peer support in an informal and collegial atmosphere. Discussion of in-progress drafts of chapters of monographs that have appeared in the REF cycle has been especially important.

Instead of a standard seminar/lecture series, the streams additionally organize regular, full-afternoon, **major research events** that resemble mini conferences featuring invited world-leading scholars. A talk by the guest scholar is followed by activities across a number of formats including work-in-progress presentations by UoB researchers (staff and PGRs) leading to feedback and a broader discussion with the visitor and the community; 'master classes' in which the visitor engages with PGR students; and round-table debate events. World-leading scholars invited have included leaders in interdisciplinary Modern Languages studies (e.g., Emeritus Professor of French, Terence Cave, Oxford; Professor Emma Wilson, French, Cambridge) and scholars from other fields whose work opens the way to interdisciplinary thinking and practice for Modern Languages research (e.g., sexologist Prof. Alain Giami (INSERM, Paris); comparative historian of ideas Prof. Vicente Rafael (University of Washington in Seattle)).

School structures (especially Word Music Image) support the **development of colleagues' impact work** and facilitate exchanges with, in particular, cultural and third sector bodies. The School Impact Lead provides **tailored mentoring to support colleagues working on Impact Case Studies**. ICS leads are given additional teaching relief to carry out impact, and impact achievements are recognized in the promotion process. The College Impact and Research Fund provides financial support for established and emerging impact (it supported Jones's theatre road trips, Downing's travel to co-create/participate in exhibitions in different European cities, and Ward's crowdsourcing work).

In line with the **Concordat** to Support the Career Development of Researchers and the College Staff Development policy, a rigorous development programme combines centrally-provided training with departmental support. This is achieved through ring-fencing of research time, mentoring, and targeted one-to-one meetings with CAL Research and Knowledge Transfer Office staff for researchers at all levels who are planning research grants and projects.

All staff in the UoA benefit from individual **research mentoring** and discipline-specific CPD sessions on promotion. Since 2013, an enhanced scheme of **study leave** has been in operation, with all staff entitled to apply every 6 semesters for up to 2 semesters' study leave (and, exceptionally, 12 months, subject to agreed objectives). Several colleagues have written major monographs in the period as a result of enhanced leave (e.g. Jato, *El éxodo español de 1939*; Rulyova, *Joseph Brodsky and Collaborative Self-Translation*; Watts: *A History of French Literature on Film*). This is supported by an annual **personal research allowance** (PRA) of

£1000 in non-pandemic times. Career progression is supported via a transparent **workload allocation model** (WAM), which ensures equitable distribution of teaching, administration, and research across the UoA. New appointees at lecturer level are assigned a formal personal mentor as part of the University probation support and monitoring policy (REF5a 3.4.3). The School has a specific **grants mentoring scheme** led by the School Research Lead. This assigns two mentors with grant-related experience to each project from an early verbal pitch stage to final submission.

Within the UoA, the Research Lead advises on research plans, outputs and career progression. Colleagues are regularly updated on research developments and opportunities via weekly Research Newsletters and at regular departmental meetings. The annual **Personal Development Review** monitors performance and maps out research goals. The **promotions and rewards strategy** encourages excellence in research and impact (REF5a 3.4.6). Staff can apply for promotion in any annual review cycle, and research performance is a central criterion. Exceptional research performance may also be rewarded with a one-off payment or award of an additional salary increment.

Excellent performance on the part of existing staff has resulted in 4 promotions to Professor in the REF period (Forcer, Hardwick, Jones, Ward). Forcer has since taken up a Chair and Headship of School at the University of Glasgow, following his term as Head of Department at UoB. Jato, Jones, and Ward have been invited to participate in the University's Research Leaders' Programme, which enables them to develop their **skills of leadership** in collaboration with colleagues from across the whole range of disciplines of the University and via international visits. Other colleagues have completed the Early Career Leadership (Ardrey, Palmer, Santos), Emerging Leaders (Sèbe, Forcer – Griffiths and Wagstaff to complete in 2020/21) and Senior Leadership (Abbott, Ginger) programmes (REF5a 3.4.4).

Research students

As a direct result of strategic appointments linked to the streams, especially in Colonial and Postcolonial and Middle Eastern Studies, Translation Studies, and Sexuality and Gender Studies, the UoA is building a **growing PGR community**. In 2016, the UoA had a registered PGR population of 62. In 2020, numbers had risen to 93, despite a challenging national climate in Modern Languages recruitment. The School has a strong appeal amongst international students, often contributing to the development of a new generation of researchers in the Global South; for instance, Sèbe's current and former PhD students include researchers from Algeria, India, Iraq, Nigeria, and Pakistan, and most of them receive scholarships from their countries of origin. The University's cross-institution Interdisciplinary Sexuality and Gender Studies network is convened by Downing, and the UoA owns the PGR programmes linked to them, placing the activities and concerns of Intersecting Identities at the heart of cross-University collaboration.

The UoA's cross-disciplinary approach to research is reflected in its PGR community and many postgraduate students in the Unit are working on **interdisciplinary projects**. Cross-disciplinary co-supervisions take place across the School and University. Downing currently co-supervises three PhD students with colleagues from the College of Social Sciences (CoSS); Jones has co-supervised four PhD students with colleagues in Political Science and International Studies and one with a colleague in History; Corr supervises a PhD student with Social Policy; Sèbe with colleagues in History, Theology and Creative Writing; and Rulyova with Creative Writing.

PGR funding comes from two principal sources (i) concrete research projects with students attached (e.g. ERC, Karcher; AHRC, Ward; Leverhulme, Klapper and Jato, Divjak and Milin) and

(ii) competitive funding schemes, of which the AHRC Midlands 4 Cities consortium (M4C; M3C to 2018) is the most significant. Applications for the latter are targeted at the research specialisms of the UoA, with particular emphasis placed on cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional supervision. The applicants are guided through proposal development by means of mentoring and application workshops run by the College. Additionally, all applicants are interviewed by a panel of experts in the UoA and only the highest quality projects are put forward for selection. 10 students in UoA have been the recipients of M3C/M4C funding in the period 2014/2015 to 2019/2020.

Successful and timely completion of PGR theses is supported by a rigorous programme of **monitoring and support mechanisms**. PGRs receive monthly supervision (or part-time equivalent) and have a team of at least two supervisors and a mentor. Supervisors work with students to carry out a Developmental Needs Analysis at the beginning of every academic year and review these with students regularly. The UoA offers online and in-person skills training via the College Graduate School. Postgraduate students are guided through their supportive annual progress reviews by supervisors. The School organises progress panels in a way which guarantees that an ECR is a member of each panel. In this way, the School aims to (i) integrate ECRs more fully into the life of the School, and (ii) guarantee a wider knowledge and experience base in the School itself, thereby future-proofing its own capabilities.

Students in the UoA also benefit from structures created at School level in 2017-18 to foster **cross-disciplinary engagement** with other PGR researchers. This includes informal, student-led fortnightly seminars at which students present a short outline of their research to their peers who offer informal feedback. These seminars, which have necessarily become virtual in 2020-21, allow for the incorporation of the UoA's burgeoning community of Distance Learning students, and also serve to combat the sense of isolation frequently reported by postgraduate students nationally. The School additionally has established twice-yearly formal research seminars, in which members of staff across the School are paired with PGRs. Thus, researchers from different departments, but with thematic interests in common, are encouraged to meet in advance of the formal presentation and discuss their thematic commonalities before each speaks about their own research in the seminar, which is open to all members of the School. As of 2018/19, there is an annual School Graduate Conference, shaped and led by postgraduate researchers. PGR students have also developed their own community activities and initiatives. For example, ROLES, a self-starting Sexuality and Gender Studies PGR network, established in 2010, holds research seminars, reading groups, and a major annual conference which attracts national and international attendance.

In order to **enhance skills development** and **preparation for careers** both in and outside of academia, PGR students are encouraged to participate in the activities of the streams and to undertake impact work/ co-authoring with their supervisors wherever practical. For example, Downing and Rees-Hales are co-authoring an article based on a series of previously unknown lithographs of female criminals unearthed by the student during her archival research. Students co-supervised within the UoA (Rees-Hales, Hedger, Tatlow, Wimbush) have taken advantage of placement opportunities (e.g., those provided through the M3C/M4C consortium) to enable them to further their understanding of the sectors related to their research (respectively, galleries, music performance, puppetry, and education). PGR students have been able to take advantage of the 'Reading X for Researchers' courses, whereby X = a language offered by the UoA. This is an asset to many of the UoA's interdisciplinary students, in particular those who come from non-languages backgrounds but need to access and understand documents in a foreign language in the course of their research.

Equality and diversity

Recruitment and promotion policies within the UoA have had the effect of **improving gender balance** at professorial level. Of seven professorial colleagues returned to REF 2014, six were men; as of July 2020, that ratio is now six female professorial (Category A) staff to two male (with one further female colleague promoted to Professor in 2020/2021). This better reflects the overall gender distribution in the UoA (77.1% female) and of the discipline as a whole. All colleagues sitting on appointment panels attend unconscious bias training and a gender balance is ensured on appointment and promotion panels. Of recent appointments to the UoA at early career stage, eight members of appointed staff are female, one male, and one non-binary. The ratio for newly recruited professors is three female/one male and, of those promoted internally to professor, two are female and two are male.

The UoA's research strategy, in particular Intersecting Identities and the focus on post- and decoloniality within Forging Links places **EDI concerns at the core of the Unit's activities**. This has fostered cross-sector collaborations around questions of sexuality and race that in turn feed back into internal policy and process. Examples include Ross's work with LGBTQ activist groups in Vercelli and Naples to share strategies and perspectives on LGBTQ rights, and a new initiative led by Downing and Evans in collaboration with partner institution UVA, the Netherlands, on international #metoo movements and new developments in EDI. Intra-departmental discussions around decoloniality have prompted a rethinking of the UoA's research structures and how these might work to exclude non-European perspectives. Three colleagues identifying as BAME were recruited or transferred to roles including responsibility for research in this REF cycle. Nonetheless, the UoA recognises that its staffing base is overwhelmingly white (88.6%), and exclusively so at professorial level, and aims to address this through its recruitment and promotion strategies now and in the future.

The UoA encourages applications for **flexible or part-time working** for staff with caring responsibilities or disabilities: 40% of staff within the UoA have such an agreement in place. All staff are eligible to apply for study leave on the basis outlined above and colleagues on part-time contracts are supported equally in achieving their research and impact objectives. The UoA has a very limited number of Category A staff on fixed-term contracts; colleagues in this group are given tailored mentoring and support for progressing their careers (seen, e.g., in the appointment of Ardrey from PDRF to Lecturer and the nomination of Roca Lizarazu for a UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship). There is dedicated space within promotion applications for staff to outline the impact of career breaks, disability or part-time working to ensure that EDI considerations are fully taken into account in the evaluation process. Staff are also supported by the University's Workplace Wellbeing team, which provides employee advice and listening services (REF5a 3.4.5).

The organization of UoA research events embeds a concern with EDI at every level in a way that **supports participation** by all research-active colleagues and students. All weekly events at School and Departmental level are within the School's single schedule of events, which ensures that these take place at family- and carer-friendly times. The emphasis on workshop-style major events, instead of traditional seminars, ensures staff at different career stages, and PGRs, can participate with their own papers/share work-in-progress, alongside leading external speakers, and engage in discussion with them (e.g., ECR Palmer presented work at the (Trans)forming Knowledge event with Prof. Deirdre Wilson; PGR student Mouna Lekkal offered a research-based response to Prof. Chandrika Kaul). Questions of gender and ethnic equality and diversity are central to the choice of speakers and representation of a variety of groups (as well as of viewpoints) is sought and achieved.

Colleagues in the UoA are able to benefit from the College's policy of offering one term of remission from either teaching or administration following **return to work** after an extended period of parental leave (min. 6 months). Seven members of the UoA (20% of total staff returned) have taken advantage of this policy in the REF cycle and have thereby been able to regain the momentum of their research and impact work: these colleagues have contributed a mean of 2.0 outputs and one has led an Impact Case Study. Other forms of remission or tailored adjustment have been offered to (and taken up by) colleagues returning to work following long-term sick leave or other forms of parental leave.

The UoA sought to achieve a gender balance in internal **REF reading and selection groups** and members of the latter received unconscious bias training. The output selection process reviewed EDI data with a view to achieving a fair representation of staff with protected characteristics within the UoA, in line with the University Code of Practice. An emerging pattern in the underrepresentation of BAME staff in terms of number of outputs submitted fed into discussions around the ways in which research structures may unintentionally exclude work done within non-European languages and the revision of the UoA's research strategy accordingly.

The School has prepared a submission for an **Athena SWAN** Bronze award (submission date: November 2020), led by Rulyova of UoA 26 and supported by an extended 4-year Action Plan. As part of the application process, the School conducted an EDI self-assessment of its three departments, including two staff EDI surveys followed by focus groups to explore and address the issues raised. The EDI Lead reports to the Head of School monthly, and is a member of School Executive Committee; there is a designative EDI budget within the School. Recent EDI initiatives have included events designed to focus on visible role models, and School-wide discussions around the University's COVID-19 Framework for Educational Resilience and the Black Lives Matter movement.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research grants

The UoA's success in grant capture has improved year-on-year and, in particular, since the strategic changes to its research structures and new appointments since 2016. Average yearly grant income in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 was £294k. In the academic years 2015/16 to 2019/20, the average figure was £484k – an increase of 65%. The UoA has won external awards to a value of £3.01 million during the current REF period; this represents a threefold increase per FTE staff member from the previous cycle. As described below, the grants won in this REF cycle show the **benefit of the methods-focused and cross-disciplinary structures** created by the UoA's research strategy. They have resulted in high-quality outputs and impact: notably, all three of the ICSs submitted to REF 2021 were underpinned by competitive grant funding.

Drawing on the expertise on cultures outside of the Western canon, memory, testimony and creative collaboration emphasised in the Forging Links stream, two researchers in the UoA have secured major **ERC Starting Grants** (ca. £1.5 million each), enabling transformative research. Gould's project *Global Literary Theory* marks a significant departure from the Western bias and basis of the canonical institution of literary criticism; while Karcher's *Urban Terrorism in Europe* uses a multidisciplinary theoretical framework to offer the first in-depth comparative analysis of

memory discourses and responses to recent acts of urban terrorism in the UK, Germany, France and Spain. Karcher's project involves collaborations with scholars, artists, and NGOs across Europe and will incorporate artistic outputs that challenge public perceptions of the relationship between memory, security and the city. The *Out of Our Minds* project (Divjak and Milin) has attracted £935k over 5 years from the **Leverhulme Trust** for genuinely discipline-transforming and interdisciplinary (linguistics, language studies, cognitive psychology) work. Hardwick's **AHRC Early Career Leadership Fellowship** (£168k) has resulted in a landmark monograph on the author Joseph Zobel and, more widely, challenged current perceptions of the Négritude movement by drawing attention to Zobel's Négritude-influenced prose fiction and its groundbreaking exploration of social class. Jones's **AHRC Networking Grant** (£44k), *Culture and its Uses as Testimony*, has enabled the development of a new methodology for analysing and understanding 'mediated testimony' leading to transformative work with national Holocaust education providers. The impact of Jones's research is reflected in her success at acquiring **AHRC follow-on funding** (£101k), which allowed her to co-produce with an international team of artists an innovative documentary theatre production (*A Land Full of Heroes*, 2019) and a multimedia art installation (*Testimony in Practice*, 2019).

Within the (Trans)forming Knowledge stream, three **AHRC Standard Grants** have resulted in innovative digital outputs and impact work, alongside traditional academic publications. Abbott's *Baudelaire Song Project* (£594k) has enabled the construction of a database containing all song settings of Baudelaire poems and led to a major research monograph and work with performers, conservatoires and schools to enhance skills in the performance of French song. Ward's *Estoria de Espanna Digital* (also supported by **follow-on funding**, in total £797k) has enabled the production of the first digital edition of a large-scale work of medieval Iberian prose and a range of impacts as described above. The fact that the two digital resources are hosted by the UoA and accessible via the UoA's website ensures the wide dissemination and use of the *Estoria de Espanna Digital* and the *Baudelaire Song Project* database, and signals the significant innovation in digital humanities research being carried out in the UoA. The AHRC Standard Grant *Knowing the Secret Police* (£988k), for which Jones is Co-I, explores how knowledge about the Stasi was acquired and disseminated in different networks and media in the context of an authoritarian regime, and in previously unimagined ways. It will enable the co-production of a photography exhibition with the internationally-renowned artist, Arwed Messmer, alongside a suite of articles and a monograph, bringing together history, literary analysis and anthropology.

Work in **Intersecting Identities** has attracted a series of smaller grants, which have resulted in considerable impact work and/or international network-building. Daoudi's **Leverhulme-funded** (£27k) work with NGOs, artists and survivors of gender-based violence in Algeria has been transformative in its impact on public discourse about the Civil War of the 1990s and has fostered the production of a number of new works of literature and art. Ross's and Ince's **AHRC Networking Grants** (on, respectively, *Queer Italia* (£42k) and *Serge Daney and Queer Cinephilia* (£38k)) have cemented the unit's reputation as a UK centre of excellence in European/ non-Anglophone queer studies. The workshops carried out for both projects have had international reach, with Ince's workshops taking place in France, Germany, and Birmingham, and Ross's in Italy, USA, and UK. Follow-on funding for Ross's project, in the form of a **BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grant** (ca. £10k) developing the project beyond the Italian focus, towards a comparison with French and British contexts, expanded and ensured continuity of research.

Alongside the significant investment in staffing outlined above, research carried out within the UoA has been recognized and rewarded at institutional level, by funding from the **Institute for**

Global Innovation (IGI) and/or Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) (se REF5a 2.3). A combined IGI/IAS 'High-risk, High-reward' award was granted to Divjak and Milin's team to begin research on the project *Optimizing Reading in a Foreign Language* (£9,150). The project demonstrates how interdisciplinary research can address intractable problems that have their roots and solutions in the humanities and pose serious challenges for knowledge exchange and economic development in a multilingual world. Karcher has been awarded funding by the IAS (£10k) to initiate a collaboration between UoB academics and artists with an interest in the complex and multifaceted theme of '(in)security'. Five artists will work closely with UoB scholars to produce works that will be exhibited/performed in 2021 at the local art space Eastside Gallery (and/or in a virtual exhibition). Forcer received funding from the IGI to support his cross-disciplinary exploration of the potential of humour in post-conflict reconciliation.

Grant capture within the UoA is supported by several measures put in place at Department, School and College level. Within the UoA, individual colleagues' agreed income targets are set in PDRs in line with career-stage and Department and School strategic planning. A key aim is to increase the size and scale of applications made, beyond smaller single researcher awards towards large collaborative projects; an important part of this is supporting ECRs to build a grant-capture trajectory through both smaller-scale applications and collaboration with senior scholars on larger projects. The creation of the streams has fostered a climate in which collaborative projects can be designed and large grants may be planned; School-level thematic events hosted under the Word Music Image heading are key facilitators of grant capture activity.

At College level, **guidance and advice** are provided by the CAL RKT Office as well as the University's European and International Research Support Office; these have been crucial to the UoA's success, and underpin future plans to expand income. Research Office staff provide advice on individual applications and forthcoming opportunities, as well as workshops on, e.g., research grant writing or writing for specific funding bodies.

Infrastructure and facilities

Colleagues in the UoA work in interdisciplinary ways across the School under the umbrella of Word Music Image, engage culturally with artistic and music practitioners and institutions, and co-supervise PhD students across the School and College. Given strengths in intermedial research, including literature and sound and visual cultures, researchers in the UoA benefit from the wider facilities of the School, including the **Barber Institute of Fine Art** and the **Bramall Music** facilities. Of particular relevance to research within the UoA, the Barber holds examples of European art from the Renaissance to the twentieth century, including Spanish art (Murillo, Goya, Picasso). It also houses a Fine Art reference library with ca. 60,000 volumes, funded by the Institute Trustees, and incorporates 2.7 million items, over 50,000 scholarly journals (electronic and print), and access to 275,000 e-books.

Researchers in the UoA use these spaces and facilities to develop and showcase their work and **engage with non-HEI communities**. For example, the final event of Abbott's *Baudelaire Song Project*, including a workshop, a masterclass and a recital, was held in the Barber Concert Hall in November 2019, and the University's artistic partnership with Oxford Lieder, which Abbott leads, was inaugurated in the same facility. WMI events have also benefitted from the University's estate. For example, the staged reading of Catalina Florescu's *Suicidal Dog and Laika*, held at the end of a cluster workshop on migration (which was led and attended by several UoA researchers), took place in the Bramall.

The UoA makes use of University-wide facilities, many of which are newly built or improved since 2014, to develop its research. The **major new University Library**, opened in 2016, houses the **Cadbury Research Library** with extensive collections and archives of historic material. It has outstanding Arabic and Islamic manuscript collections, including the famous Birmingham Qu'ran, relevant to the work of Gould's research team (REF5a 4.3). Similarly, Hardwick leads work on Ecocriticism with the world-leading University of Birmingham **Institute of Forest Research**, and collaborated on the development of a successful Leverhulme DTP grant held by the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences.

A number of researchers in the UoA are integral to the University's **digital infrastructure**, both as users and developers. Colleagues undertaking work with corpus and/or digital resources include Abbott, Ardrey, Corr, Divjak, Jones, Malamatidou, Milin, Schifano, and Ward. For the *Out of Our Minds* project, Divjak and Milin have access to a lab that belongs to the research group. Their lab has equipment for behavioural and physiological data collection (two desktops and two laptops with ultra-responsive monitors for reaction time studies, two tablets for survey data collection, two sets of noise-cancelling headphones, several button boxes, and physiological measurement equipment). They also have their own High Performance computing nodes that are integrated into the UoB BEAR network and access to the two ELAL labs with eye-tracking equipment (REF5a 4.5).

4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

International collaborations

The UoA's strategy includes the ambition to raise further the international profile of Modern Languages at Birmingham via leadership on collaborative international projects and dissemination of activities by means of research outputs, outreach events and impact formations. In this regard, the UoA has benefitted significantly from the structures created by UoB's **strategic partnerships**. This includes the new collaboration with partner institution UVA on international #metoo movements and new developments in EDI. Ward and Abbott are developing a major strategic institution-level collaboration with Trinity College Dublin and other Irish HEIs to carry out *Authority in the Digital Age* (ADA). The project deals with the fundamental question of trust and authority in the contemporary world, through an interrogation of editing practices and security in digital contexts. Through partnership agreements brokered by Yuan, Sèbe and Ginger delivered an invited research-lecture tour of partner institutions in China, with Sèbe speaking from the perspective of colonial/postcolonial studies, and Ginger from that of the theory of comparison. HEIs visited included Renmin, Fudan, China University of Mining and Technology, and South China Medical University.

The work of the streams has also fostered the **development of international networks** led by researchers within the UoA. They have organized major international conferences and acted as host for events of major international and national associations. Within Forging Links, two major events built on the stream's and UoA's discussions around issues of post- and de-coloniality. In the first, Gould and Santos delivered a British Academy writing workshop with the title 'Global Epistemologies'. The workshop was delivered in collaboration with the School of Literary Studies in the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) in Hyderabad, India. It supported ECRs from the Global South to develop strategies for publication, grant capture and networking. In the second, Sèbe hosted the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies's study day on 'negotiating borders in the Francophone world', as well as the international conference 'The End of Empire', sponsored partly by the Past & Present Society. Alongside the two major AHRC-funded international networks within Intersecting Identities (see above), the stream – led by Ince

– hosted the annual BAFTSS (British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies) conference at UoB in April 2019. Within the (Trans)forming Knowledge stream, Griffiths co-organised an international conference at the University of Calgary on 'The Drama of Obedience, 1700-1900' in early April, funded by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (ca. £7k), which was cancelled due to COVID-19. The collaboration will now take place in the form of an edited volume of *Oxford German Studies* (April 2021) entitled *The Drama of Obedience*, featuring scholars from Canada, the USA, Germany, Switzerland and Austria.

Relationships with key beneficiaries and audiences

The formation of cross-sector partnerships has been central to enhancing the social and cultural impact of our work across the streams. The development of World Music Image and the embedding of the UoA within it has supported us significantly in achieving this goal. The UoA's partnerships with non-HEI organizations are highly diverse, but can be grouped loosely into **three core areas**: arts and cultural organizations and individual artists; policymakers and NGOs; and educational organizations and practitioners. Reflecting UoB's identity as a civic university, there is an emphasis on **regional partnerships**; and, as Modern Linguists, there is equally a focus on **co-operations with international organizations and institutions**. This work has supported the impact case studies submitted to REF 2021 and fostered wider activities and impact not captured in those submissions, including **engagement with diverse communities and publics**. The detail below outlines some key examples of these co-operations and the impact emerging from them.

1. **Arts and cultural organizations and individual artists.** The major impacts to emerge through collaborations in this area are the co-production of unique cultural artefacts and transforming public understanding of topics of urgent concern. This includes Jones's co-productions with the theatre company La Conquista del pol sud and Centrala Space, which created new cultural artefacts and engaged multiple audiences in the UK and France. The cultural impact of Ward's *Estoria de Espanna Digital* project was assured through partnerships with the Biblioteca Nacional and Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural Español. The project has brought the research to diverse audiences using digital tools, including crowdsourcing. Abbott's innovative and cross-disciplinary work on French song and performance has led to a close co-operation with Oxford Lieder, resulting in the production of new creative forms – most recently, the premiere of a new song by British composer Cheryl Frances-Hoad and the publication of a new score (Chester Music, 2019). Karcher contributed to the co-production of a new creative works through her collaboration with the film collective Las Otras, which resulted in the documentary *Frauen bildet Banden - eine Spurensuche zur Geschichte der Roten Zora*.
2. **Policymakers and NGOs.** The impacts emerging from collaborations with policymakers and NGOs focus on addressing and finding innovative solutions to key social challenges. For example, Daoudi's research-led activism with survivors of gender-based violence in North Africa is enhanced by her partnerships with the Algerian NGO, Djazairouna, who work with victims of terrorism during and after the Civil War. Daoudi's research and impact is made possible by relationships with local artist and activist communities and she has engaged diverse audiences (survivors, readers, visitors to exhibitions) through these partnerships. Sèbe brought his expertise on the impact of arid environments on strategies of imperial conquest and administration to collaborations with world-leading international think tanks (the Cato Institute, USA – among the top 15 most influential think-tanks worldwide), as well as military organisations (Sandhurst Military Academy). Forcer co-operated with representatives of Save the Children, MSF, Clowns Without Borders UK, and the European

Federation of Healthcare Clown Organisations to explore the potential of humour in post-conflict cultural repair.

3. **Educational organisations and practitioners.** Researchers from across the UoA collaborate with individual schools nationally and internationally, as well as with organisations responsible for education in particular topics. They thereby engage teachers and students and influence and inform pedagogical practice. To give just a few examples, Jones's impact work included the co-production of resources with three national Holocaust education providers and transformed the use of mediated testimony in this field. The *Estoria de Espanna* project engaged school students in Spain and the UK with new perspectives on medieval manuscript culture. Hardwick's Zobel research, which refreshed public understanding of *négritude* also within schools, was conceived as a collaborative venture with key Martinican partners, including the Médiathèque de Rivière-Salée, the Town Council of Rivière-Salée and the Lycée Joseph Zobel.

Contributions to the discipline

Researchers in the UoA **work internationally and in cross-disciplinary ways** to explore new agendas and assert the urgency of the work they undertake. To this end, for example, Ginger founded and co-leads the International Network of Nineteenth-Century Hispanists, which brings together an international network of more than 200 scholars and hosts annual international conferences in different countries. Outputs emerging from this network within the REF period include the international edited collection *Spain in the Nineteenth Century*, which sets out a new agenda in the field. In recognition of the groundbreaking research facilitated by her AHRC Fellowship, Hardwick was invited to be an inaugural member of the steering committee of the Joseph Zobel group, hosted by leading French Research institutions ITEM/CNRS. Marcer has recently been elected President of the prestigious Anglo-Catalan Society. Ince currently serves as Treasurer of BAFTSS. Sèbe has been elected a member of the executive board of the French charity *Les Sahariens* and this has led him to work with the *musée saharien* near Montpellier, with which they have a partnership agreement.

The work completed by the UoA on linguistics responds in a direct way to the **sustainability of the discipline** by addressing the key challenge of effective Modern Languages education and recruitment in secondary schools. This is exemplified by the project *Linguistics in Modern Foreign Languages* (MFL). This is a joint venture between researchers in the UoA (Corr, Shifano) and 4 UK universities which aims at assessing the potential for the integration of linguistics into the MFL curriculum in schools. The ultimate aim of this project is to drive stronger uptake and results in MFL study, and to enthuse and better prepare candidates for entry into MFL at university by bringing about a change in the curriculum. The work is supported by a grant from the OWRI-funded 'Language Acts' flagship project (£8k, with Corr and Schifano as Co-Is).

Members of the UoA occupy leading positions on the **editorial boards** of some of the most significant publications in the disciplines of which they are part. For example, Divjak is Editor-in-Chief of the discipline-leading journal *Cognitive Linguistics*; Ince is a General Editor of *French Screen Studies*; Jones is Subject Editor for German for *Forum for Modern Language Studies*; Marcer is an invited editor of the new journal *Bulletin of Contemporary Hispanic Studies*; and Watts co-edits one of the leading journals in nineteenth-century literary studies (*Dix-Neuf*).

Many of the UoA's researchers define the benchmarks of excellence in the field via high-level **peer assessment appointments**. For example, Downing is nominated assessor for the UNESCO Chair in Gender Studies; Gould has peer-reviewed for the Shota Rustaveli National

Science Foundation, Georgia and for Fullbright US scholarships; Griffiths has reviewed for the American Academy in Berlin; Hardwick has peer-reviewed for the National Science Foundation of South Africa; Jones has reviewed for the Humboldt Foundation, the Dutch Research Council, the Estonian Research Council and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND; Karcher has reviewed for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship scheme; and Wagstaff for the Research Foundation, Flanders. Five colleagues are members of the AHRC Peer Review College (Abbott, Gould, Hardwick, Jones, and Sèbe).

Members of the UoA have been invited to **international professorships and fellowships**. For instance, Sèbe was a visiting professor at the Sorbonne (2015), the University of Montpellier (2017) and Sciences-Po Aix-en-Provence (2019); Hardwick held a visiting fellowship at Emory University in 2015; and Brown spent 9 months at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbuettel as a Humboldt Fellow.

Colleagues disseminate research via invitations to deliver **plenary or keynote lectures and talks at international institutions**. As a small exemplary sample of the international range of these activities: Gould's leading research on de-westernizing literary criticism prompted an invitation to speak as keynote on "What is Islamic Literary Theory?" at the American University of Beirut's Center for Arts and Humanities; Hardwick gave an invited keynote lecture on Zobel at the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies annual conference; and Jones was a speaker at the Leamington Spa chapter of the 'Creative Mornings' programme (live-streamed internationally). ECRs and mid-career researchers in the UoA have also been invited to act as keynotes, including Brown's invitation to give the opening keynote lecture at a conference on the history of women writers and translators at University of Lausanne, Switzerland, and Malamatidou's invitations to be plenary speaker at conferences at University of Athens, Greece and São Paulo State University, Brazil. Sèbe was a guest speaker at French Cultural Institutes in Shanghai, Algiers, Constantine, Tlemcen and Brazzaville. This demonstrates that at all career stages researchers in the UoA are recognised as leading figures in the field, and involved at all levels in shaping its future agenda.