

Institution: University of Bristol
Unit of Assessment: 27: English Language and Literature
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

Context

The Department of English at the University of Bristol (UoB) has doubled in size since 2013. We now have 40 permanent academic staff engaged in research and teaching, with an additional 4 early-career researchers (ECRs) on postdoctoral fellowships, a total of 40.7 FTE submitted staff, up from 21 FTE submitted to REF2014. This planned staffing growth, matched by an increase in undergraduate and postgraduate student numbers, has enabled us to broaden and strengthen our research activities, to focus on interdisciplinary research and outreach, and to reconfigure our research strategy into an ambitious pathway towards further achievement. By mobilising our combined expertise, we are leading the field in the application of historicised literary and textual scholarship to key social and cultural issues.

Our Department is pioneering in its **breadth of research areas and methodologies**, which encompass an exceptional chronological range and an array of interdisciplinary approaches to literary studies in English. As part of its growth strategy during this REF cycle, the Department has seized the opportunity offered by its expansion to develop its work in two major fields: firstly, the study of **English as a global language** of cultural production which is capable of articulating plural identities and facilitating transnational modes of text production; and secondly, literary studies as a form of **applied knowledge** relevant to contemporary challenges (including the environment, multilingualism, cultural identity, and public health) and to industries and communities beyond the university.

Research structure

The Department is one of four Units of Assessment in the School of Humanities which sits as one of three Schools within the Faculty of Arts. This embedded structure provides a rich context of support for research development and performance.

The Department is organized into **five well-established research groups** (all colleagues belong to at least one), with each group linked to one or more of the larger cross-Faculty Research Centres and clusters, many of which are led by members of the Department. In addition, our research groups regularly collaborate with staff in other Faculties and in one or more of the University Research Institutes and Specialist Research Institutes. The following table lists our research groups and the Faculty and University structures with which they most often collaborate.

Department research group	Faculty research centres/clusters	University Institutes
Medieval Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Medieval Studies • Centre for Material Texts • Borders and Borderlands research cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigstow Institute • Cabot Institute • Migration Mobilities Bristol
Early Modern to 1780	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Modern research cluster • Centre for Material Texts • Centre for Health, Humanities and Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigstow Institute • Cabot Institute • Elizabeth Blackwell Institute • Migration Mobilities Bristol
Romantic and Victorian Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Environmental Humanities • Centre for Material Texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigstow Institute • Cabot Institute • Jean Golding Institute
Modern and Contemporary Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Health, Humanities and Science • Centre for Environmental Humanities • Centre for Black Humanities • Bristol Poetry Institute • Bodies of Water research cluster • Embodied Mind research cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigstow Institute • Cabot Institute • Elizabeth Blackwell Institute
Global Literatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Black Humanities • Centre for Environmental Humanities • Centre for Health, Humanities and Science • Global Feminisms research cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brigstow Institute • Cabot Institute • Elizabeth Blackwell Institute • Migration Mobilities Bristol

Faculty Research Centres are funded for five years and are expected to pursue Faculty priorities, to consolidate and strengthen research in these areas, provide seedcorn funding, host conferences and events, encourage collaborative projects, and support applications for external funding. Faculty research clusters are given small amounts of funding for up to three years and are expected to grow into a Centre or to evolve into new clusters.

Cutting across our five chronological research groups are **key methodological themes** which promote cross-period exchanges and collaborations within the Department and elsewhere across the School and Faculty:

- text editing
- history of the book
- poetry and poetics
- science and medical humanities
- environmental humanities

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

- spatial humanities
- digital humanities
- transnationalism

Our research groups are supported in the Department through workshops and research seminars, visiting speakers, away-days, and seed funding, all of which have been reconfigured in 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Faculty Centres and University Institutes provide the catalysis and resources for large-scale activities including conference organisation, grant capture, external collaborations, and impact.

Research objectives

Strategic Aims for Research and Impact 2014–2020

The strategic aims for research highlighted in our REF 2014 Environment statement and implemented since 2014 are:

- increasing the number of collaborative research projects and awards;
- diversifying the sources of funding to which we apply;
- providing high-quality mentoring to early-career staff;
- maintaining support for research activities by maximising internal resources including research leave.

Since REF2014 the Department has defined **four further research and impact objectives**:

- strengthen our world-leading areas of research and increase our international profile by making strategic appointments and working with the Faculty Research Centres and University institutes;
- extend the range and depth of our impact through targeted collaborations with non-academic external partners, both national and international;
- develop new strengths in cross-period and interdisciplinary research methodologies;
- increase our cohort of postgraduate research (PGR) students, using our high quality research supervision and training to attract the best students to our department.

Evidence of Achievement of Strategic Aims

We have consolidated our suite of five research groups which are fully engaged in contributing to the Department's research strategy and performance (see Section 2 for specific examples). We have made **strategic appointments** to build capacity in these areas and we have retained staff by means of **mentoring and research support**.

Building on our exceptional chronological range across the field of literary studies, we have targeted **methodological themes** which cut across period boundaries (see list above). These approaches respond to, and lead, key national and international developments in the discipline; extend our capacity for **risk-taking research**; and bring us into **productive contact** with the medical, social, and natural sciences. Our research groups are directly linked to Faculty Centres and clusters and engage with University Institutes.

We doubled our **annual grant income** from £105,000 in 2013–14 to £226,000 in 2019–20, earning in absolute terms a total of 34 separate external grants worth more than £2 million pounds. We have been awarded funding from a **wide range of internal and external sources**, including Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC),

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), Medical Research Council (MRC), Leverhulme Trust, British Academy, Heritage Lottery Fund, European Union, Society of Antiquaries, GW4 [research consortium of the universities of Bristol, Bath, Exeter, and Cardiff], Worldwide Universities Network (WUN).

We **increased our PGR student numbers** from 40 students per year in 2013-14 to 55 students per year in 2019–20, with an average of 47 PGR students enrolled across the period.

Our research has developed significantly with respect to **interdisciplinarity** and **we collaborate successfully with colleagues across period boundaries** through the Faculty Research Centres and through research clusters such as ‘Bodies of Water’ and ‘Embodied Mind’, both comprising classical to modern perspectives across several Faculties.

We have greatly **extended the range of our productive partnerships outside the university**, becoming more deeply embedded within the local context of the City of Bristol and forming new national and international partnerships.

Impact strategy and delivery

Our impact strategy has focused on:

- **Development of productive partnerships**, nationally and internationally, to support grant applications, public engagement, and impact. Staff are supported to establish and build productive relationships with external partners, drawing on Department, School and Faculty funding.
- **Co-production of research**, as evidenced in our Impact Case Studies, which showcase a range of partnerships, particularly heritage, creative, and media (Putter), education and economic impact (Bennett), professional training (Maude), and creative and economic impact in a global context (Krishnan).
- Targeting sectors where our research can make a positive social and economic contribution, including **heritage and cultural sectors** (museums, galleries, libraries, archives, historic buildings, cultural organisations), **creative industries** (publishing, media, exhibitions, festivals, arts practitioners), **educational institutions, professional and policy-making bodies** (commercial publishing, medical and scientific institutions, government), and community groups, fostering **civic engagement**.
- Building **lasting connections with partners in Bristol** by embedding our research in the local community.

To deliver this strategy, we have targeted and built up significant links with **major heritage and cultural organisations** within and beyond Bristol including the National Maritime Museum (Holberton, collaborative doctoral award and co-created exhibition), the National Trust (Badcoe, co-producing a publication on environmental humanities), the Bodleian Library (Putter, ‘North Sea Crossings’), Salisbury Cathedral (Hume, public performances), and the Historic Towns Trust (Fulton, ‘Map of Bristol in 1480’). We have contributed public lectures and events to national cultural festivals, including ‘Being Human’ (Badcoe, Gill, Krishnan, Maude, Publicover), ‘Festival of Ideas’ (Dawson), ‘Festival of Nature’ (Malay, Pite), and ‘Engagement Bites’ (Gill). Hanaway-Oakley was seconded for six months to the **Science Museum London** (2019) to work on her project ‘Colour Blindness in Literary and Cultural History, c. 1860–1940’, and she has been subsequently appointed Honorary Research Associate to the Science Museum Group.

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

Following our strategic appointments in Creative Writing we have extended our impact in the **creative industries**. The Department is now a major sponsor of the Bristol Short Story Prize, an annual event that results in an anthology published by the Bristol-based publisher Tangent Books. Kahora was one of the prize judges in 2020, and Thebo has set up practical placements at Tangent for Creative Writing Masters students. Thebo runs creative writing workshops for schools at Bristol Cathedral and makes numerous author-visits to schools throughout southern England. We have contributed readings, lectures and workshops to large annual literary festivals including Bath (Thebo), Cheltenham (James), and Hay (Fulton). Kahora and Krishnan have pioneered collaborations with creative industries in **continental Africa**, especially Nairobi, working with the Kwani Trust to curate its annual Kwani Litfest and edit its journal (Kahora), and Uganda, working with local publishers and the Writivism Festival (see Krishnan Impact Case Study).

Our cross-period and interdisciplinary research themes have enabled us to create lasting partnerships with **professional and policy-making bodies**. Batt was selected for a placement at the British Library Labs to work on digital collections and is developing further collaborations using digital humanities methodologies. Vaccarella works with the Bristol Heart Institute and Oxford University Hospitals to provide workshops for patients and medical professionals as part of her medical humanities research on illness and narrative. Maude's research on embodiment and medicine has led her to collaborate with psychiatrists, psychotherapists and psychoanalysts at the New York Psychoanalytic Society and Institute in New York and the University of Helsinki. As part of our 'history of the book' research theme, we also contribute in various ways to the **publishing industry**: Fulton is Chair of the Editorial Board at the University of Wales Press and Putter has acted as a consultant to Bodleian Library Publishing. Fulton also acts as an advisor to the **Welsh Government** as a member of the 'Wales Studies' group in the Learned Society of Wales.

Examples of benefits arising from such collaborations include placement and training opportunities for our PGRs (Bristol Cathedral, Downside Abbey, St Mary's Portbury), increased visitor footfall (Bristol Cathedral, Bristol Old Vic, Tobacco Factory, SS Great Britain, MShed, Science Museum London), and economic benefits to our partners (Bristol Short Story Prize, Historic Towns Trust, National Trust, Somali Resource Centre, Shakespeare's Globe London).

Open access

Members of our Department comply with Open Access requirements by uploading all our non-embargoed publications (articles and book chapters) to Bristol's institutional repository (PURE), where they are accessible via the internet. We have used internal and external funding to create accessible databases of **open research**, such as Batt's contribution to the [Digital Miscellanies Index](#), Verweij's AHRC-funded project [Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England](#), and Fulton's [Mapping the March of Wales](#). Fulton is the Chair of the Open Access Sub-Committee of the Learned Society of Wales and is Executive Board Member of University English, the national subject organisation, and has participated in consultation activities led by Plan S and UKRI.

We also comply with university requirements regarding **research integrity**, ensuring that our research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal, and professional frameworks and standards. Research projects of staff and students which require ethical approval are referred to the Faculty Ethics Committee.

Future strategic aims and goals for research and impact

Following a period of significant growth during the current REF cycle, the Department is now aiming to consolidate and strengthen its position as a large, diverse, world-leading, and outward-looking unit. We have identified the following priorities for the period beyond 2020:

- To maintain support for our current research groups in order to develop our exceptional strengths and depth in these areas, while nourishing **emerging research initiatives**. Among other developments, we are planning to propose new Faculty research clusters in Creative Industries and Spatial Humanities, and to work with the School of Modern Languages to develop our 'transnationalism' theme, including comparative literatures and multilingualism. Krishnan took over as Director of the **Centre for Black Humanities** in 2020 with a mission to support local and international initiatives and to extend our diversity agenda. The proposed new University Library (opening in 2023–4) will give us opportunities for exhibitions and public events supported by our research.
- To maintain and strengthen our **postgraduate and early-career community** through continued engagement with the AHRC-funded South West and Wales DTP consortium (of which Bristol is the hub); recruitment through our MA programmes; support for postdoctoral fellowships; appointment of early-career staff; robust mentoring and training. We plan to extend our current placement schemes to enable all our postgraduate students to undertake professional placements during their candidature should they choose to.
- To raise further our international profile and consolidate our current **external partnerships** through joint research bids, co-produced research, and impact activities, while actively investing in **new partnerships**, local, national, and international, in each of our five research groups. We will make further use of our WUN membership and visiting scholar schemes, build on our existing international networks, seek additional co-tutelle agreements with partner universities, and make further grant applications with international partners. For example, in the **Global Feminisms** cluster, Kennedy-Epstein has recently been appointed official biographer of Muriel Rukeyser, working with the Francis Goldin literary agency in New York.
- To scale up our **external grant income** by developing more ambitious, large-scale, and ground-breaking research projects with clear pathways to impact. A number of large grant applications to the AHRC, ERC, and Wellcome Trust are currently in development or pending, and we will continue to use the resources of RED, the Faculty's research management team, to identify opportunities for research funding.

2. People

Research groups

The Strategic Aims of the Department (Section One) are addressed through the activities of the five research groups, which include postgraduate students.

Medieval Studies comprises three professors (Fulton, Putter, Tether) and three ECR staff (Hume, Levelt, McClune), with a further two teaching-only staff who are research active. This is one of the **largest groups of medievalists** in a single department in the UK, while the Faculty's Centre for Medieval Studies is the largest of its kind in the UK.

The Medieval group has made a major contribution to the Department's strategy of supporting **interdisciplinary research**, drawing its research from fields such as linguistics, environmental studies, and publishing. The appointments of Fulton, McClune and Tether have significantly expanded our strengths in medieval literature to encompass the **linguistic diversity** of the whole of the British Isles, covering medieval English, French, Scots, Welsh, and Irish. The group's publications and research projects deploy **key methodologies** and approaches, including text

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

editing (Putter, *The Works of the Gawain Poet*), spatial humanities (Fulton, *Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations in the Later Middle Ages*, [‘Borders and Borderlands in Medieval and Early Modern Europe’](#)), and book history (Tether, *Publishing the Grail in Medieval and Renaissance France*).

The group has been active in establishing **research partnerships** with regional institutions including Bristol City Council, Bristol Records Office, St Mary Redcliffe Church, Downside Abbey, Salisbury Cathedral, and Hereford Cathedral Library.

Early Modern to 1780 comprises nine staff led by a professor (Steggles) and eight early and mid-career staff (Badcoe, Batt, Dawson, Lee, McTague, Powell, Publicover, Verweij). The appointment of Steggles in 2018 has given us crucial leadership in Early Modern Studies and established us as a hub for the study of early modern drama in its material and textual forms. The group has particular **methodological strengths** in digital humanities (Steggles, [Lost Plays Database](#); Verweij, [Manuscript Pamphleteering in Early Stuart England](#); Batt, [Digital Miscellanies Index](#)), spatial humanities (Publicover, *Dramatic Geography*; Badcoe, *Edmund Spenser and the Romance of Space*), text editing (Steggles, *Complete Works of John Marston*; McTague, *The Plays of Nicholas Rowe*), and science and medical humanities (Powell’s work on Christopher Smart and on developments in eighteenth-century botany and optics). Batt has pioneered a **digital humanities** approach to searching older print archives (‘Data-mining for verse in Eighteenth-Century Newspapers’) which earned her a placement in the **British Library Labs**, working with the BL’s digital content team.

Working from an environmental humanities approach, the Early Modern group has spearheaded two **Faculty research clusters**, ‘The Perspective from the Sea’ (2013–18) and ‘Bodies of Water’ (2018–21), which have won funding from the Cabot Institute and the Brigstow Institute to develop **arts/science collaborations** and public engagement events. These clusters have generated a rich cross-disciplinary and cross-period programme of seminars, public lectures, and exhibitions in partnership with heritage organisations including the Bristol museum SS Great Britain, the Arnolfini Gallery (Bristol), the National Trust, and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Members of the group are active in the Faculty Centre for Material Texts under the co-directorship of Batt and McTague, staging key events with **local and international partners** including book artists, graphic designers, architects and librarians (‘Living Well with Books’ international conference at Bristol [2018] and ‘Making Books in Bristol’, a series of public talks [2017]).

Members of this research group are also linked with the Faculty Centre for Health, Humanities and Science (Powell) and the Centre for Environmental Humanities (Badcoe, Publicover), with Publicover a member of the Board of the University Strategic Research Institute, Migration Mobilities Bristol. With internationally acknowledged and award-winning strengths in early-modern drama, Steggles and Dawson work with **leading Shakespeare theatres**, including the Tobacco Factory in Bristol and the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse and Globe Theatre in London, and have organised several public events at both places.

Romantic and Victorian Studies are represented by ten staff, including the Department’s only named chair, the Winterstoke Professor of English Literature (Karlin), two other professors (Bennett, Pite), and seven early- and mid-career staff (Cheeke, Coit, Lee, Matthews, Powell, Puri, Wright). As well as publishing world-leading outputs, the group engages with our **key methodological themes** of environmental humanities (Pite, ‘Romantic Bristol’ smartphone app; Wright, ‘Tennyson and Bees’), science and medical humanities (Lee, Powell), poetry and poetics (Bennett on Wordsworth and Keats; Fay, *Wordsworth’s Monastic Inheritance*; Wright on Tennyson), transnationalism (Karlin, French and English literary connections; Coit, expatriate Americans and the transatlantic novel), history of the book (Matthews, album poetry), and text

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

editing (Matthews, *Complete Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ongoing; Karlin, the Longman Browning edition, *The Bostonians*; Fay, the Wordsworth and Beaumont letters). The work of this group is highly **interdisciplinary** (Cheeke, literature and visual art; Karlin, literature and history; Powell, literature and science) and **cross-period** (Bennett, Karlin and Pite all work in the twentieth century as well as the Romantic period and nineteenth century). Members of the group are aligned with the Faculty Centre for Material Texts and the Faculty Centre for Environmental Humanities, and Pite was Director of Bristol's Institute for Advanced Studies in 2012–16.

Modern and Contemporary Literature includes thirteen staff led by four senior professors (Bennett, Maude, Rabaté, Pite) and includes six early-career staff (Battersby, Hanaway-Oakley, Kahora, Malay, Rose, Vaccarella). The group has strengths in **poetry and poetics** (Bennett, Blades, James, Jones, Malay, Pite, Wootten), with Wootten currently the co-director of the **Bristol Poetry Institute** which brings poetry into the community. The research group has also developed a sector-leading profile in three of our key themes, **science and medical humanities** (Battersby, Bennett, Blades, Gill, Hanaway-Oakley, Maude, Rabaté, Rose, Vaccarella), **spatial humanities** (Krishnan, *Writing Spatiality in West Africa*), and **environmental humanities** (Daw, Malay, James, Jones, Pite).

Staff working in medical humanities are closely aligned with the Faculty Centre for Health, Humanities and Science, and Maude has been Director of the Centre from 2018. Hanaway-Oakley and Vaccarella are lead members of two **research clusters** funded by the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute (EBI), supported by Maude who is the Co-Lead (with Lee) of the EBI Medical Humanities Research Strand, funded by the Wellcome Trust (WT). The medical humanities theme is supported by a dynamic series of collaborations with **health professionals and external partners**, including the Bristol-based HIV/AIDS charity the Brigstowe Project (Blades, Vaccarella), NHS consultant psychiatrists and neurophysiologists (Maude, Rabaté), and the Science Museum London (Hanaway-Oakley, secondment to the Museum).

The Modern and Contemporary research group includes **Creative Writing**, in which we have recently made two strategic appointments, namely Thebo, a well-established writer of young-adult fiction, and Kahora, who has a significant international reputation as a journalist, short-story writer, and writer of creative non-fiction. These two appointments, supplementing our existing strengths in **writing poetry** (James, Pite, Wootten) and **creative non-fiction** (Malay) have led to the development of a strong profile in outputs and postgraduate recruitment. Creative Writing staff have an active outreach programme and have received several **awards and nominations** (Thebo has been awarded a Hawthornden Fellowship and has been shortlisted several times for the Carnegie Medal).

Global Literatures encompasses American Literature and literatures of the global south (especially India and the African continent) from the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries, a chronological span which gives this group of ten researchers a world-leading profile in **collaborative international research**. Led by two professors, Karlin (the Winterstoke Chair) and Krishnan, this is our major area of investment and development since 2015, with seven ECR appointments in the recent past (Blades, Coit, Forbes, Gill, Puri, Savvas, Sides) and two postdoctoral fellows (Daw, Rose).

Staff in this group share **methodological approaches** in environmental humanities (Daw, Forbes, Krishnan, Rose, Sides), science and medical humanities (Blades, Gill, Rose), text editing (Kennedy-Epstein: Muriel Rukeyser; Karlin: Henry James) and transnationalism (Coit: Henry James; Forbes: African-American literatures; Kahora: African diasporas; Krishnan: writing and

publishing in continental Africa; Sides: literatures of the African continent). Staff contribute to the Faculty Research Centre for Black Humanities, including as Director (Gill, 2018–2020).

Staffing strategy and staff development

Our **recruitment strategy** is based on the following elements:

- Maintain diversity and breadth in our research strengths by making ‘like for like’ appointments following resignations or retirements. We also look for opportunities to make **strategic appointments** which strengthen our research in more than one area (e.g. Tether in medieval literature and digital humanities; Forbes in 19th-century African American literature and 19th/20th-century American crime writing; Puri in 19th-century British writing and literatures of India; Rabaté in modernism and literary theory; Vaccarella in Modern/Contemporary Literature and medical humanities).
- Ensure **academic leadership** at Reader or Professor level in each of our research areas (e.g. Steggle appointed to lead the Early Modern to 1780 group; Thebo appointed at Reader level to lead Creative Writing).
- Ensure that University and UK Government principles of **equality and diversity** are applied to our recruitment processes in order to attract and retain the best applicants. These principles are included in job advertisements, selection panels are diverse, interviews are held in accessible rooms, and support is provided to applicants where necessary.
- Use our research strategy to determine new early-career appointments at times of expansion (e.g. to improve our staff-student ratios). Areas of **existing and emerging research strengths** are targeted for additional staff when resources are available (e.g. appointments of Thebo and Kahora as part of a planned expansion into Creative Writing; appointment of Vaccarella to strengthen our research in Medical Humanities; appointment of Malay to support Environmental Humanities).

Our **staff development strategy** has the following objectives:

- To encourage and support **career development of all staff**, regardless of career stage or contract type. All staff in the Department, including those on fixed-term contracts, have a **mentor** with whom they meet regularly and who conducts their annual appraisal (using University-wide software, ‘MyReview’), designed to set short-to-medium-term research objectives and to pave the way for longer-term aspirations. **Early-career staff** are offered particular support, including additional workload credits for research (100 hours for Lecturer B and 50 hours for Lecturer C, based on the Faculty’s Workloads Model), a lighter teaching load during their first year of appointment, and support from the Early Career Network in the Faculty. They are given time to undertake training and development through the University’s CREATE programme (Cultivating Research and Teaching Excellence), which leads to membership of the Higher Education Academy, and all staff are encouraged to attend training courses offered by the University Staff Development unit. **Senior staff** are encouraged to undertake management training, including the in-house leadership programmes provided by Staff Development (e.g. Fulton, Senior Leader’s Programme while Head of Department).
- The Department offers honorary fellowships to early-career staff at the end of their fixed-term contracts (e.g. Fay, Sloane, 2018, both of whom have been appointed to academic posts elsewhere). The Faculty supports applications to a range of postdoctoral schemes including the Leverhulme Early Career Fellowships, the British Academy Postdoctoral

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

Awards, the Newton International Fellowships, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships, the Wellcome Trust Research Fellowships, and the University Vice-Chancellor's Fellowships. The Department has successfully mentored a number of applicants to each of these schemes, resulting in a **strong cohort of early-career research fellows** (e.g. Malay, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, now Lecturer; Daw and Rose, Vice-Chancellor's Fellows; Battersby and Fay, Leverhulme Early Career Fellows).

- Build a supportive and integrated **community of staff and students**, for example, by inviting emeriti, honorary fellows, and students to research seminars and social events, announcing staff and student successes on our website and social media, and having regular staff meetings. During the pandemic, we moved all our seminars and meetings online, including several social events, as a means of staying in touch and monitoring wellbeing during a difficult time.
- Ensure that all staff are given maximum time, support, and **resources to undertake research**.

Support, training, and supervision of postgraduate research students

Recruitment, funding and support

The Department has maintained an average of c.47 postgraduate research students per year since 2014, including the first cohort of PhD students in Creative Writing (from 2019). We recruit from our own MA students and we also encourage applications from UK and international students via our website, staff profiles, and Faculty open days. Students have been funded by the AHRC, University Alumni scholarships, Department Teaching Fellowships, and grants from students' home governments. Bristol led the two successful bids for the AHRC South West and Wales Doctoral Training Programme (SWW DTP 1 and DTP 2) and is the administrative hub for the DTP. While they are studying at Bristol, PhD students can apply to Department, School, and Faculty funds for **financial support** for library and archive visits, training, organising and attending conferences, and other research-related activities. The University's Alumni fund also offers financial support to postgraduates to present papers at conferences (such as 'English Shared Futures' in 2018) and research trips to archives in the UK and US. Research students in the Faculty of Arts have a **dedicated building** with shared space to work, as well as other 'hot-desking' options throughout the Arts precinct and further space in the PGR hub of the Bristol Doctoral College.

Training

The Department has a **PGR Director** (Bennett) who provides overall support to our cohort of PGRs including small-scale funding for research-related activities, access to training, and annual performance monitoring. Many of us contribute to the series of **training workshops** convened by the School of Humanities Postgraduate Research Officer across the academic year for research students (e.g. IT training, Introduction to Doctoral Research, Preparing for Upgrade, Research Ethics, Research Skills). The Faculty of Arts also offers a **suite of training courses** specifically tailored to the needs of PhD students, including an introduction to research, writing retreats, professional development, 'getting published in the Arts', and academic writing.

All PhD students are automatically members of the University's Bristol Doctoral College (BDC), which acts as a hub for **skills training and professional development** across the University. The BDC offers courses for PhD students such as starting a PhD, effective presentation skills, public engagement, careers and employability, and publishing academic papers/books. PhD students are

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

normally given opportunities to teach at undergraduate level, when they are supported by a teaching mentor in the Department and by Level One of the University's training course for teaching, CREATE.

Research students are encouraged to attend Departmental, School, and Faculty research-related events, and to give papers at the fortnightly **Departmental Research Seminars**. These are useful training opportunities for PGRs, along with a regular **Postgraduate Conference** organised by the students themselves. The seminars have continued online during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, including the 'Contagion Lockdown' postgraduate conference in June 2020. PGRs are also encouraged and supported to present papers at national and international conferences and workshops, and to take leadership roles in organising such events. PGR students attend many of the Department and School's term-time weekly **reading groups** (including 'Piers Plowman', 'Medieval Latin', 'Critical Theory', and 'Decolonial') and are supported in organising their own reading groups, as well as in running postgraduate conferences and colloquia. They are also embedded in the Faculty Research Centres, as members of the Boards, and as contributors to and participants in events organised by each Centre.

Research by our PhD students has been published in prestigious journals, with Baynes winning the *Review of English Studies* Essay Prize in 2017 and Cataldi winning the *Medium Aevum* Essay Prize in 2019. Other journals in which our students' work appeared during their candidature or very shortly afterwards include *Ben Jonson Journal*, *Gothic Studies*, *Thomas Hardy Society Journal*, *Seventeenth Century*, *Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies*, *Victoriographies*, *Critical Survey*, *The Lancet*, *James Joyce Quarterly*, and *Feminist Encounters*. Many former students have edited volumes of essays and/or contributed chapters to edited volumes, and a large number have had their theses published in the form of monographs with publishers that include Brill (Leiden), Edinburgh University Press, Manchester University Press, Otowa Shobo (Tokyo), Rodopi (Amsterdam), Routledge, and Tate Publishing. Creative Writing students have had poetry and short stories published in journals such as *Atrium*, *Cannon's Mouth*, and *Street Life*.

We have considerable success in placing our students into academic and professional posts following their PhD. In the past five years, our students have been awarded postdoctoral fellowships (Leverhulme, British Academy, Harvard) or found posts at universities (e.g. Bristol, Cambridge, Düsseldorf, Goldsmiths, Lincoln, Palermo, Sussex, Warwick) and in professional sectors (e.g. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, The National Archives, the National Gallery).

Supervision

Each postgraduate research student is supervised by two members of staff (normally from the Department, or from a consortium institution in the case of SWW DTP students). Supervision meetings take place at regular intervals, with a recommended minimum of ten meetings over the academic year. At the end of each meeting, the supervisors and student jointly review the student's research, writing, and set appropriate and achievable goals which are recorded on the university's software system STaR. Towards the end of the first year, PhD students go through a rigorous **Annual Performance Review** of their work, submitting a 6000–12,000-word sample of their writing, an outline of the thesis describing its central research questions, structure, and methodology, and a bibliography. The portfolio is assessed by two independent members of staff, who interview the student and write a report on progress. One of the reviewers subsequently oversees a light-touch paper-based version of the review at the end of the second and third years to check and confirm satisfactory progress towards timely and successful submission of the thesis.

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

Supporting and promoting equality and diversity

The Department models equality and diversity in its practices of student recruitment, staff appointments, research support, wellbeing support, and curriculum design and delivery, following the University Strategy which includes policies on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The University's **EDI Steering Group** includes membership from all Schools and Faculties and there are local EDI groups at School level which are strategically focused on identifying activities that will influence change. Kennedy-Epstein is the current co-chair of the School of Humanities EDI Committee, working towards an **Athena Swan accreditation** for the School. EDI issues are on the agenda of every School and Faculty meeting. The University runs a range of Staff Networks providing peer support, a staff mentoring system, and the Bristol Women's Mentoring Network. The University operates a **Returning Carers scheme** which provides a grant of £10,000 for one semester to assist returning carers to update and resume their research.

Our department has one of the **most diverse staff in the Faculty**, with ethnically-diverse colleagues from British, Italian, Finnish, Dutch, American, Australian, South African, Kenyan, Indonesian, and Indian backgrounds. The gender balance of our staff is 50:50 (22 female and 22 male), and at senior level (Readers and Professors) there are five females and five males. Other protected characteristics represented by our staff include age, disability, race, maternity, sexual orientation, religion, and marriage. Leadership positions, including Head of Department and Directors of Faculty Research Centres, have been assigned evenly to males and females in the Department over the last five years, and administrative roles are distributed evenly across the department. Female colleagues have taken on leadership roles, including Fulton and Matthews, who are the former and current Heads of Department, and Batt, Gill, Krishnan, and Maude who are current or former Directors of Faculty Research Centres. Four female staff have held School/Faculty leadership posts of 0.5FTE or above (Dawson and Wright, School Education Director; Fulton, School Research Director; Tether, Faculty Graduate Education Director).

Staff who participate in recruitment committees undertake **mandatory EDI training** through the Staff Development Unit, and the UK Government's 'protected characteristics' legislation informs **targeted support** for individual staff and postgraduate research students (e.g. flexible working; health or caring issues which require additional support to enable participation in research events such as conferences). Our **PGR cohorts** have been approximately 55% female and 45% male over the last three years, with 30% of BAME students in each PhD cohort. The Department's research-led curriculum began to be '**decolonialised**' well before the events of 2020, and students are unable to complete their English degree at Bristol without studying a diverse range of texts and authors, from medieval to contemporary. One of our reading groups, 'Decolonial', led by Sides, encourages staff and students to engage with the theory and practice of diversity in the curriculum. Our [Statement in Support of Diversity and Anti-Discrimination](#) is prominently displayed on the front page of our website.

The purpose-built Humanities building, which houses the department, teaching spaces, and research areas, is entirely accessible, including lifts, ramps, and accessible toilets. All research seminars and events are held in accessible rooms.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income from research

With a great variety of research fields and methodologies in the Department, we can attract funding from a wide range of organisations. Within this assessment period, the total value

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

of our income (in the form of overheads) from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)-recorded sources, including research councils (UK and European), charities, and government, is just under £1million (£996,445).

In addition, **non-HESA sources** have also provided significant funding for our projects, including income from consultancies, visiting fellowships, arts organisations, learned societies, internal university funding, and income as co-investigators (Co-Is) on international projects. Examples include Fulton's **consultancy with Netflix**, Maude's funding from the EBI (four awards in the last three years), Vaccarella's grant from Monash University (Australia), and Thebo's support from the **Hawthornden Foundation** (writing fellowship in 2018-19).

We are also supported by several funding streams within UoB, ranging from Faculty conference and research grants to university-level strategic funds. Funding which staff in the Department have successfully won includes:

- Benjamin Meaker Visiting Professor scheme (nine visiting professors brought to Bristol, from universities in the US, EU, and Australia)
- International Strategic Fund (five awards forming international networks in the US, Australia, Seoul)
- Knowledge Exchange (KE) fund (five awards)
- GW4 funding stream supported by the universities of Bristol, Bath, Cardiff, and Exeter (one network supported for two years)
- Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), of which Bristol is a member (two awards)
- University Research Fellowships, which extend Faculty research leave from one semester to two (ten awards)
- Vice-Chancellor's Fellowships, a postdoctoral scheme which started in 2017 (two awards)

All five of our research groups are active in applying for funding and working with partners across the UK and internationally, in line with our current Strategic Aims.

Medieval Studies: Putter's AHRC grant, 'Verse Forms of Middle English Romance', and his Leverhulme Project grant, 'North Sea Crossings', have led to new developments in **multilingualism and pan-European research**. His Heritage Lottery Fund grant has forged new collaborations with non-academic partners, especially the educational organisation Flash of Splendour, Aardman Studios, and the Bodleian Library (see Putter Impact Case Study). Fulton's Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship, 'Medieval Welsh Political Poetry', cements the group's expertise across the languages and cultures of medieval Britain and Ireland.

External funding has been matched by **internal funding sources**, with success in university schemes such as WUN (Fulton), GW4 (Fulton, Tether), the Benjamin Meaker Visiting Fellowships scheme (Fulton), and the International Strategic Fund (ISF, Fulton, Tether), establishing networks and international collaborations with the universities of Ghent, Macquarie (Australia), Sydney, Pennsylvania, Penn State, and Rochester (NY).

Early Modern to 1780: major awards have included Batt (British Academy), Holberton (British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship), Steggle (AHRC, £715,000 for the John Marston project), and Verweij (AHRC, Co-I, 'Early Modern Political Pamphlets'). The group has developed new funding streams from diverse sources such as the Society of Antiquaries (Verweij) and has used university resources to seed-fund new projects (Publicover, Brigstow Institute). New **interdisciplinary projects** have led to productive collaborations with international researchers, such as those

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

instigated by Steggle (*Lost Plays Database*, with the universities of Melbourne and Arkansas) and Publicover (University of Heidelberg), funded by the university's ISF.

Romantic and Victorian: the group attracted a **Leverhulme Early Career Fellow** (Fay, 2014–17) and Batt was awarded a British Academy grant. Using internal sources of funding, the group has nurtured **external partnerships** with organisations such as the Wordsworth Trust (Fay, Matthews) and the National Trust (Fay). Pite was awarded £8000 by WUN (2015) to develop the 'Romantic Bristol' app, working with Destination Bristol (tourism) and local community groups.

Modern and Contemporary Literature: Our recognised strength in this area is indicated by the award of four **postdoctoral fellowships** between 2016 and 2020, Battersby (Leverhulme Early Career Fellow), Daw, Rose (Vice-Chancellor's Fellows), and Malay (Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, subsequently appointed to our Department as a permanent member of staff). Staff have been successful in winning an AHRC Network award (Maude), British Academy funding (James, Vaccarella), as well as more **diverse funds from internal and external sources** including the Brigstow Institute (Vaccarella), the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies (Maude, research fellowship), and the Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of Turku (Maude, visiting professor). Maude is currently Co-I on a Medical Research Council Grant, 'Adolescence, Digital Technology, and Mental Health Care' (£100,809), and the co-lead of the Medical Humanities Strand in the EBI, funded by the WT Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF, £50,000).

Global Literatures: There have been **major grant successes** in this research area, with significant awards from AHRC, GCRF, WT, and ERC (Krishnan, Gill, Sides). The Global Literatures group has used its funding to form strong links with **wide-ranging national and international partners**, including cultural organisations (Kahora, Malawian Writers Workshop; Krishnan, Kwani Trust [Kenya], Mawazo African Writing Institute [Uganda], Writivism Festival [Uganda]); museums and galleries (Forbes, Ashmolean Museum Oxford; Gill, Bristol Museum and M-Shed Museum Bristol; Kennedy-Epstein, New York Public Library), and charities (Blades, Brigstowe Project [HIV/AIDS charity in Bristol]; Savvas, Incredible Edible, community food growing movement in Bristol).

In line with our strategy to increase our research grant applications, staff have already secured **five major awards starting in 2020-21**: Dawsons' Brigstow Institute funding for activities following the 'Good Grief' festival (2020-21); Fulton's Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship for her project 'Medieval Welsh Political Poetry' (2020-22); Gill's Wellcome Trust award for the 'Black Health and Humanities' interdisciplinary training network and collaborative research initiative (2020-22); Putter's **British Academy Global Professorship** award to bring Professor Kathleen Kennedy from the US to Bristol for four years (2021-24); Rose's AHRC funding for a Covid-related project, 'Shame and Stigma in Covid-19' (2021-23). Daw and Battersby have been awarded Marie Curie postdoctoral fellowships (2021-5).

Infrastructure and facilities

Support for research and impact

Our research, including impact, is well supported at four levels: Department, School (of Humanities), Faculty (of Arts), and University, maximising routes to research achievement.

In the **Department**, we have instituted the roles of Research Director and Impact Director to support and advise on initiatives and activities. Each member of staff can apply to the Head of Department's fund (supplemented by several endowment funds) for research and impact support,

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

and workloads are adjusted to give priority to research, including at least one teaching-free day a week. Staff leading Impact Case Studies have been given additional workload credits of 200 hours per year. Staff set their research priorities with their mentor and are further supported by their research groups within the Department. The Department has a **Research Advisory Group**, comprising Readers/Associate Professors and Professors, who work with the Head of Department to design and implement the Department's research strategy.

The **School Research Director** (Fulton until July 2020) and **Impact Director** (a post held by Maude during the assessment period) are supported by a 0.5 administrator and operate a discretionary fund to augment Faculty funding. The School Research Director oversees the Research Leave application process and subsequent reporting, the **Annual Research Reviews** (where individuals discuss their research progress with two senior staff), the REAP evaluation process, REF performance and information, and grant information and advice. The Research Director holds regular grant-development workshops, provides strategic advice on grant schemes, and reads draft applications. The Impact Director works with the Faculty Impact and KE Manager, RED, and Policy Bristol to disseminate information to staff and develop impact from our research.

In the Faculty of Arts, research is supported by the **Faculty Research Office**, led by two Faculty Research Directors who are supported by a full-time Impact and KE Manager, a Faculty Business Fellow (now Partnerships Fellow), and two administrators. The Faculty supports an **annual grant-writing retreat** and smaller writing retreats throughout the year.

The Faculty Research Directors manage a significant **Faculty Research Fund** for conferences and other research activities such as visits to archives and collaborators, travel funding for collaborators to visit Bristol, image permission rights, costs of indexing, and similar research expenses. Funding is competitively awarded, with each member of staff eligible to apply for up to £1500 per year for **conference and research activities** and up to £2000 to hold a conference at Bristol. The Faculty provides some teaching buy-out for staff applying for large grants and there is also a separate **Impact Research Fund** to support impact-related activities.

The **Faculty research leave policy**, by which staff are normally awarded one semester of leave following six semesters of teaching, has a formal application process through each School and compulsory reporting on progress following the period of leave. EDI issues are addressed during the process, with staff self-reporting any issues when they apply for research leave or in their post-leave report.

The **Faculty's Workload Model**, based on credits assigned to research, teaching, and administration, is key to supporting research in transparent and equitable ways. This underpins the Faculty's '**Time for Research**' policy which defines how much teaching relief can be secured through research leave, fellowships, and grant awards.

The six **Faculty Research Centres** and the **University Research Institutes** support research through organising events, conferences, public engagement activities, collaborative bids, and early-career development. They also offer funding for research initiatives. Staff in English have been successful in winning funding from the Research Centres and from the Brigstow Institute, EBI, and the Cabot Institute.

We are very well supported for grant applications, with support provided at Faculty level through the **University's Research and Enterprise Development** team (RED). Faculty Research Development Managers (2.5 FTE) work with staff on grant applications, providing dedicated grant development support, training sessions, and bespoke advice. Pre-award and post-award finance

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

are supported by officers within RED who are assigned to specific faculties. All grant applications worth more than £10,000 are subject to a rigorous **peer-review process** (REAP, or Research Excellence Advisory Panel), by which applicants receive detailed feedback from four people in the Faculty, including their School Research Director. RED also has an international arm, supporting applications to the **EU and other international schemes**.

RED's **Knowledge Exchange (KE)** team manages the devolved funding for impact from the Research Councils and WT. Researchers can apply for funding up to £15,000 to support impact-related projects (e.g. Fulton, 'Making Bristol Medieval', £11,173).

University Research Fellowships are awarded competitively to staff going on research leave to enable them to take a full year of leave, and the Department has won 10 of these awards between 2014 and 2020.

The Department's postdoctoral fellows benefit from 'Bristol Clear', a **University-level programme of resources** for research staff development which includes the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Research Staff and the Research Staff Development Fund.

Research support is facilitated for all staff regarding individual circumstances such as disability, long-term illness, or caring responsibilities. Many of our early-career staff have benefited from the University's **Returning Carer's scheme**.

Impact is supported by the School Impact Director, the Faculty Impact and KE Manager and the university-level **Policy Bristol** unit which co-ordinates a comprehensive public engagement operation that includes annual events, training, and collaborative activities with policy-makers.

Infrastructure

The University has recently embarked on an ambitious estates development, the **Temple Quarter** campus, due to open in 2022. Members of our Department have been active in contributing to discussions about ways in which the Arts and Humanities can be represented on the new campus (Krishnan, Maude, Sides, Sperlinger). We have also benefited from funding, collaborative activities, and training provided by the University Research Institutes.

The University is planning a new **£103 million University Library** which will provide space for public events, social mixing, and exhibitions, as well as the normal study and reading functions. The current Arts and Social Sciences library is well-resourced with digital and printed material, and the Department has a dedicated Subject Librarian who responds to requests for additional material for teaching and research. The Special Collections contains several archives essential for our research, including manuscripts (Medieval Studies group) and the world-renowned **Penguin Archive** (Bennett, Maude, Tether, Wootten). Close departmental collaboration with Special Collections has resulted in important discoveries, e.g. Tether identifying a [medieval Arthurian manuscript](#), and expert statements from Maude and Putter to support the Library's purchases of [the copy of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*](#) owned by the judge who presided over the 1960 obscenity trial, and a thirteenth-century [Glastonbury Bible](#) fragment.

At School level, the new multi-million pound **purpose-built Humanities Building** opened in 2019, providing teaching and office spaces, research space for seminars and individual work, and social spaces shared by staff and students. Opportunities for seminars, collegial discussions, and workshops have been enriched and are frequently interdisciplinary.

Postgraduate research students have their own building with shared space and administrative support from the **Faculty Postgraduate Office and SWW DTP Hub** which is co-located with the

students.

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

Research collaborations leading to knowledge exchange and impact

We are a notably outward-looking department with wide networks across the UK, Europe, and internationally. Our extensive partnerships and external links have been instrumental in enabling us to use our research for the benefit of the discipline and wider communities outside the university, leading to measurable impact. Collaborations range from **cross-institutional bids** to funding bodies (such as Putter's Leverhulme project with Cambridge researchers) to **international research partnerships** (such as Krishnan's European Research Council grant working with colleagues in continental Africa, and Putter's AHRC project with US partners). We have taken a lead role in establishing **global links for postgraduate research exchanges**, such as our co-tutelle arrangement with Macquarie University in Australia, which enables us to offer international joint PhD programmes.

The economic and cultural benefits of our research are evident from our Impact Case Studies but are also pervasive across the department. Our work with external communities includes **schools** (Badcoe; Bennett; Publicover; Putter), **medical and science professionals** (Blades; Hanaway-Oakley; Lee; Maude; Pite; Vaccarella), **cultural organisations** (Dawson; Holberton; Kahora; Krishnan; Publicover; Putter; Rabaté; Steggle; Thebo), **tourism** (Fulton, Pite), and **heritage industries** (Fulton, Holberton, Hume). Examples of our partnerships include Hanaway-Oakley's secondment to the [Medicine Galleries](#) (pp. 51–2) at the **Science Museum London**, Dawson's work as consultant to the Tobacco Factory and Bristol Old Vic theatres, and Steggle's contributions to productions and public events at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse and Globe Theatre in London.

Our Department has a longstanding record of **impact in the Bristol community**. As members of a large and well-located civic university, we have actively sought partnerships with local communities in Bristol as well as further afield. The **Medieval Studies** group has engaged with Bristol's medieval heritage, working with Bristol Cathedral, St Mary's Portbury, and Downside Abbey to manage placements for postgraduate students (Hume); working with the Bristol Record Office, Bristol City Council and a group of local historians to co-produce a map of medieval Bristol (Fulton); collaborating with a Bristol media production company to co-create animations of medieval stories (Putter Impact Case Study). The **Early Modern to 1780** group use their expertise in Renaissance drama to co-produce events and exhibitions at the SS Great Britain museum, the Arnolfini Gallery, the Tobacco Factory, and the Bristol Old Vic (Badcoe, Dawson, Publicover, Steggle). The **Modern and Contemporary** group engage with cultural institutions in Bristol such as the Lyra Poetry Festival (Pite), and the Georgian House Museum and MShed (Gill). The **Medical Humanities Exhibition** was founded by Lee as an annual event to showcase work from students on the intercalated BA in Medical Humanities and is co-curated with the community arts centre, the People's Republic of Stokes Croft. We continue to provide masterclasses and teaching materials for **schools in Bristol**, including an event at the Royal West of England Academy on fairy tales for school students (Hume and Wootten).

One example of research co-created between us and local communities is the [Map of Bristol c. 1480](#) (PI Fulton) funded by a consortium of local history groups and the university's KE fund. Research for the map was conducted collaboratively and the published map (Historic Towns Trust, 2020) will be used to encourage tourism and support secondary education. Another example is Vaccarella's 2018 work with [cardiomyopathy patients](#) to co-produce narratives of their experiences

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

to help them make sense of their diagnosis. A third example is Pite's [Romantic Bristol](#) app, funded by WUN and developed in collaboration with the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery and Destination Bristol, which has led to walking tours for members of the public based on the app. Our work in **Medical Humanities** has resulted in a recent national online festival, 'Good Grief' (co-organised by Dawson, October 2020) which attracted 12,000 people and a further 34,000 accessing recordings on the [Grief Channel](#). This has already resulted in a successful grant from the Brinstow Institute for the project 'Creative Grieving' (PI Dawson, £15,000).

Under the directorship of Karlin, then of David Punter (retired 2018), and subsequently of Wootten and Kosick (School of Modern Languages), the **Bristol Poetry Institute**, founded in 2012, hosts a prestigious series of annual poetry readings (recent speakers have included Carol Ann Duffy, Andrew Motion, Simon Armitage, Alice Oswald, and Claudia Rankine) with attendance figures averaging c. 600 up to 800 people. The BPI has also sponsored events such as 'A Poetic City', a year-long community project, 'The Last Poets', a performance workshop commemorating the civil rights movement, participation in literary festivals (Cheltenham, Ledbury), and a Poet in Residence scheme. Alice Oswald, Professor of Poetry at the University of Oxford in 2019–20, is one of our Honorary Fellows, along with Tjawangwa Dema, poet and producer of the 'Africa Writes' festival in Bristol.

Internationally, we work with partners across the globe to engage our research with the general public. As examples, Battersby collaborates with the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science, where he held a short-term fellowship (2018); Kennedy-Epstein is curating an exhibition with the **MIT List Center for Visual Art in New York** featuring the twentieth-century collaboration between writer Muriel Rukeyser and photographer Berenice Abbott (delayed by Covid-19); Krishnan has been an active contributor to the annual ['Writivism' festival](#) in Uganda since 2016; Rabaté is a founder and curator of the [Slough Foundation](#) in Philadelphia; Vaccarella continues to work with Monash University in Australia on **ethics and narrative**, building on an interdisciplinary research grant awarded by Monash in 2015.

Several of us work with **STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) disciplines** and practice-led disciplines, a trend that has increased over the last five years and which is part of our strategic plan. We belong to several networks funded by the University's EBI (medical research), Cabot Institute (environmental research) and Migration Mobilities Bristol, bringing our research in these areas into dialogue with other disciplines. Examples of collaboration with STEMM disciplines include Badcoe, 'The Unsettled Planet', with Earth Sciences and a sound engineer (2018–20); Hanaway-Oakley, seconded to the Science Museum, London, to work with science historians, especially in the field of optometry (2019–20); Gill, peer reviewer for the *BMJ*; Maude, 'Modernism, Medicine and the Embodied Mind', working with psychoanalysts, neurologists, and geriatricians (2015–16); Vaccarella, 'Illness as Fiction', working with cardiologists and neurologists (2018–19).

Recently, our networks have enabled us to respond quickly to contemporary events, pivoting some of our research towards unfolding developments and national priorities. **Extinction Rebellion** inspired Malay's workshop, 'Visualising Extinction' (2019) which was supported by the Centre for Environmental Humanities. Sides has collaborated with Penn State University and the African poet Tjawangwa Dema (one of our Honorary Fellows) to run a public workshop at Penn State on literature and **climate change** (2019). Kennedy-Epstein and Puri have engaged with the **#MeToo movement** through the Global Feminisms research cluster. The **Black Lives Matter** movement has been addressed by the Centre for Black Humanities and the Anti-Racism Steering group at UoB (of which Krishnan and Gill are members). Holberton's research on Atlantic trade in the

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in collaboration with the National Maritime Museum, addresses Bristol's links with the **slave trade**, and he has an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) grant application pending with the National Trust on this topic. The **Covid-19 pandemic** has been addressed by Battersby and Rose, with an article submitted to *The Lancet* (2020); Gill, whose 'Black Health and Humanities' WT funded project responds to racial health inequalities emerging from Covid-19; Maude, as a member of the WT-funded **Anti-Microbial Resistance Management Board** in the EBI and Co-Is on the EBI Rapid Response project 'Public Views of Covid-19 Science'; Rose as Co-I on a recent AHRC award, 'Shame and Stigma in Covid-19'.

Contribution to the research base

As a department, we provide **subject leadership** in supporting our discipline nationally and internationally. Many of us currently serve, or have previously served, as **officers of national and international scholarly societies, advisory boards, subject associations**, and similar bodies, including, for example, the British Association for Modernist Studies, the New Chaucer Society, the International Arthurian Society, and the British Society for Eighteenth Century Studies. The Department is a member of our disciplinary organisation, University English, and Fulton is on its Executive Committee. Krishnan has been the section editor for 'West Africa' in *The Year's Work in English Studies* (2015–17). Several colleagues act as **international peer reviewers and consultants** and many of us regularly act as **external PhD examiners and expert reviewers** for promotion, tenure, and professorial chairs in the UK and around the world (including the US, Australia, Canada, EU, and Qatar). Five of us have been members of the **AHRC Peer Review College** during this REF period, and three of us are reviewers for the **European Research Council**. We also review for the Leverhulme Trust, WT, British Council, British Academy, and the Irish Research Council. Krishnan is an invited member of the **AHRC GCRF/ODA (Official Development Assistance) Peer Review College**; Maude reviews for the **WT, National Science Centre Poland, and the European Science Foundation**; Putter is an external assessor for a wide range of international research councils including the European Science Foundation, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the research councils of Switzerland, Belgium, South Africa, and the Netherlands.

Many colleagues act as **journal editors** (e.g. Tether, *Journal of the International Arthurian Society*, Hanaway-Oakley, *Modernist Cultures*, Rabaté, managing editor, *Journal of Modern Literature*), **general editors or editorial board members** of book series (Manchester University Press; University of Wales Press; Peter Lang; Brepols; Brill; Cambridge University Press, Edinburgh University Press, Bloomsbury) and members of **journal editorial boards** (including *African Literature Today*, *Anglia*, *Journal of Literature and Science*, *Journal of Beckett Studies*, *Shakespeare*, *Ben Jonson Journal*, *Medical Humanities*, *Transnational Modernisms*, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, *International Journal of Welsh Writing in English*, *Arthurian Literature*). Steggle is the **General Editor** of [The Lost Plays Database](#), a major online research resource, and Fulton is the Chair of the Editorial Board at the University of Wales Press.

We have held **eight international conferences** in Bristol during the last six years, with a further two postponed to 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Virtually the whole department has given at least one international conference paper each year, and many of us have organised sessions at the **major international conferences** including the Modern Language Association (US), Modernist Studies Association (US), Medieval Academy of America (US), Shakespeare Association of America (US), Othello's Island (Cyprus), British Association of American Studies (UK), European Conference on African Studies (UK), and the major medieval studies conferences at Kalamazoo

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

and Leeds. All our staff, apart from ECRs, have given at least one **keynote address at an international conference** in the last five years (at venues such as Oxford, Cambridge, London, Durham, York, Germany, Turkey, Mexico, Brussels, New Orleans, Taiwan, Korea). As a world-leading literary critic, Bennett has been in high demand, with keynotes and invited papers in Germany, Belgium, Israel, Oxford, Poland, Helsinki, and Beijing.

We have also been very active in **co-organising events and exhibitions** at venues across the UK, which include the Georgian House Museum, Arnolfini Gallery, Cambridge University Library, the British Library, the Weston Library, The National Archives, and the Science Museum London. Lee has been the lead organiser of a regular annual **Medical Humanities Exhibition**, mainly held at PRSC (People's Republic of Stokes Croft, a community arts venue in Bristol), which has now expanded into a festival (from 2019) bringing together artists, humanities researchers, and medical professionals. Verweij is an **Advisory Board member** for the 'Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots' exhibition, British Library (planned for 2020 but postponed to 2021). As co-director of the **Bristol Poetry Institute**, Wooten has been instrumental in creating a community around performance poetry in Bristol with regular events in community locations. Blades and Vaccarella have organised several **public events in Bristol** sharing stories of HIV/AIDS, including a workshop on 'AIDS Twenty Years On' funded in part by the US Embassy (2016).

The excellence of our researchers has been recognised by a number of awards and honours. Putter and Karlin were elected **Fellows of the British Academy** in 2019 and 2020 respectively. Rabaté is **Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences**. Fulton is a **Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales** (2015) and of the **Society of Antiquaries** (2014). Karlin delivered the **Clarendon Lectures** at the University of Oxford in 2016. Verweij was awarded the Saltire Society's **Scottish Research Book of the Year** in 2016 for his first monograph. Steggle has won the **Biennial Note Prize** awarded by the journal *Early Theatre* (2017); the **Calvin and Rose G. Hoffman Prize** for Distinguished Publication on Christopher Marlow (2015); and the **RSA-TCP Article Prize** for Digital Renaissance Research (2015). Thebo has been shortlisted for the **Carnegie Medal** on three occasions. Several of us have been elected or appointed to visiting professorships or fellowships (e.g. University of Ghent, University of Oxford, Harvard University, Turku University, UCLA). Several of us hold Trusteeships on learned societies (Early English Text Society; Scottish Text Society; Eugene Vinaver Memorial Trust). Fulton is a Trustee of the Historic Towns Trust and was elected **Vice-President for Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences of the Learned Society of Wales** in 2019.

Our research is regularly featured throughout the **print and electronic media**. Several of us have appeared on **BBC Radio** programmes including 'In Our Time' and 'Natural Histories' (both on Radio 4). Kennedy-Epstein was interviewed on [US radio \(PRX\)](#) in 2020 about her work on Muriel Rukeyser. Tether featured in an **international news story** in 2019, '[The Bristol Merlin](#)', distributed to c. 500 broadcast, print and online sources (the largest research story ever emanating from the School of Humanities), reaching at least 50 countries across Europe, the US, and Australia. Fulton's expertise in Celtic and medieval languages led to her being commissioned as a **Netflix consultant** to invent two languages for the fantasy series '[Cursed](#)', broadcast on Netflix in June 2020. In addition, a number of us review regularly for publications such as *Times Literary Supplement*, *Times Higher*, *Financial Times*, *Irish Times*, and *London Evening Standard*, and we have been featured in **podcasts** (for example, '[History Extra](#)', 2020; '[BBC Earth Podcast](#)', 2019; [In Our Time](#), 2018).

Our research, ranging from textual scholarship through state-of-the-art literary criticism to innovative re-shapings of the discipline using new methodologies and a genuinely global approach

Unit-level environment statement (REF5b)

to literature, is making a substantial contribution to the dynamism and sustainability of literary studies as a key discipline for meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century. Moving flexibly to apply the insights and practices of literary studies to global issues through historicised perspectives, we bring literature and writing into mainstream economic and social dialogues with communities of academics, policy makers, and the general public.