

Institution: 10007140 Birmingham City University
Unit of Assessment 34: Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

A. Overview

The Birmingham Centre for Media and Cultural Research (BCMCR) is focused on the principles of interdisciplinarity, critical investigation, collective practice and social activism, along with a commitment to disseminate our research to, and beyond, the academy. We produce distinctive, collaborative research through five established clusters i) Creative Industries, ii) History, Heritage and Archives, iii) Jazz Studies, iv) Media and Place, v) Popular Music Studies, and vi) Screen Cultures; and two emerging clusters in i) Cultural Theory and ii) Game Cultures. Our researchers have built deep relationships within the city and the region, but also nationally and internationally, resulting in globally-significant research projects and world-leading publications. Our archives, seminars, conferences, and new media initiatives respond to and excite interest in established and emerging methods of inquiry across all our activities.

2014 to 2020 represents a significant period of strategic development for BCMCR, demonstrated by a 35% increase in our external research income, the high standard and number of our research outputs and formats, and our systematic commitment to researcher development. In RAE2008, three media researchers made a return to RAE2008. By REF2014, we had established our research centre, returning 12 research-active staff. We incorporated rigorous pathways for researchers at the start of their careers, providing support for staff from professional backgrounds to become research-active in order to deliver BCU's strategic plan for 2020 and the Faculty policy driving our research-informed curriculum.

Our submission to REF2021 demonstrates our significant achievements in this cycle, including 32 independent researchers (31.21 FTE), and 4 emerging researchers, representing an increase of over 266% in our staff base and including 8 of the 12 staff previously returned to REF2014. Our current cohort of 34 PGRs represents a four-fold increase from 2014, aided by our membership of the AHRC Midlands4Cities DTP and BCU investment in doctoral scholarships. Our challenge has been to manage this growth in the Centre, ensuring that we maintain our collective intellectual project, while encouraging growth in new areas, such as our work in gender and sexuality and game cultures.

In line with the three other UoAs in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Media (ADM), BCMCR has a Research Directorate structure led by a Director (**Gebhardt**) with Associate Directors for REF, Careers and Outputs (**Forkert**), External Income and Impact (**Saber**), and Doctoral Education (**Carter**). In January 2020, the Faculty merged our host school, the School of Media, with the School of English to form the Birmingham Institute of Media and English (BIME), providing further opportunities for interdisciplinary research. This will play a key part in our future strategy beyond REF2021.

B. Review of research and impact strategy, 2014-2020

In REF2014 we identified 2014-2020 as a critical phase for the Centre's development. Our aim was to consolidate our intellectual project by fostering research capacity and increasing participation. To achieve this, we set ourselves the following goals:

- Develop a clear intellectual rationale and goals for the Centre that are reflected in research clusters and the wider research culture;
- Support staff to take an active part in all BCMCR activities, including funding applications, outputs, career development, research clusters and the seminar series;

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

- Develop ambitious and creative research that informs teaching at UG and PG levels, and beyond;
- Foster distinctive practice-based research, particularly through documentary film and exhibitions;
- Recruit PGRs and develop an inclusive, engaged community so they feel confident to participate in the research culture;
- Develop local, national and international partnerships, growing and consolidating strategic external partnerships with cultural organisations and festivals to aid research/impact;
- Sustain BCMCR through developing skills and research leadership, including for members of under-represented groups.

Our review demonstrates how we have met these objectives. We have done this primarily through the work of our clusters, which focuses our collective project and enables us to engage effectively with emerging debates in the field. They support the careers of our researchers, they are the context for funding applications and deepening our non-academic partnerships. To embed sustainability and professional development, each cluster is led by a senior and junior academic. PGRs and postdoctoral researchers play a key role in them, leading initiatives such as open access postgraduate journals, events and exhibitions. Many Centre members participate in multiple clusters, and we invite colleagues from outside of the UoA and the University to participate, which further encourages interdisciplinary research activity and partnerships within the wider community.

As research careers have matured, we have empowered new leaders to introduce clusters around emerging specialisms, nurtured by our already established leaders. This approach has enabled us to increase from four clusters in 2014 to eight in 2020. In 2020 our clusters were:

Popular Music Studies (8 independent researchers and 7 PGRs from UoA34) emerges from the REF2014 Interactive Cultures cluster, focusing specifically on issues of musical production and consumption. Led by Professor of Jazz and Popular Music Studies **Gebhardt** and ECR **Draganova**, its research is represented by 13 outputs. **Barber's** work on songwriting has resulted in the award-winning practice-as-research *Sodajerker* podcast and an AHRC funded Songwriting network; this work is represented in one of our Impact Case Studies (see ICS-C).

Jazz Studies (7 independent researchers from UoA34, 6 from other UoAs, 6 PGRs and 9 external members) emerged out of Popular Music Studies as our staff profile and their research specialisms expanded. Led again by **Gebhardt**, working with **Pillai**, the cluster reflects the Centre's commitment to interdisciplinary research, involving researchers from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, such as **Whyton**, who was strategically recruited as Professor of Jazz Studies to grow research in this area. It also accounts for a fifth of our externally funded projects: more than a quarter of the UoA's income from externally funded research within the census period. This cluster's research is represented by 12 outputs, and the *Changing approaches to programming and the audience experience at Cheltenham Festival* Impact Case Study (see ICS-B).

Established in 2014, Creative Industries (7 independent researchers from UoA34, 2 from other UoAs and 14 PGRs) has since become one of BCMCR's largest research clusters, encapsulating BCMCR's sheer growth of staff and research profile. Currently led by **Carter** and **Patel**, who took over from **Dudrah** and **Naudin** in 2020, it is interdisciplinary in outlook and involves colleagues from art and design, and education. It has benefitted from the strategic appointment of **Dudrah** as Professor of Cultural Studies and Creative Industries, who guided the development of the cluster, and accounts for over 25% of the UoA's externally funded income. The cluster's research is represented by 5 outputs.

Returned in 2014, History, Heritage and Archives (11 independent researchers from UoA34, 2 from other UoAs and 2 external members) is necessarily diverse, exploring all aspects of archiving and cultural heritage practice. It is currently led by **Webber** and **Cravinho** following the departures of Paul Long and Christopher Hill. Core to the cluster's activity is the ADM archive, overseen by **Cravinho**, which holds specialist collections such as the Cult Film Archive, the Film Fanzine

Archive, and the National Jazz Archive. The cluster is represented by 4 outputs, two of which are co-authored.

Screen Cultures (11 independent researchers from UoA34, 1 from another UoA, 10 PGRs and 5 external members) was an emerging cluster in REF 2014 and since then has become well-embedded within UoA34, but also across other faculties and beyond the University. Led by **Mercer** and **Tomsett**, who took over from **Mendik** and **Commane** in 2020, the cluster has nurtured a diverse body of work across film, television and screen research, as well as including practice-based approaches. Its submission to REF2021 consists of 13 outputs, including a documentary film. **Mercer's** and **Commane's** work on gender and sexuality has been a particular focus of our world-leading research.

Media and Place (8 independent researchers from UoA34 and 7 PGRs) emerged out of the 2014 cluster Media for Social Change and is co-led by **Saber** and **Turner**. The cluster is represented by 8 outputs and has had significant success with external funding applications, accounting for over 35% of the UoA's total externally funded income from research projects since 2014. An example is **Saber's** Check project, which forms one of our Impact Case Studies (see ICS-A).

With a view to the future growth of BCMCR beyond 2020, two new clusters have emerged. These are:

Cultural Theory (5 independent researchers from UoA34, 12 from other UoAs, 5 PGRs and 1 external member), which emerged from Media and Place in 2018. This interdisciplinary, cross-Faculty cluster is led by **Forkert** and Nulman, who is based in the School of Social Sciences, and has been particularly successful with research funding applications, securing awards from funders such as Leverhulme, ERSC and AHRC. The cluster's submission to REF2021 consists of 4 outputs.

Game Cultures (3 independent researchers from UoA34, 3 from other UoAs, and 4 PGRs), also founded in 2018, emerged out of both Creative Industries and History, Heritage and Archives. It represents a collective interest in the cultural aspects of games of all kinds; both physical and digital, and is led by **Webber** and **Stevens**. It is represented by 3 of our output submissions to REF2021. Our clusters align to the programmes of the Birmingham Institute for Media and English, and research-active staff contribute to those programmes, implementing our research-informed teaching strategy. We have also developed MA routes into PhDs, culminating in an MRes framework to recruit students in September 2021. A new faculty policy was introduced in 2019, which places research at every level of all academic programmes.

C. Future research and impact strategy

The next five years present a particular challenge for BCMCR as we move from a period of growing our research culture to sustaining it, as well as negotiating the challenges in the HEI sector prompted by Covid-19. Our specific objectives, which have been collectively shaped through discussion at monthly strategy meetings, are to:

- i. Consolidate the trajectory of our research clusters and intellectual project, by developing the structures for supporting career progression and external funding;
- ii. Support the new generation of ECRs through to mid-career achievements, developing leadership skills to sustain our research community;
- iii. Sustain the scale and diversity of external funding income, drawing on our newly forged relationships with the School of English, and using research clusters to provide intellectual support and mentoring for the development of future grant applications;
- iv. Expand our doctoral research provision to create a diverse and sustainable cohort through targeted recruitment linked to our clusters and the AHRC Midlands4Cities consortium. Critical to this strategy is the development of MA and MRes routes-in;
- v. Consolidate research-informed teaching for UG and PGT students, ensuring full participation of all staff with SRR in taught programmes;

- vi. Enhance our external engagement through new partnerships with cultural organisations, businesses and public bodies, building on the strong track record evidenced in our impact case studies, and responding to BCU's commitment to the KEF.

D. Enabling research impact, interdisciplinarity, open access and research integrity

Sustaining impact - We have sought to further enhance the impact of research taking place in the UoA through the public engagement work we conduct both locally and internationally. This has involved investment, infrastructure development and skills training in research impact. **Saber**, who has particular expertise in this area, worked closely with impact consultant Saskia Walcott. Walcott's experience in devising the AHRC impact strategy has been invaluable to the development of our own, emphasising ways to capture evidence of impact and develop our skills in articulating our research effectively. Since 2016, she and **Saber** have led 12 impact workshops and, in addition, we have invested £38,000 worth of dedicated impact awards from FRIS (see below) funding to 7 initiatives and have been supported by an Impact Officer from BCU's Research, Innovation, Enterprise and Employability (RIEE) department. Furthermore, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Lab, co-ordinated by **Saber** and **Turner**, develops quantitative and qualitative methods for the impact assessment of projects within the UoA and outside of the University. Exemplars of our impact can be found in the three Impact Case Studies, which emerge from three of our established research clusters [see Section 3 and Section 4].

Facilitating interdisciplinary research – Beyond the role our clusters play in promoting interdisciplinary research activity, the BCU ADM Faculty has expedited interdisciplinary work across the creative and cultural practice subjects, and the university's STEAM-informed research ambitions provide infrastructural support for interdisciplinary work. Phase two of the STEAMhouse initiative forms the background for aligning our REF, KEF and TEF strategies through to 2025. We appointed four strategic professorships for the Global Arts and Design, Creative Industries, Performing Arts and Jazz Studies in 2016 to promote and provide role models for interdisciplinary work. This approach is replicated in our doctoral programme, where interdisciplinary teams are encouraged and Midlands3/4Cities DTP studentships have enabled sharing of expertise from the consortium's current eight universities.

Open research, effective sharing and management of research data - Our commitment to an open research environment is evident from three key initiatives. Firstly, we introduced three new open access journals – *Riffs* and *Songwriting Studies* in Popular Music Studies; *Makings* in Creative Industries – alongside the already well-established *Cine-Excess* journal. Secondly, the Centre's website regularly publishes items relating to our research, including critical reflections, blogs, the BCMCR *New Thinking* pamphlet series, and our many project reports, such as **Hamilton's** 'Birmingham Live Music and Brexit'. Thirdly, our M&E Lab is an open access platform, providing resources that can be used by other universities, NGOs and community organisations. We also use the BCU open access repository as a platform on which to make journal articles publicly available.

Integrity, ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards - BCMCR fosters a culture of research integrity and ensures that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards. The UoA participates in University-level research ethics processes, and **Carter** chairs the Faculty's Ethics Committee as well as being responsible for ethical review in the UoA. The University provides wider support for funded research projects, including a compliance process, periodic review and principal investigator training.

2. People

A. Staff recruitment and development

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

BCMCR is made up of 32 independent researchers, totalling 31.21FTE (90.6% of staff work full-time and 9.4% are on fractional contracts; all are on permanent contracts except **Cleeve, Patel, Hamilton** and **Sarson** - our fixed-term Postdoctoral Research Fellows – and **Cravinho**). Since REF2014 six staff have either retired or resigned, including two Professors. Our long-term strategy has been to nurture staff at the beginning of their academic careers, particularly supporting those from professional, non-academic backgrounds to become research active. For example, between 2014 and 2020, eight staff working within the UoA began their Doctoral Studies. 6 completed their programme in the current cycle and we have retained five of those staff members (**Coley, Harte, Naudin, Jackson, Davies**) and four make returns to REF2021. Furthermore, these staff – **Harte, Jackson, Coley** and **Naudin** – have also been promoted to Associate Professor, along with another 13 staff who have been promoted from Visiting Lecturer to Research Fellow (**Pillai**), Lecturer to Senior Lecturer (**Akinbobola, Collie, Commane**), Research Fellow to Senior Research Fellow (**Barber, Cravinho**), Senior Research Fellow to Reader (**Saber**), Senior Research Fellow to Associate Professor (**Webber**), and Associate Professor to Professor (**Mendik**). In recognition of their outstanding contribution to our research environment, **Carter** (who completed his PhD in the previous cycle), **Mercer** and **Gebhardt** have all been promoted twice in the current cycle, while **Forkert** has been promoted three times.

We have recruited 5 new independent researchers to their first permanent post, with senior members of BCMCR included in the recruitment process, and have also invested in staff who have been at the beginning of their research careers, either having a PhD or being close to completion. Our equality culture is attractive to potential staff, with the gender ratio of 80%/20% female/male in new permanent staff: **Commene, Collie** and **Taylor** were appointed in 2015, and **Wilde** and **Tomsett** in 2018. **Stevens, Charles, Akinbobola, Draganova** and **Turner** were originally employed on short-term contracts, but converted to permanent contracts during the current cycle. **Akinbobola, Charles** and **Turner** had previously completed PhDs in the Centre, further demonstrating our commitment to retaining and supporting our PGRs to develop academic careers. A key element of this strategy has been the introduction of Faculty-funded postdoctoral fellowships, of which **Hamilton** and **Sarson** have been beneficiaries. The Faculty has also invested in two strategic appointments: Professors **Dudrah** in 2016 and **Whyton** in 2015.

We have benefited from enhanced leadership structures at Faculty level. BCMCR's Director of Research since 2017, **Gebhardt** is an experienced Professor, with world-leading publications and successful funding track record, who guides the Centre's intellectual project. As part of this role, he sits on the management committee of BIME, ensuring that research is fully integrated into all Institute-level planning, curriculum development and policies, as well as on Faculty and University research committees. The Research Directorate (**Carter, Forkert, Gebhardt, Saber**) meets weekly, reporting to Faculty Research Committee. The formation of BIME has enabled opportunities for increased co-working with the School of English, with **Saber** providing leadership across BIME for external grant capture.

The research clusters are at the heart of our staff development strategy, enabled by a consolidated faculty Researcher Development programme. Our ambitions are to: i) ensure the career progression of the Centre's next generation of academics to enhance the vitality and sustainability of the discipline at BCU; ii) enhance staff skills to meet our research priorities, including improvements in outputs and impact, and to access internal and external funding. Standardised Faculty-level research goals are built into the Individual Performance Review (IPR) process, covering areas appropriate to SRR status (outputs, conference presentations, external funding proposals, doctoral supervision). Progress is assessed at mid-year and year-end meetings, where staff are given the opportunity to discuss immediate training needs and long-term career aspirations. Staff have also benefited greatly from the Faculty's extensive Researcher Education and Development (RED) programme, which consists of:

- initial definition and granting of research-active status, based on an assessment of outputs, awards and other relevant activity;
- mentoring, by which every research-active member of staff in the Faculty, from junior to the most senior Professor, has a research mentor;

- a year-round programme of workshops on topics such as grant capture and doctoral supervision (accredited by SEDA, the Staff and Educational Development Association);
- regular review and revision of personal research plans in relation to workload allowances.

Since 2014, the RED programme has enabled 20 BCMCR researchers to attend a Supervisor Development Day, 9 to undertake Mentoring Training, and 6 to attend a PhD Examination Workshop. All colleagues meet with their research mentor at least twice a year. Mentors are assigned on the basis of career stage and subject specialism, and mentoring includes advice on project planning, network building, outputs and impact. Support for external funding proposal development has been enhanced by a Faculty peer-review process mapped against UKRI standards. Our staff are able to draw upon expertise from 2 AHRC Strategic Reviewers (**Wall, Dudrah**) and 5 AHRC Peer Review College members (**Dudrah, Forkert, Saber, Mercer, Whyton**), as well as experienced reviewers in other UoAs. 14 of our colleagues have successfully completed the SEDA postgraduate supervision qualification (Communities of Practice)

The Faculty Research Investment Scheme (FRIS) is another ADM initiative that enables staff to bid for funds for teaching remission (usually from an individual module) to work on a substantial research task, such as the completion of a monograph, the development of an external funding proposal, an impact activity, or to purchase research-related equipment. Since 2017-18, FRIS funding has also facilitated the recruitment of a postdoctoral fellow to lead BCMCR's annual theme (see Section 4). In total, FRIS has funded 41 projects by BCMCR staff, worth nearly £300,000. The Faculty also devolves a conference, networking and mobility (CNM) budget to each UoA. Since 2017, this fund has supported 26 colleagues of those returned to REF2021 to attend 68 conferences and been crucial in supporting researchers to internationalise their research careers, with 18 BCMCR members visiting locations such as Canada, Japan, China, the USA, Australia, and 11 European countries.

For staff in receipt of a Faculty doctoral studentship, there is the opportunity to apply for WAM remission at the 54 month point to help complete their thesis and support their transition to research active status; 6 have received this support.

B. Support for Research Students

We have a vibrant and growing community of 34 PhD students across 21 supervisors. The foundation of our research culture, this PhD cohort is made up of 29 Home/EU students and 5 Overseas students. The gender ratio within this cohort is 25:7 male/female and we have 2 non-binary PGRs. 11 are from BAME backgrounds, with 3 reporting disabilities. Our approach to doctoral education has been transformed in this cycle through our participation in the AHRC Midlands4Cities doctoral training partnership alongside seven other institutions from the region (initially Midlands3Cities with five other institutions). We have been awarded 10 studentships through this highly competitive route and secured three AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards working with partner organisations outside the HE sector. The first, with the Beatfrees Collective, a Birmingham-based youth engagement company, supervised by **Naudin** and **Dudrah** on the role that data-driven policy making has on inequalities among young people; the second, with Soul City Arts, supervised by **Forkert** and **Gebhardt** exploring creative practices, policy and sustainability in urban rejuvenation; and the third, with Punch Records, supervised by **Dudrah** and **Naudin** on multilingualism in British Asian popular music. All AHRC awards are match-funded by BCU's QR budget. In addition, ADM has funded 11 studentships through internal PGR initiatives, such as STEAMhouse and the Faculty Studentship scheme. We also have one PGR in receipt of a Commonwealth studentship. There have been 18 doctoral completions during this cycle, which represents a significant increase on the 5 completions we reported to REF2014.

ADM provides a systematic doctoral education and development programme across the arts and humanities to support our doctoral researchers achieving timely completion and increased quality of submission. This follows the AHRC's doctoral training framework and the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, providing PGRs with key professional and transferable skills to prepare them for careers inside and outside academia.

In their first year, all PGRs undertake the PGCert in Research Practice, led by Jacqueline Taylor (from UoA32) with **Carter** and **Sarson**, and further support from academics across the Faculty. Through 10 weekly workshops, the course encourages students to reflect on their position as researchers and to experience a range of interdisciplinary methods, working as part of a diverse community of researchers. These sessions are supported by weekly tutorials with students' supervisory teams. The course takes place over 6 months for full-time PGRs (12 months part-time), requiring a 6000-word research proposal and 3000-word critical reflection to be submitted. PGRs are expected to consider their current skills, knowledge and experience in relation to future ambitions and the potential impact of their research, leading to the production of a five-year plan.

Throughout their studies, students participate in 'PGRStudio', an interdisciplinary programme led at Faculty level by Taylor. PGRStudio aims to enhance the ADM PGR research community and student experience by supporting routes into and out of PhD through professional and career development. It fosters and develops innovative new approaches to arts and humanities PGR education over a period of 42 months for full-time PGRs (66 months part-time). PGRs are able to participate in weekly training workshops and a mentoring scheme, and can apply to be part of the Brilliant Club, a charity which gives them the opportunity to teach their research to school pupils from groups under-represented in HE. PGRs are also offered the opportunity to complete the SEDA course in teaching and to apply to become an Associate Fellow of AdvanceHE. Since 2015, PGRStudio has held an annual conference, addressing a different theme each year, which aims to provide an inclusive and experimental space for PGRs to present work-in-progress and elements of practice and performance. Opportunities are provided for PGRs to be involved in the running of the conference, from developing the theme and peer-reviewing abstracts to graphic design and churning sessions.

BCU revised its regulations and processes for research degrees in 2014 to provide better data and monitoring as well as a more supportive student experience, adopting best practice from the sector and learning from our experience as part of then M3C. Potential supervisors are involved in the application process at an early stage. This assists in assessing the applicant's suitability for a research degree and how well the proposed project fits with our expertise and research priorities. All students have at least two supervisors, with the designated Director of Studies expected to meet full-time students fortnightly, and part-time students at least twice a semester. Second supervisors provide specialist disciplinary or methodological expertise. The responsibilities of supervisors and students, set out in the Research Degree Student Handbook, have been developed in line with the QAA Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programmes. Progression review meetings take place at 6-months and 12-months (or equivalent) and are conducted by a panel external to the supervisory team using viva-like examination processes. At the end of each academic year, the student and each supervisor are asked to complete an annual report and a plan for the coming year, which are scrutinised by the Faculty Research Degrees and Environment Committee. Progress is also monitored through supervision records; an 'at risk' process for struggling students triggers extra support to get them back on track for timely completion. Viva preparation support includes compulsory mock vivas, and interdisciplinary 'Master Your Viva' workshops run by PGRStudio, facilitated by recent PhD graduates and experienced PhD examiners.

Our strategic aim is to integrate PGRs into our research clusters, providing further research training opportunities. This has led to the introduction of two PGR journals: *Riffs*, which provides a creative, experimental space for writing and thinking about popular music; and *Makings*, which publishes research relating to the topic of culture and the creative industries. In total, seven open-access issues of these journals have been published online, including five issues of *Riffs*, providing valuable publishing and editorial experience. Our PGRs are encouraged to present their research at BCMCR seminars and, between 2014 and 2020, 57 PGRs have given papers: 29 from UoA34; 15 from other UoAs; 14 from external HEIs. We support our PGRs to present at national and international academic conferences; since 2017, we have funded their attendance at 27 conferences. For example, in 2018/19, 13 of our PGRs presented over 20 papers internationally,

including events in Canada, Estonia, Italy, Finland, Germany and Australia, again emphasising our commitment to preparing researchers for international careers.

C. Equality and Diversity

BCMCR commits to equality and diversity in supporting independent researchers through promotion of an open, transparent, and collegiate working environment. The Centre, and the wider University, are addressing a legacy situation of female and BAME staff concentrated in junior roles. A strategic aim in this census period has been addressing issues of participation around gender and ethnicity and how this translates into leadership opportunities. In the previous REF cycle, BCMCR's management structure was entirely white and male, with the four-person team now includes two women BAME Associate Directors (**Saber** and **Forkert**). In 2013, 8 male and 4 female researchers were returned, a gender balance of 67%/33%, while by July 2020, our membership had a gender balance of 58%/42%, with 18 males and 13 females. We have achieved greater gender balance across career stages. In the previous cycle, all female researchers were beginning their careers and all senior researchers were male. There are now 13 junior members of staff (6 female, 7 male); 4 mid-career researchers (2 male, 2 female), 2 Readers (1 male, 1 female), 5 Associate Professors (3 male, 2 female); and our research professoriate includes 6 males and 1 female. This represents an improvement from the previous cycles, where there were no female professors or female mid-career researchers (MCRs). The UoA now has greater ethnic diversity, moving from 2 BAME researchers in 2014 to 7 in 2020, including a strategic professorial appointment (**Dudrah**) to strengthen our work around black and British Asian media.

Improvements in gender balance have been driven by female academics progressing their careers, supported by the Director of Research and Associate Dean for Research, and latterly by the new Executive Dean. Highlights included a cross-disciplinary ADM Women Researcher's Network, co-led by **Naudin** and **Forkert** alongside Boulwood (UoA32), which in 2017-2018 included a series of events on women's careers and engagement with the Aurora leadership programme. Since 2018, 6 members have participated in BCU's annual month-long Xchange Festival in association with International Women's Day, which received the Vice Chancellor's Strategic Investment Fund. Highlights include a panel discussion on women's careers organised by **Saber**, the Feminist Playlist radio programme developed by **Draganova** and **Forkert** in collaboration with Brum Radio, and a presentation by the Feminist Internet collective organised by **Commene** and **Forkert**. **Commene** benefited from the Aurora leadership programme for women academics in 2017/18, securing promotion to Senior Lecturer in 2020.

BCMCR members have also participated in events focused on race equality. Vincent Obia (PGR), **Akinbobola**, **Dudrah** and **Forkert** took part in a University-wide panel in connection with Black History Month. Ian Sergeant (PGR) was one of the organisers of *Anticipating Black Futures*, a conference for Black PGRs which was supported by M4C and hosted by BCU. **Akinbobola** is the founder of an annual conference for female African media workers and academics, African Women in the Media, which took place first at BCU and subsequently in Nigeria and Kenya.

In the 2019 promotion and conferment cycle, BCU held women-only workshops on promotion and conferment led by ADM PVC/Exec Dean, Alison Honour. **Forkert**, **Commene**, **Naudin** participated and successfully achieved promotion. As identified earlier, three BAME colleagues have been promoted in the current cycle (**Akinbobola**, **Forkert**, **Saber**).

BCMCR's internal REF peer review panel is underpinned by BCU's commitment to eliminate discrimination and create an inclusive culture, giving everyone an equal chance to succeed. The panel's membership comprises of colleagues with a range of internal and external reviewing experience, representing all career and research leadership stages within BCMCR and with a 50:50 gender balance and 3 BAME members. Core members also completed EDI training with AdvanceHE in line with the BCU REF2021 Code of Practice.

The wider BIME institute of which BCMCR is part is currently in the process of applying for an Athena SWAN departmental award and has designed a staffing strategy to support career progression among female, LGBT+ and BAME colleagues. The University has an LGBT+ Staff Network and is seeking accreditation from Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme, as well as the Race Equality Charter. Recruitment policies discourage single-gender panels and are currently being revised in line with the University's EDI strategy to promote ethnic diversity in recruiting. Through working together with these initiatives, fostering greater participation from researchers from a variety of backgrounds, and supporting junior staff and MCRs to become research leaders, we hope to sustain Equality and Diversity in the future.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

A. Research funding and strategies for generating research income

BCMCR has increased our income generation from a range of sources over the assessment period, in line with the strategic aims laid out in our REF2014 submission. We have made 120 funding applications – considerably exceeding our ambitions of one submission per month – with a value to BCU of over £12m. 37 of these have been successful, generating an income to BCU of £1.9m from projects with a total value of £15m. This is a substantial increase on the £1.4m income reported in REF2014, and one of our most significant achievements in the current cycle.

Our key successes in terms of value and prestige include: **Saber's Check Global** (£1.5m project value, £275k income), an international project funded by the Swedish International Development Agency that provides media training to journalists and activists in the global south, which also led to the *Developing a verification and anti-disinformation network for the global south* (£3.5m value, £250k income) project. Other collaborative projects include **Whyton's** HERA Knowledge Exchange and Impact Fellowship, with the University of Southampton (£220k value, £110k income); **Dudrah's Creative Multilingualism**, led by University of Oxford and partnered with SOAS and the universities of Cambridge, Pittsburgh and Reading (£4m value, £160k income); and the *Voices of War and Peace: the Great War and its Legacy* project (£671k value, £61k income). The latter was one of five AHRC First World War Engagement Centres led by University of Birmingham, for which **Saber**, **Webber** and **Stevens** worked on associated projects, including 'Minding Black Histories in times of War: Remembering, Acknowledging and Celebrating Black Soldiers' Contribution to WW1'. Our postdoctoral researchers have been particularly successful in securing AHRC Leadership awards, such as **Patel's Supporting Diversity and Expertise Development in the Contemporary Craft Economy** (£227k value, £184k income) and **Pillai's Jazz on BBC-TV: 1960-1969**, in partnership with the BBC and the content agency Somethin' Else (£169k value, £135k income). Other UKRI awards include **Forkert's** internationally-focused AHRC Fellowship *Conflict, Memory, Displacement* (£100k value, £50k income), which collaborates with a number of non-academic partners. Likewise, **Whyton** and **Gebhardt's Cultural Heritage and Improvised Music in European Festivals (CHIME)** for the EU's Joint Project Initiative scheme (€650k value, £197k income) involved partners in Sweden and the Netherlands. Two of our AHRC Research Networking Scheme grants - Barber's *Songwriting Studies* (£33.5k value, £27k income) and Mercer's *Masculinity, Sex and Popular Culture* (£40.5k value, £32.8k income) - have made significant interventions within their respective fields, leading to the introduction of the Songwriting Studies journal and Mercer's book series with Routledge.

Our funding strategy for this REF cycle has been to diversify our sources of external funding beyond research councils. While we have been successful with UKRI-funding, with 16 awards coming from the AHRC, 2 from EPSRC (**Harte**) and one from the ESRC (**Forkert**), more than 50% of our 37 awards were from alternative sources. For example, applications to non-UKRI funders have proven particularly beneficial, especially for the Creative Industries cluster. **Naudin's** Arts Connect funded project *Cultural Engagement Partnerships Evaluation* (£59k value/income), the Creative Europe funded *smARTplaces: A European Audience Development Programme* (£3.5m value, £61k income), formerly led by Long, but taken over by **Harte** following his departure, and **Carter's** British Academy/Leverhulme Trust project *The Transnational Trade in Hardcore Pornography Between Britain, Scandinavia and the Netherlands* (£3.5k) are notable examples.

Outside of this cluster, some of our key projects are **Saber's BAME Arts Development Impact Study and Evaluation 2016-2019**, funded by Birmingham City Council, and **Hamilton's Live Music in Birmingham Project** (NESTA). Other non-UKRI funders included Birmingham Hippodrome (**Naudin**), Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences (**Saber**), Big Lottery Fund (**Mendik**), and the Royal Television Society (**Jackson**).

Our success in funding has been aided by enhanced support at Faculty level. This includes regular email bulletins sent by the ADM Research Office informing staff of the latest funding opportunities. As outlined in Section 2, RED workshops support staff in making grant applications, with sessions targeted at particular funders (AHRC, BA/Leverhulme, etc.) and others tailored towards improving and extending impact to researchers at all career stages. The Research Mentoring scheme and Personal Research Development Plans help colleagues identify and apply for funding opportunities, and integrate external bid development into annual review goals. All QR income from REF2014 is devolved by the University to the Faculty, which disburses it through the processes described in Section 2 (doctoral studentships; postdoctoral fellowships; FRIS; Conferences, Networking & Mobility Fund). BCMCR has benefitted significantly from this approach: with 28.66% of the Faculty's research-active staff, we have attracted (on a three-year average) 28.75% of QR income.

External income development in BCMCR is led by **Saber** in the role of Associate Director for Research Development and External funding. In 2018, **Saber** established an internal peer-review process to support colleagues making funding applications. This involves in-person support from the moment the applicant decides to develop a bid until the bid is submitted, with each funding application peer-reviewed by a team which includes senior and early career researchers, and a combination of specialists and non-specialists from across BIME. Review templates are adapted from UKRI review forms to allow applicants to address concerns external reviewers are likely to raise. The composition of the peer-review panel ensures that applications communicate effectively with reviewers within and outside the area of specialisation, also enabling junior staff to gain peer-reviewing experience. The consideration of impact is embedded within the process. As Sections One and Two evidence, BCMCR connects funding bids to career development and progression (especially for staff beginning their careers and MCRs), and to clusters, so that research development is centralised within existing structures that can provide intellectual support, idea exchange, and the sharing of best practice. The final stages, including institutional approval, are coordinated by the Faculty Research Office.

In 2020, BCMCR piloted a new strategy for major funding applications, involving interdisciplinary teams from within the Centre, along with contributions from other ADM researchers, to develop and submit four major grants (average value > £750k each). Mapping onto UKRI strategic priorities and aligning with our own intellectual project, these applications rely on expertise from within our research clusters. They address the following themes:

- 1) Archives as cultural assets (**Saber**)
- 2) Songwriting and Artificial Intelligence (**Barber**)
- 3) Games and storymaking (**Webber**)
- 4) Beyond integration: convivial relations between refugees and host communities in Brazil, Trinidad & Tobago, Turkey and Uganda (**Forkert**)

We see such an approach as crucial to our post REF2021 plans and a way to sustain, and build on, our already strong success in generating external income. A key aspect of this will be the continuing use of capacity planning, allowing us to provide WAM remission for colleagues to write funding applications that speak to our intellectual aims as a Centre, but also the changing priorities of UKRI.

B. Operational and scholarly infrastructure supporting research and impact in the UoA

BCU has invested heavily in its City Centre campus during this cycle, improving the physical environment for both teaching and research. The £61million Parkside Building is home to Curzon

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Street Studios (CSS), a large media production facility which is part of BIME. It houses four TV studios; the UK's largest Green Screen studio; twelve Sony HD cameras; three Avid video suites; two Pro Tools 5.1 audio suites; and six digital radio studios. Members of BCMCR have directly benefited from this investment in facilities, particularly in pursuit of our strategic aim to further develop practice-based outputs. For instance, **Pillai's** re-creation of the television studio broadcast *Jazz 625 Live: For One Night Only*, a key output from his AHRC funded *Jazz on BBC-TV: 1960-1969* project, was produced at CSS. Similarly, **Mendik's** *Zombies Need Houses Too: A Film and Regeneration Project* (Big Lottery Fund – non-UKRI), produced three documentary films here - *Brombies: The Making of an Estate*, *They Live Outside*, and *We Do Exist*. In addition, the SMARTPlaces event *The Work of Art: Craft, Enterprise and Gender in the Digital Age* was filmed at CSS and broadcast live via Facebook to a global audience.

In 2015, £5000 of FRIS funding was used to invest in a media production kit for BCMCR researchers wanting to engage more with practice research, including a video camera, audio recorder, microphones and a high-speed Apple Mac, which Carter used in the production of the documentary series *Sexposed*. Free Adobe software licenses are also available to staff for producing images and sound, for video editing, and for designing print for publications. We have invested in a Technical Officer (**Barber**) who supports colleagues to build websites and is responsible for the BCMCR website (<https://bcmcr.org/>), which promotes the UoA's research, events and publishes research-informed blog posts written by Centre members to an international audience. For local audiences, the Parkside Building exhibition space has played a specific role in our impact strategy, being used by members to share their research with public audiences. We have held exhibitions such as **Grimes' Punk Rock!! So What?**, **Wall's Let's Play Vinyl** and **Dudrah's Slanguages**. Future use of this space will be a key aspect of our future impact strategy.

In 2015, the University library was relocated to the new £63million Curzon Building on the City Centre campus, bringing its substantial resources within easy reach of our staff and PGRs. The library has received significant investment in monographs and in databases such as JSTOR, that directly support individual staff projects as well as the interface between research and teaching. The interlibrary loan service makes an even wider range of books and journals available. BCMCR staff are working closely with the Library Collections team to establish core holdings for each of our research clusters and with the Library Research Services team to build training support for doctoral students and newly appointed staff. After only three years, the 24,300m² Curzon Building was extended by 9,300m² in 2018 at a cost of £31million, further increasing space available for the hosting of research events. These include our successful BCMCR seminar series, which presents our research to other academics, practitioners, industry and cultural organisations. We have also introduced our own UoA library to support our research. This currently consists of approximately 250 titles and is maintained by **Stevens**.

Centre members have also participated in BCU's STEAMHouse initiative by hosting workshops, conferences and symposia informed by our research, such as **Patel's** 'Craft Economies: Inequalities, Opportunities and Interventions' conference and 'Craft and Social Media' workshop as part of her AHRC Fellowship, and 'Gender and Ethnic Diversity in the Creative and Cultural Industries' with **Naudin** and **Akinbobola** as part of the xChange festival, BCU's month-long celebration of International Women's Day. **Wilde** has held a number of workshops on immersive media and social media; staff PGR Zuby Ahmed hosted 'Games Design 101: An introduction to extended reality and future technology'; **Gebhardt** and **Hamilton** invited regional music festival directors to a co-design workshop for their CHIME mobile application; and **Dudrah** and **Naudin** presented at the 'Hello Culture: Identity' symposium.

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

For 2014-2020, strategic objectives an inclusive research environment that produced ambitious and creative research in a variety of forms, as well as developing local and international partnerships with partners and other organisations. We encourage experimentation with a range of theories and methodologies based on our experience working with diverse communities, and value creative solutions to the challenges of dissemination and engagement. In what follows we give

evidence of our collective achievements during this period, focusing on our contributions to the intellectual culture, collaborations and partnerships and how we influenced wider public debate.

i. Academic beneficiaries

Centre staff participate in numerous local, regional, national and international research initiatives. 20 members have acted as peer-reviewers for 54 journals, with 7 members acting as peer-reviewers for 14 publishers. 18 Centre members belong to 32 professional bodies, including the main UK subject association MeCCSA, for which **Mercer** has been elected to the executive committee. 13 Centre members are editors, co-editors or on the editorial boards of 23 publications: **Mercer**, for example, is editor, reviews editor, and inner editorial board member of *Porn Studies*, while other editorial board memberships include **Grimes** for *Punk Scholars Press*, **Patel** and **Forkert** for *Soundings* journal, **Dudrah** for *South Asian Popular Culture*, and **Wall** for *Popular Music Matters*. 8 Centre members have peer-reviewed abstract submissions for 13 conferences, including MeCCSA's annual conference. In addition to our 5 AHRC Peer Review College members, **Carter** and **Webber** have been peer-reviewers for the ESRC and British Council respectively, and **Gebhardt** and **Whyton** are peer-reviewers for the Polish National Science Centre. Members also hold editorial roles for book series, such as **Mercer's** *Masculinity, Sex and Popular Culture* (Routledge) series with a colleague at University of Northumbria, **Gebhardt** and **Whyton's** *Transnational Studies in Jazz* (Routledge) series, and **Mendik's** *Shockers* (I.B. Tauris) series with a colleague at Brunel University.

14 solo-authored monographs have emerged from our research clusters, including **Carter's** *Making European Cult Cinema: Fan Enterprise in an Alternative Economy* and **Naudin's** *Cultural Entrepreneurship* (both Creative Industries); **Mendik's** *Bodies of Desire and Bodies in Distress: The Golden Age of Italian Cult Cinema* and **Mercer's** *Gay Pornography: Representations of Masculinity and Sexuality* (both Screen Cultures); **Pillai's** *Jazz as Visual Language: Film, Television and the Dissonant Image* (Jazz Studies); **Forkert's** *Austerity as Public Mood* (Cultural Theory); and **Draganova's** *Popular Music in Contemporary Bulgaria: At the Crossroads* and **Gebhardt's** *Vaudeville Melodies: Popular Musicians and Mass Entertainment in American Culture, 1870-1929* (both Popular Music Studies). We have also produced 14 edited or co-edited collections with a focus on critical issues within the field. Examples include **Gebhardt** and **Whyton's** *Routledge Companion to Jazz Studies*, **Wall's** *The Northern Soul Scene*, **Dudrah's** *The 1970s and its Legacies in India's Cinemas* and *Shah Rukh Khan and Global Bollywood*, **Patel** and **Naudin's** *Craft Entrepreneurship* and **Mercer's** *Childhood and Celebrity*.

Our 105 solo and co-authored invited chapters include **Stevens'** 'On Vidding: The Home Media Archive and Vernacular Historiography' for *Cult Media: Repackage, Re-released and Restored*, and **Barber's** "'Will You Love Me Tomorrow': The Brill Building and the Creative Labour of the Professional Songwriter' for *The Cambridge Companion to the Singer-Songwriter*. We have also contributed 102 solo and co-authored articles to peer-reviewed academic journals, such as **Saber** and **Webber's** 'This is our Call of Duty: Ideology, History and Resistant Videogames in the Middle East' for *Media, Culture and Society* and **Harte** and **Turner's** 'Reciprocity and the Hyperlocal Journalist' for *Journalism Practice*.

BCMCR members have been supported in presenting invited research/conference papers, delivering 441 conference papers since 2014; 164 of these were overseas. We presented 26 keynotes (9 overseas) by invitation. Members have organised or co-organised 39 conferences (11 overseas) and we have been invited to speak at a number of public events such as SheFest: Women and Comedy; Outburst Festival; the Uncensored Festival, London; and Jazz Improvisation and Civil Interaction, National Jazz Museum, New York. BCMCR has hosted international conferences, including the 'Journal of South Asian Popular Culture Conference', 'Punk Scholars Network 2nd International Conference', 'Cine-Excess X-XIII', 'Radical Film Network', 'Cultural Entrepreneurship Symposium', 'Documenting Jazz', and the 'Fourth Rhythm Changes Conference'.

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

Our contributions to the field have been recognised by numerous prizes and awards, among them: CNN African Journalist Award – Sports Reporting Category (**Akinbobola**); AHRC Gold Standard Letters in recognition of services to the Peer Review College (**Dudrah**, 2016 and 2019); Director's Choice Award – Sydney's Night of Horror International Film Festival and Documentary Finalist Award – Rome Independent Prisma Awards (**Mendik**); Best Music Programme from the Broadcast Awards (**Pillai**); gold medal winner at the New York Radio Festival (**Coley**) and United Kingdom Adult Producers Media Innovation Award (**Carter**).

ii. Collaborations, Networks and Partnerships

Collaborative working is encouraged through our commitment to embedding impact in our research and through the support we provide colleagues in designing research projects that involve external partners (Section Three). The externally funded projects that Centre members have led or been involved with have involved collaboration with 49 other universities nationally and internationally, building cross-sector and interdisciplinary relationships; these projects also worked with more than 150 non-academic organisations. One of the key elements of BCU's strategic plan to 2020 was to become the University *for* Birmingham, and our research projects have partnered with local cultural organisations such as the Home of Metal, Soul City Arts, Beatfreeks, Flatpack Film Festival, Birmingham Museums, Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham City Council, Midlands Arts Centre, Stoney Lane Records, and IKON Gallery. We have also collaborated with national organisations, including: the British Film Institute, the National Lottery, the BBC, Cheltenham Festivals, the National Trust, Sampad South Asian Arts, Craftspace, Crafts Council UK, The Runnymede Trust, Migrant Voice, Nottingham Contemporary, the Ashmolean Museum, the British Council, and GCHQ. Internationally, we have worked with Dortmunder U (Dortmund, Germany), Musée de Picardie (Amiens, France), ETOPIA – Centre for Art and Technology (Zaragoza, Spain), Liechtenstein National Museum, Gothenburg City Museum, the Dutch National Jazz Archive, the Danish Film Institute and Schwüles Museum (Berlin, Germany). Externally funded projects with a distinctly international focus include *Check* (**Saber**), *Conflict, Memory, Displacement* (**Forkert**), *smARTplaces: A European Audience Development Programme* (**Harte**), *CHIME* (**Whyton** and **Gebhardt**), *Masculinity, Sex and Popular Culture* (**Mercer**), and *The Transnational Trade in Hardcore Pornography Between Britain, Scandinavia and the Netherlands* (**Carter**).

One of our most successful strategies to enhance collaborative working has been achieved through our public research seminar series, coordinated by **Forkert**. Seminars are structured around our research clusters, with each designated three weeks within the academic year to host weekly presentations linked to its research activities. Between 2014 and 2020, over 130 seminars have taken place, hosting 233 independent speakers of which 57 were (or still are) PGRs. This represents a total of 289 independent papers delivered. Funding is available to cover travel and accommodation expenses so that clusters may invite external speakers from other HEIs, arts and third sector organisations. Since 2014, we have hosted 148 external speakers, with 26 from non-HEI organisations such as the BBC, Community Media Association, ArtsProfessional, Birmingham Town Hall/Symphony Hall, and YOUTH CLUB. From this, projects and research relationships have emerged, including BCMCR's partnership with the USE-IT! project. In addition, the research seminars have been used as a platform for the launch of publications such as the *Riffs* journal and **Naudin's Cultural Entrepreneurship** (Routledge) monograph.

Our seminars have played an important part in internationalising BCMCR, involving over 20 international visiting researchers from countries such as Austria, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden and further consolidating our international networks. This has led to us hosting a number of visiting researchers during the cycle: Eduardo Vincente and Nivaldo Ferraz (University of Sao Paulo), Mario Dunkel (Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg); Christa Bruckner-Haring (Kunstuniversität Graz), Matthias Heyman (University of Antwerp), Petter Frost Fadnes (University of Stavanger), Alessandro Brunazzo (Yale University), Prof. Ayobami Ojebode (African Studies Centre Leiden), Olusola Oyewo, Olayinka Egbokhare and Beatrice Laninhun (University of Ibadan), René Schalleger (Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt). Our members also hold associations with other universities: **Draganova** is an adjunct member of the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research at Griffith University

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

(Australia); **Barber** has been an adjunct professor at Leeds College of Music; **Dudrah** was elected as Visiting Scholar at Wolfson College, Oxford. **Akinbobola** developed an Erasmus+ exchange programme with the University of Ibadan and Lagos State University in Nigeria, involving postgraduate researchers from these universities visiting BCU and participating in researcher development activities, including the research seminars. Additionally, 5 staff members from these universities have visited BCU, and members of BCMCR have gone to Nigeria to give presentations on their research. More recently, a blended learning PhD is being launched in 2021 and is aimed at supporting staff at Nigerian universities to gain doctorates and have international research experience.

Our annual theme has also been crucial to developing a collaborative research culture that is critically reflexive and socially engaged. To date we have had 5 themes: 'Amateurism' (2016/17), 'Cultural Translation' (2017/18), 'Borders and Hinterlands' (2018/19), 'Materialities' (2019/20) and 'Alternativity' (2020/21). We invite all Centre members, including visiting speakers and researchers, to engage with these themes and to respond to them in their work. The themes will also form the basis of new titles in the recently established BCMCR book series - *New Directions in Media and Cultural Research* - with Intellect Press.

BCMCR members also contribute to the research base and the wider community through their leadership of academic networks, such as **Mercer's** *Masculinity, Sex and Popular Culture* (AHRC Networking grant), with universities of Northumbria, Exeter, East Anglia, Lille, Open University Catalonia, and Schwüles Museum (Berlin); **Barber's** *Songwriting Studies* (AHRC Networking grant), with University of Liverpool; **Gebhardt's** *Jazz and Everyday Aesthetics* (AHRC Networking grant), with University of Warwick; and **Whyton** and **Gebhardt's** *CHIME* (JPI) with universities of Amsterdam and Gothenburg. In addition to funded projects, we have also been involved in academic networks involving partnerships with other national and international HEIs: **Webber** and **Saber** are members of the *Voices of War and Peace* consortium; **Carter** and **Mercer** are members of the *Screening Sex* network, while **Mercer** is a Research Fellow of *MEDUSA: Genders in Transition* research network, UOC, Barcelona; **Forkert** is a member of the Berlin-Britain network hosted at Humboldt University; and **Wall** and **Charles** have established a partnership with the University of the West Indies.

iii. Wider Contributions to Culture and Society

We are involved in a number of cultural festivals and public facing events as part of our commitment to communicating our research beyond academia. For example, **Mendik** is Director of the annual Cine-Excess cult film festival while **Commane** organises the Bean Flicks queer, feminist porn festival with colleagues in the School of Health. Cheltenham Jazz Festival was the named partner on **Whyton's** *CHIME* project, and **Gebhardt's** *Jazz & Everyday Aesthetics* and *Keychanges at Cheltenham Jazz Festival* projects. The *Riffs* journal has organised workshops in connection with the Ideas of Noise experimental music festival and with Home of Metal, an organisation that documents the history and culture around heavy metal music; **Draganova** co-organised a public symposium in connection with Home of Metal.

Our non-academic collaborations extend to roles with cultural institutions. **Barber** was a judge for the Young Songwriter of the Year award at the Song Academy and **Coley** was a judge for the Grand Jury New York Radio Festival. **Dudrah** was a judge for the AHRC Research in Film Awards for 2015 and 2016. **Pillai** and **Coley** are trustees of the Charles Parker Trust; **Wall** and **Cravinho** are trustees of the National Jazz Archive, and **Naudin** is trustee of the Moseley Community Development Trust and Old Print Works (for which she is also Chair). **Cravinho** is co-founder, head of research and board member of the Portuguese Jazz Network. **Forkert** is on the board of Soul City Arts, an intercultural arts organisation. **Carter** collaborated with Rose Tinted Films on the production of the *Sexposed* documentary film project. **Saber** is a board member of The Yemen Archive and The Syrian Archive, and of the MENA Design Research Centre. **Webber** and **Stevens** have worked with the MACE Archive in partnership with Secret City Arts and **Webber** is also board member of British DiGRA.

BCMCR members have delivered impact and shared their research with audiences and other users through public engagement events. Highlights of this activity include: **Barber's** keynote at the Ivors Academy on 'Songwriting, Streaming and Sustainability'; **Mendik's** successes at the Sitges International Film Festival (official selected documentary film entry, 2017, 2019); and **Harte's** presentation on the UK local media at the Westminster Media Forum Keynote Seminar. Other notable work includes **Patel's** public event in June 2019 entitled 'The Work of Art - Craft, Enterprise and Gender in the Digital Age' and **Akinbobola's** annual African Women in the Media conference supported by the African Union and UNESCO.

BCMCR members' research has also been profiled by the media. **Mercer's** *Gay Pornography* monograph was profiled in *Gay Times*; **Carter's** work featured in *Wired* magazine, newspapers such as *The Sunday Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *Ekstra Bladet* (Denmark) and was interviewed by the German TV channel Arte TV. **Sarson's** research has been featured in *GQ* magazine, interviewed as an expert on gay men's use of dating and hook-up apps and **Mendik** was interviewed by the *New Statesman* (2018) about his National Lottery-funded *Zombies Need Houses Too* project.

As part of our experimental approach to dissemination, we have also worked with exhibitions as a format for public engagement. With Simon Redgrave from Punch Records, **Dudrah** co-curated the 'Slanguages: Languages in the Creative Economy' exhibition at The Buttery, Wolfson College, Oxford. **Cravinho** co-curated the 'Jazz Journeys: Everyday Life' exhibition for Centrala, Birmingham, while **Saber** curated the 'Aden: Then and Now' exhibition for The GAP Arts Project, Birmingham, involving Birmingham's Yemeni community.

Finally, our membership participates in a range of BCMCR consultancy work connected to their expertise. **Harte** acted as a consultant for the Destination Local scheme, a collaboration between Nesta and Innovate UK and as a consultant for the European Journalism Centre. **Naudin** has undertaken a significant amount of commissioned research in connection with the M&E lab. This includes the evaluation report of the RE:Present scheme, which sought to address the lack of diversity in Birmingham's cultural organisations (2016) and the Cultural Landscapes report for Birmingham City Council on BAME cultural leaders in Birmingham with **Turner** (2019). **Mercer** has acted as an expert witness in an obscenity court case, and **Carter** is a member of the Campaign against Censorship.