

Institution: York St John University
Unit of Assessment: Theology and Religious Studies (UoA 31)
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Unit context and structure</p> <p>Theology and Religious Studies (TRS) at York St John University (YSJU) has evolved rapidly in recent years to maintain its traditional research strengths and to develop new ones. It has increased both the proportion of research active staff and the quality and quantity of its research outputs.</p> <p>YSJU began life as an Anglican teacher-training college, so TRS as always been a core discipline within the institution. The moves that saw YSJU becoming a university in 2006 and then gaining research degree awarding powers (RDAP) in 2015 have led to a growing emphasis on research. Alongside this has been a continual evolution in the department's specialisms and activities, which have enabled it to maintain a diverse portfolio of research in a rapidly changing sector.</p> <p>In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) cycle, we organised ourselves mainly around two core areas of public theology (led by Kim) and practical theology (led by Village). We submitted 7.0 full time equivalent (FTE) category A staff, which was half the total employed in the department at the time. Of the 30 outputs assessed, 3% were considered world-leading (4*) and 30% internationally leading (3*). Our two impact case studies were rated from very considerable to modest impact (10% = 3*, 70% = 2* and 20% = 1*). Our environment was considered to be conducive for research at levels ranging from internationally excellent to nationally recognised (10% = 3*, 40% = 2*, 50% = 1*). Our REF2021 submission is based on eight members of category A staff (6.2 FTE), which represented 80% of the staff employed on the census date.</p> <p>The move to RDAP also gave considerable impetus to our numbers of doctoral students. In REF2014 we reported 1.5 research doctoral degrees awarded (one was jointly supervised across units), and this rose to nine successful completions in the current cycle.</p> <p><u>Changes in the unit since 2014</u></p> <p>TRS has undergone significant changes since 2014 and is currently in a transition that will shape its research profile during the next REF cycle. In 2014 we were a department in the Faculty of Education and Theology; in 2016 the university restructured and we became a subject area in the School of Humanities, Religion and Philosophy (HRP); in 2019 we became Religion, Politics and International Relations in the re-structured School of Humanities. These changes have meant a reappraisal of our research and impact strategies during the current REF cycle.</p> <p>Restructuring our research has been done in relation to changes in our overall activity. In 2013, Theology and Ministry was a core activity supported by staff whose research was in the fields of public theology (Kim), practical theology (Village), ordinary theology (Christie) and Christian ministry (Village, Williams, Hoyland and Comer). That core business was lost when the Church of England validated Common Awards through Durham University. In 2013 we also delivered programmes in world religions and Christian theology. This activity was supported by staff whose research was in fields such as Judaism and peace studies (Kollontai), Buddhist studies (Collett), religion and popular culture (Yore), Marian studies (Maunder) and the sociology of religion (Friend).</p> <p>In 2015, our research activity was re-structured to reflect four core programmes: Theology and Religious Studies, Religious Studies, Christian Theology, and Religion, Philosophy and Ethics. The Religion, Philosophy and Ethics strand has expanded relative to the Christian Theology strand, requiring more staff with this expertise (Bourne, McIntosh, Jesson, Nelstrop, Dawson). By 2019 the department had replaced its Masters programmes in Contemporary Religion and</p>

Theology and Ministry with a single MA in Religion in Society, which was in keeping with the research expertise of staff teaching on the programme, as well as student interest in the contemporary significance of religion and its role in social justice. The programme draws on the resources of the Ebor Lectures and Centre for Religion in Society.

Current research activity

Our current research reflects both historical strengths and recent changes in the unit. We continue to produce outputs related broadly to public theology (e.g. Dawson's work on local Fair-Trade groups), although the work of McIntosh has expanded into areas related to religion and media, lived religion and current issues of feminist ethics and social justice. Related to this is the work of Bourne on crime and punishment. Kollontai continued to work on issues related to religion, peace and conflict, including how these subjects can be conceived and promoted within the setting of higher education. This relates to Yore's work on student art projects and to the role of art in peacebuilding.

Village's work in practical theology has continued with ongoing empirical research of bible-reading, clergy and congregation studies, and substantial collaborative work on church schools. A funded project evaluating the Accompanied Ministry Programme in Truro Diocese (2015–18) led to several joint publications with postdoctoral researcher Muskett, who had successfully completed her PhD at YSJU in 2013. Muskett continues to build on her PhD work on cathedrals, and in 2019 she published a book (*Shop Window, Flagship, Common Ground: Metaphor in Cathedral and Congregation Studies*, SCM). Until his retirement in 2018, Williams contributed several articles related to ecclesiology, culminating in a book (*Ecclesianarchy: Adaptive Ministry for a Post-Church Society*, SCM) in 2020.

Our new emphasis on the philosophy of religion is reflected in the work of McIntosh and Dawson, and also of Jesson, who has developed a particular interest in the writings of Simone Weil.

Another change that has shaped the context of the current REF cycle was the university gaining RDAP in 2015. We had previously awarded University of Leeds research degrees. Students from 2015 have been enrolled onto equivalent YSJU programmes. The change enabled TRS to develop professional doctorate (PD) programmes aimed mainly at those engaged in ministry in Christian churches (the Doctor of Ministry programme) or other religions (the Doctor of Religion programme). These were developed in conjunction with a Doctor of Education PD because the Faculty of Education and Theology was extant at the time and there were natural links related to areas such as religious education. Some teaching is shared across the programmes, with an emphasis on collegiality and the identification of common themes for professional practitioners in different disciplines.

Research and impact strategies

Achievement of strategic aims since 2014

During the current REF cycle, the TRS research strategy was largely informed by the university strategy, which has 'impactful research' as one of its three priorities. It recognised the historic reality that research at YSJU has been shaped by our curriculum developments, so that increasing research capacity meant, in part, encouraging existing staff to develop their skills and standing as researchers and research supervisors. This has increasingly enabled staff to use their research to inform curriculum development and to ensure that teaching and research serve each other and the needs of the learning community. Our taught MAs, for example, were shaped around the research interests and expertise of the programme teams.

The aim for TRS during this REF cycle were to 1) increase the number of staff who were research active, 2) increase the number and range of outputs from the unit and 3) promote research-active staff into more senior roles.

1) Increase the number of staff who were research active.

Although the FTE number of research active staff has declined, where new staff have been appointed on permanent contracts (Bourne, Nelstrop, Dawson) these have been active researchers, so the proportion of staff who would be considered research active (using university criteria devised in 2015) rose from 57% to 78% over the period. In 2014, ten of 16 (63%) staff had doctoral qualifications, compared with nine of ten (90%) in 2020.

2) Increase the number and range of outputs from the unit.

The total number of peer-reviewed outputs from staff who were employed in TRS at some time since 2014 comprised 54 journal articles, 21 chapters in books and 12 books or edited collections. This represents an increase of about 50% in departmental output during the current REF cycle compared with 2008–13, despite declining staff numbers. We have fewer staff, but they are more research active and more productive than in 2014.

3) Promote research-active staff into more senior roles.

In terms of promotion, Village became professor of practical and empirical theology in 2015, Bourne head of school in 2016, McIntosh subject director in 2016 and associate head of school in 2019, and Jesson became senior lecturer in 2014. Of the three professors in the School of Humanities on the census date, two were in TRS.

Development of new strategic aims

The changing emphasis of our core business and the increasing importance of research impact require that we develop a completely new strategy. In 2019, TRS developed research and impact strategies that are designed to better align our research expertise with our core teaching over the next five years, and to ensure we fulfil the university aim for “impactful research”. These aims link to the changing structure of the unit, which now has fewer permanent members of staff who teach across a range of subjects that coalesce around the notion of “religion in society”. The key features of these strategies are:

- The appointment of mainly early career researchers (ECRs) who have completed doctorates and who can offer research relevant to our new subject areas. Dawson was appointed to a permanent full-time post in July 2020, and Jagger to a part-time post of lecturer in religion and gender shortly thereafter. This shift in core activity and staff profile will partly be enabled by reducing our activities related to theology and ministry.
- The use of the Centre for Religion in Society (CRiS) as the key body for increasing research capacity and delivering research impact. The centre has existed for several years, but we intend to devote more staff resource to it to develop new links with outside bodies and develop those that already exist. One of our impact case studies is based on work done by the director of the centre (Kollontai) and other staff working on projects that explore the interface of religion in society with special reference to issues such as social justice, peace and violence, and the implementation of UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Increase research collaborations within and beyond the university. We already have some close and productive long-term collaborations with staff in other universities. For example, in the current REF cycle, collaboration with researchers at Warwick University (Village) has partly been related to our impact case study on the role of psychological type in preaching and biblical interpretation. Joint and independent research from both institutions has fed into a range of publications, workshops and teaching sessions for laity and clergy. Data from the InCites database indicates the growing strength in this area when comparing 2008–14 with 2014–20: the number of international collaboration papers increased from two to 17, the number of UK collaborating institutions increased from three to 12, and the number of international collaborating institutions increased from one to ten. We will encourage existing collaborations to continue in this productive vein and support the creation of new links as opportunities arise.

- The promotion of research and management activities that help to create a diverse and inclusive research culture. McIntosh and Jagger's current research project is specifically aimed at creating an inclusive environment for trans students and staff, and we see this as a model for the sorts of projects we might develop in the next few years. Studying issues of race, sexuality and gender keeps these issues at the forefront of our activity and consciousness.

Current and future research

The 2019 university restructuring left the School of HRP largely intact (now the School of Humanities), and growing relationships within the school are leading to joint publications, shared conferences and seminars. The CRiS already has links with local religious bodies that together deliver the Ebor Lecture series. Contacts with key local figures are beginning to suggest ways in which the research expertise in the department could be deployed to answer some of the pressing issues of our time.

In 2019 Kollontai, director of CRiS, spent several months as a resident researcher at the Centre for Theological Inquiry at Princeton University working on a series of publications related to her long-term interest in religion and peace-building. A jointly authored book (*On the Significance of Religion in Conflict and Conflict Resolution*, Routledge) was published in 2020 and more in the "Religion Matters" series are likely to emerge early in the next REF cycle and will be used as a basis for developing practical impacts in a range of contexts.

In 2019 McIntosh began a funded study entitled "Supporting Trans and Non-Binary Staff and Students in HE: Shaping Best Practice in Anglican Foundation Universities". The research is leading to a series of network events and material that can be used by religious professionals who support transgender people in a range of educational settings. This study exemplifies the likely nature of our research impacts in the next REF cycle.

In 2019 Village was part of the team from the Alister Hardy Trust who met for a two-day consultation with researchers from Boston University to explore the possibility of creating a new online database of current religious and political experiences. Such a database would offer a research resource for the future and be a way of engaging public interest, hopefully in a similar fashion to the original Hardy enterprise.

In 2019 Bourne was part of a collaborative bid entitled "The Forgiveness in Justice Project", working with colleagues in four other universities in the UK and USA.

In 2020 Jesson had a semester of academic leave to complete a book contract.

In May 2020 Village launched a survey, "Coronavirus, Church and You", in partnership with Warwick University and Bishop Grosseteste University, and the three institutions submitted a joint bid for funding for a follow-up survey to the UKRI COVID-19 call. The survey attracted over 7,000 responses and results were reported in the religious press. Village also oversaw parallel surveys among Roman Catholics in both the UK and the ROI. This is another example of research that is likely to benefit church communities as they respond in the longer term to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The School of Humanities includes researchers from several different UoAs in the current REF cycle (English Language and Literature, Geography, History, TRS). Since 2016, the School REF Working Group (chaired by Village) has brought together UoA leads on a regular basis to share experiences and explore possible cross-disciplinary projects. In 2020 the school received £10,300 QR funding for a short-term project entitled "Flood Futures York: Risk and Social Justice". Members of TRS worked with staff from Geography, History and English to create a broad-based initiative that involved stakeholders from across the city in an exercise to map out future research related to climate change. We see this sort of initiative as indicative of the kind of

collaborative, multidisciplinary, impactful research that we want to typify our UoA in the next five to ten years.

2. People

Staffing strategy

The changing circumstances of TRS since 2014 have resulted in a reduction in permanent academic staff from 16 (14.0 FTE) in 2014 to ten (8.2 FTE) in July 2020. Recruitment has been designed to ensure the viability of certain teaching areas but also to facilitate a move away from former areas of expertise to new areas linked to our changing profile. Where possible, staff have been recruited to permanent posts (2.8 FTE since 2014), but fixed-term appointments have been used where necessary to allow strategic developments in research expertise once existing areas have been taught out. The appointment to permanent posts of staff with research expertise in religion and philosophy and/or religion and ethics (Bourne, 2015; Nelstrop, 2017; Dawson, 2020) has allowed growth in these areas.

Equality and diversity

UoA31 sits within a broader context of support for equality and diversity at YSJU which has implemented several initiatives which ensure policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent. This is formalised in the YSJU Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy and the targets within the YSJU 2026 strategy (e.g., 10% BAME student and staff population; all staff are engaged in equality and diversity training and development appropriate to their role; median gender pay gap below 10%; 95% of staff think the university is a good place to work). Equality impact assessments are a routine part of annual monitoring and progress towards YSJU targets are reported to executive board and the governing body on a yearly basis. Of additional note, YSJU is a member of the Athena SWAN Charter (and is currently applying for a Bronze Award), a Stonewall Diversity Champion (ranked 49th place on the 2020 Top 100 Employers list) and Top 20 Trans employer, a Disability Confident employer, and a Mindful Employer. There are also several active staff networks available for staff to join that align with these awards and this agenda including the LGBT+, BAME and Disability staff networks.

Several of our staff are actively involved in promoting and managing equality and diversity at all levels of the university. For example, Bourne chaired the university's Race Equality Task Force 2018–19 and now chairs the Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team (SAT). McIntosh is the school representative on the SAT. She has also been active in organising International Women's Day, notably Sara Ahmed's public lecture in March 2020.

TRS complied fully with the YSJU institutional code of practice in selecting research outputs. The UoA lead also undertook Advance HE training on equality and mitigating bias as part of the role. Due to the small size of our submission, it is not possible to report a profile at UoA level here while also complying with HESA guidelines on anonymous reporting when presenting Equality and Diversity data (e.g., all our percentages would be based on less than 22.5 FTE). However, equality and diversity data for the UoA was reviewed internally following the completion of output selections and reported to both the SALT and Athena SWAN development groups as part of promoting greater diversity and inclusion at UoA, school, and institutional levels. Our data was also included as part of an equality and diversity impact assessment at institutional level.

Staff development

Staff have an annual personal development review (PDR), with research as an integral part. Topics discussed include reviewing progress, setting objectives for published outputs, research engagement (grant applications, PGR supervision, scholarship, knowledge exchange) and research development (external visibility, conference attendance, networking). YSJU is a signatory on the Vitae Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, which directly informs our staff development approach. Our centralised research CPD programme (over 40 sessions) is aligned to the four core Vitae competencies and recognises staff individual development needs while also acknowledging that a common set of requisite personal and

professional skills are needed for success. CPD delivery is mainly delivered by our professoriate and by external speakers (e.g. Professor Mark Reed delivered our impact workshop). Our new open data repository service (RaYDaR) and research repository (RaY) will further increase the impact and transparency of research at YSJU and support researcher development.

The PDR has supplemented by semi-formal “research conversations” held at least once a year with the head of school or their deputy and the SRL and/or research professors in TRS. These conversations are designed to allow staff to share their aspirations and interests, and to identify ways in which these can be supported by the department and school. Support can include:

- Academic leave. The university policy allows a continuous period of paid leave, normally up to one semester and not more than twelve months in duration, during which a member of academic staff is released from normal duties to complete an agreed programme of work as part of a planned research or professional practice project. Under this policy, Nelstrop spent three months at the Institute for the Study of Spirituality, KU Leuven, Belgium, in 2018, Kollontai took up a bursary to attend Princeton University, USA, from January to May 2019 and Jesson had a limited teaching load for one semester in 2020.
- Financial support for research trips and to attended conferences. The school funds trips to visit research collaborators in other universities, and for the purposes of collecting research data. Village visited South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the USA in 2014 as part of his work stemming from the Bible in the Church initiative of the Anglican Consultative Council. The school finances conference attendance where staff are delivering papers that are likely to lead to peer-reviewed outputs, and this has provided substantial support for TRS staff over the last six years. For example, since 2016 seven staff have been funded to attend 11 UK and six overseas conferences, with a total spend of around £9,364.
- Appointment of a research mentor. Any staff, but especially ECRs, can request specific support from a mentor. Mentors must have attended training for the role and are assigned mentees through a process of negotiation managed by the SRL. Mentors can help by discussing potential projects, suggesting funding routes, reviewing outputs, etc. In addition, some mentors are assigned specifically to help some staff negotiate promotion applications for associate or full professor.
- Funding for research trips, specialist support services and catalyst projects. The school has funded a range of research trips for data collection and access to specialist libraries, etc. In 2017, Village was funded to give access to a statistical support service, which enabled him to develop his expertise in a range of advanced statistical techniques.

TRS benefits from being part of the School of Humanities, which runs an annual research conference that enables staff (and PGRs) to share their research across disciplines. In addition, there have been various events at school and university level to help staff make time to research, such as the Just Write! retreats.

The university Research Office (RO) has a staff of seven and provides a range of development courses for staff and postgraduate researchers (PGRs). The staff continuing professional development (CPD) course for 2020–21 is based around the Vitae Research Development Framework (RDF) and includes 40+ sessions to be delivered over the academic year. Village and Kollontai both offer sessions in this programme. The RO also disseminates information on funding grants, as well as giving support in writing bids. The school research lead (SRL) is a professorial-level post that was created post 2016 to manage and promote research among staff and PGRs within the school. At the census date, the post was held by Kollontai from TRS. The SRL arranges research mentoring (by trained senior staff with proven research experience) for more inexperienced researchers as well as working with the RO to ensure training programmes and support are in line with current needs.

PGR support

The majority of PGRs in TRS are doctoral students on part-time programmes. During the REF period (1 Aug 2013- 31 July 2020) we have had 21 PhDs (13 PT), eight PDs (only PT on this programme) and two MA by Research (MAREs) students registered at some point. Of the 29 doctoral students, there have been nine completions and 11 are still current. This compares to two completions from 2008 to 2014.

YSJU has well-established processes for induction, training, and monitoring of PGR students. Formal reviews of PGR student progress are conducted every six months by academics external to the supervisory team. Progress is monitored centrally four times a year (by Research Degree Committee). All supervisory meetings are logged. Supervisory teams are made up of multiple academic staff from the PGR student supervisory register. To be added to the register, staff are required to meet stringent criteria for PGR supervision eligibility pertaining to engagement in research, continual professional development and formal YJSU training. Endorsement from Heads of School or School Research Leads is also required. Applications are assessed by a central committee of senior research staff (again, by Research Degree Committee). It is mandatory that all supervisory teams have at least one member of staff with experienced supervisory status (have previously supervised a PhD student to successful completion). In addition, all PGR students have a PGR tutor who is available to provide support outside of the supervisory team.

All students undertake needs analysis periodically and an individually tailored training programme is created. The needs analysis is based on competencies in the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Support is provided by supervisory teams and via a centralised PGR training programme that includes core and supplementary workshops at each year of study. Like our staff training programme, our PGT training programme aligns with the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Core parts of the programme include Research Ethics and Integrity, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for Research, Data Management, and Copyright and Intellectual Property rights. These sessions are compulsory for all PGR students.

A range of other central and local support is available to PGR students that include (1) access to centralised services (e.g. Student Services, Chaplaincy, Library and Learning Services, Careers); (2) access to a stipend of up to £900 (£450 part-time) to support travel and consumables associated with their research and professional development; (3) access to the YJSU Graduate Centre providing study space and remote access to a range of specialist software; (4) opportunity to complete a postgraduate certificate in academic practice to achieve associate fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA); (5) administrative support provided by the School and Research Office and (6) various PGR events held throughout the year (e.g., Three Minute Thesis (3MT), Bake Your Thesis, and the annual PGR conference).

The success of this training and support system for PGRs has been reflected in the results of the annual Postgraduate Research Experience Survey. In 2018 (the last year for which we have school-level information), YJSU had the following satisfaction scores based on 49 responses (national averages in parentheses): supervision 94% (86%), resources 90% (79%), research culture 70% (63%), progress and assessment 91% (80%), responsibilities 89% (78%), research skills 88% (86%), professional development 75% (79%), overall 96% (80%). The Humanities, Religion and Philosophy School results were above average for supervision 98% and research skills 93%.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities**Research income**

Research income to TRS since 2014 has totalled £213,965. This included:

- A two-and-a-half-year study by Village of the Accompanied Ministry Programme in Truro Diocese (£65,810). This involved working closely with the diocese to assess the impact of the programme on participants and their parishes, as well as the constraints on successful outcomes. The research not only generated published outputs, but more importantly enabled the team delivering the programme to make evidence-based changes to delivery going forward.

- A two-year study by McIntosh on transgender support in higher education (£30,710 from Church Universities Fund Committee). This on-going study is based on interviewing transgender students and staff, as well as listening to those who support transgendered people in universities. It aims to generate guidelines based on best practice observed during the research.
- The remaining income was from smaller projects, other work by Village (totalling £40,764) and research by Kim (£35,747), Simpson (£146) and Kollontai & Kim (£40,788).

We have made nine competitive funding bids since 2014, increasing our collaborative bids with other universities (including bids with University of Warwick and University of Nottingham) and seeking to diversify our income stream with four bids to research councils.

Infrastructure

a. Centre for Religion in Society (CRiS)

Our impact strategy for the next REF cycle is to use CRiS as the main vehicle for managing and achieving research impact. The centre has a website that maintains a blog and various resources related to “religion, peace and reconciliation”, “creative media, arts and peace-building” and “religion in the public sphere”.

b. Ebor Lectures

Since 2006 the Ebor Lectures have provided a space for discussion and debate about a wide range of issues related to the role of religion in contemporary societies by inviting well-known public figures and academics to give public lectures in York Ministry or the university. Over the last six years we have helped to produce annual series on diverse topics such as austerity, global security and education. YSJU is a key player in this network and we hope to continue to evolve the nature of the activities to enable more impact in the future. A new venture in our 2019 series, “Science: Wonder, Gift & Challenge”, was a family event that preceded a lecture by Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ, director of the Vatican Observatory, whose research studies meteorites and asteroids.

Facilities

YSJU has made great progress in increasing the availability of resources (especially online) in areas related to our research. This represents the growing importance of research generally at the university in the current REF cycle. Across the university, journal subscriptions rose from 33,000 to 64,000 from 2014–15 to 2018–19. Over the same period, spend on information provision and access rose by 40%. Spending on specific TRS resources has been £197,222 over the last three years.

For TRS, some of the key subscriptions that have become available in the last five years include: Taylor & Francis Social Sciences & Humanities and Science & Technology collections, Wiley Online Library, SAGE Premier, Oxford University Press Archive, LGBT Magazine Archive and The Philosopher’s Index with Full Text. Evidence-based acquisition programmes (EBAs) with Cambridge University Press, Oxford Scholarship Online and JSTOR e-books have made a wide range of relevant scholarships available to researchers and ensured that key titles are then added to the library stock. These changes represent a major improvement in key facilities available to TRS staff and PGRs.

A notable spending commitment by the university is to allow unlimited inter-library loan (ILL) requests for all staff and PGRs. Our proximity to the British Library at Boston Spa means we can obtain most items within a few days. Where it is not possible to obtain an ILL, the university has committed other funds to purchasing the item where it is available. The library will also send items by post to the home addresses of staff and PGRs, a great help for some of our PT PGRs who live some distance from York. This has been especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we were well-placed to cope with this crisis.

In preparation for applying for RDAP in 2015, the university created the Academic Profile System (APS), which was used to collect and collate information about staff research activity and outputs. Village was in charge of research metrics for the university until 2016 and has since used the APS to manage the early stage of our REF preparation. More recently, the university research repository, Research at York St John (RaY) has been used to manage research outputs. Dedicated administrators ensure the information is up to date and complies with copyright regulations.

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

Research collaborations

TRS has a wide range of long-standing and short-term collaborations with universities and institutions in the UK and elsewhere. As a small higher education institution, we value these connections, which give our staff access to wider facilities and help with funding bids to external bodies. Among these are:

Religion and peace-building

Kollontai has been involved with academics from various countries in several publishing initiatives. In Israel she has worked with Kaye College in 2014–15 to organise the 2nd Consultation on Multiculturalism; with the Department of Religious Studies at the Bethlehem University on a joint funding bid to the British Academy in 2014; and with Bar-Ilan University (and the University of Birmingham) in contributing to an edited collection (Gross, Z. & Davies, L. [eds] [2016] *The Contested Role of Education and Conflict and Fragility*). In 2017 she helped to organise a symposium on “Rights, dignity and morality: Chinese and Western perspectives”, a collaboration between YSJU, Tongji University, China, the University of Otago, New Zealand, the Australian Catholic University, Australia, and the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, Hong Kong. The edited collection from this symposium was published in 2019. More recently Kollontai has worked with Dr Christine Schliesser (University of Zurich, Germany) and Dr Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana (Georgetown University, USA) in developing an interdisciplinary book series published by Routledge, *Religion Matters: On the Significance of Religion in Global Issues*, aimed at promoting collaboration and dialogue between academics, policy makers and practitioners in relation to the role of religion in helping with the development of the UN 17 Strategic Development Goals.

The University of Warwick

The collaboration between Village and Professor Leslie Francis at the University of Warwick has been running for over ten years. Village was associate fellow at Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU) until 2019 (when the unit closed), and Francis is still visiting professor at YSJU. The collaboration draws on Village’s expertise in quantitative analysis of large and complex datasets, resulting in over 20 jointly published articles in the current REF cycle in areas related to church schools and Christian ministry. In addition, access to datasets collected jointly with Professor Francis (such as the 2013 *Church Times* survey) and with Dr Sylvia Baker, an associate fellow at Warwick, has enabled Village to publish a further ten articles or books related to attitudes and beliefs among churchgoers. This productive collaboration has been supported by the department, who have paid travel costs and allowed research leave to enable Village to attend numerous research meetings.

National Church Life Survey (NCLS) in Australia

This collaboration began at the start of this REF cycle when Village visited NCLS Sydney in 2014. The collaboration has allowed him to analyse the very large datasets collected by NCLS in 2011 and 2016 to test theories related to religion, migration and social capital, and various aspects of psychology and religion among clergy and congregations. It has so far produced five joint peer-reviewed articles.

Other collaborations

Between 2014 and 2016, Don Macdonald (Seattle Pacific University, USA) and Chris Sink (Old Dominion University, USA) came to YSJU to collaborate with McIntosh to develop work on John

Macmurray and relations theory. This resulted in a joint publication: McIntosh, E., MacDonald, D., & Sink, C. (2016). "Macmurray on Relationality: A Tool for Systems Theory?" *Philosophy and Theology*, 28(1), 207–224.

Maunder has a long-standing interest in Marian studies; his collaborations with other scholars made him ideally suited to edit *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, published in 2019. There were 37 contributors from countries including UK, USA, Canada, Philippines, Taiwan, France, Switzerland, Mexico, Australia, the Netherlands, Belgium and Finland.

In 2019, McIntosh worked with colleagues from Chester, Coventry and Exeter universities on an Arts and Humanities Research Council networking grant on "Critical Whiteness and Theology", while Jesson applied for a similar grant with colleagues from Durham, Edinburgh and Cambridge. In the same year, Bourne was part of a large Economic and Social Research Council collaborative research bid with four other universities related to restorative justice.

In 2020, Village was part of a joint bid with the University of Warwick and Bishop Grosseteste University to the Research UK initiative related to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also organised the "Coronavirus, Church and You" online survey in conjunction with Leslie Francis at Warwick, and this resulted in a range of outputs.

Networks and partnerships

Ebor Lectures

The Ebor Lectures are a joint venture between TRS at YSJU, York Minster, The Order of Carmelites, The Yorkshire North and East District of the Methodist Church and the C & JB Morrell Trust. This long-standing venture promotes public lectures in York Minister or YSJU related broadly to the place of religion in society. Each year there is a different theme and since 2014 these have covered: "The Morality of Austerity" (2014), "The Role of Education in Public Life" (2015), "Global Security" (2016), "Journeys of Change" (2017), "Peace and Reconciliation" (2018) and "Science: Wonder, Gift & Challenge" (2019). Speakers since 2014 have included well-known academics (e.g., Tariq Modood, Martyn Percy, Eamon Duffy and David Wilkinson) and public figures (e.g., Tony Campolo, Michael Morpurgo, Frank Field MP, Julia Neuberger and Ruth Gledhill). The lectures usually attract several hundred people and have resulted in edited collections based on the lectures given.

Church of England

Village has developed relationships with the Church of England, directly and indirectly, that have enabled him to employ his research expertise and experience to help dioceses. These form the basis of one of our Impact Case Studies. Work with York Diocese in the past has included a study of attitudes towards lay participation in Church schools (2012) and there was a second study related to freewill offering in 2014 the "Parishes and Schools Survey" (2012) and the "Generous Churches Making and Nurturing Disciples: Feedback on the Freewill Offering Process" (2014). The study of the Accompanied Ministry Development programme in the Diocese of Truro from 2015 to 2018 was funded by the St Luke's College foundation. At a national level, Village was invited to be part of the Church of England's advisory board for the Living Ministry programme. His expertise in surveys and the analysis of survey data has helped to support the workers on this project, which is aimed at improving the understanding of, and training for, Anglican ministry. In May 2020 he ran a survey through the *Church Times* examining responses to the COVID-19 pandemic among churchgoers.

The Alister Hardy Trust (AHT)

The AHT administers the database of reported religious experiences collected by Alister Hardy in the 1960s and by others since then. Village was invited to the board of trustees in 2016 and is currently vice-chair. His expertise in handling various forms of quantitative and qualitative data helps the trust to plan strategies for expanding and using the database.

Other networks and partnerships

CRiS is in the process of setting up official partnerships with the Inter-Faith Network UK and the Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Staff in TRS also contribute to various academic networks:

- Bourne was elected to the committee of the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics and was part of the founding meeting of the Theology and Criminology Network.
- McIntosh was elected a member of the advisory board for The Global Network for Public Theology in 2020. She is a seminar convenor with the Society for the Study of Theology, from which new work on feminist trauma theology is emerging.
- Village was on the committee of the International Society for Empirical Research in Theology (ISERT) until 2016.

Wider activities and contributions

Hosting conferences

Although facilities for large conferences are limited at YSJU, TRS staff have organised conferences and study days during this REF cycle:

- In 2014, Village organised the ISERT biennial conference in York and Maunder organised a conference on The Virgin Mary in Britain and Ireland.
- In 2015, Kim and Kollontai organised the 5th International Conference on Peace and Reconciliation, hosted at YSJU.
- In 2016–2017, Kollontai was co-organiser of an International Symposium on Dignity, Morality and Rights-talk: An Integration of Christian Theology and Western-Chinese Cross-cultural Dialogue.
- In 2019, Mcintosh co-organised events for LGBT History Month and International Women's Day, and Maunder ran a study day at Sarum College, Salisbury. In 2020 internationally renowned speaker Sara Ahmed took part in the LGBT History Month events.
- Kollontai organised an interdisciplinary and international symposium for May 2020, Religion in Globalised Societies: The Challenges of the Theory-Praxis-Policy Nexus, which was cancelled due to the pandemic.

Journal editing and peer review

Members of TRS have acted as peer reviewers for at least 30 different journals in the last five years and book project reviewers for publishers including Palgrave Macmillan, Routledge and T & T Clark. McIntosh has recently been appointed to the editorial board of a new international book series on Political and Public Theologies with the Centre for Theology and Public Issues (CTPI), University of Edinburgh, to be published with Brill. Village was editor of *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* from 2012 to 2019 and is on the editorial board of *Journal of Beliefs & Values* and *Rural Theology*.