

Institution: Bangor University (10007857)
Unit of Assessment: UoA27 English language and literature
<p>Section 1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Continuing Bangor's strategy of aligning key areas of strength in REF2014, this submission encompasses a range of thematically-linked research from across the Arts and Humanities at Bangor undertaken by researchers in English Literature and Creative Writing, Film, History and Music. This strategic drive towards cross-disciplinary, complementary research fosters innovative thinking, enhances impact and maximises the research potential of smaller discipline areas resulting in a 38.2% increase in FTE submitted from 13.6 (REF2014) to 18.8 (REF2021). Our strategy since 2014 has focused on consolidating and expanding strengths, with high priority given to increasing our substantial research outputs and growing research impact. Since REF2014 the unit as a whole has produced over 222 outputs, including 41 monographs, over 70 peer-reviewed journal articles, over 110 book chapters, as well as edited volumes, and special journal issues.</p> <p>This demonstrates Bangor University's commitment to the sustainability of research and impact across the disciplines and will remain the core strategy into the next cycle (specified in a College-wide Research and Impact Strategy document). The aim is to enable individual excellence and collaborative innovation with a continued focus on key strengths and emerging areas of expertise within the College of Arts, Humanities, and Business. The College provides a central support system including a dedicated research support officer, and supports research, impact, and postgraduate researchers with three College Directors for these areas; their responsibilities are mirrored by dedicated officers at School level.</p> <p>This strategy, which aligns with key UKRI funding principles as well as the four pillars of HEFCW's 'Vision for Research and Innovation in Wales' (Excellence; Place; Innovation; Collaboration), has enabled the creation of a sustainable, culturally diverse portfolio of research which reflects the historic strengths of Bangor University and impacts on culture, society and the arts in national and international contexts. Researchers interact with and draw upon the distinctly Welsh culture of Bangor's location and situate it within the global context. They engage with colleagues across the Arts and Humanities and further collaborate with those in the Social Sciences. This results in innovative research, which is relevant to current global concerns, and a long chronological research frame from the medieval period to today. There are three key interconnected areas of strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material Texts and Material Culture (Claydon, Cunningham, Durrant; Hagger; Johns; Koehler; McCue, Niebrzydowski; Radulescu; Thorstad; Wilcox) • Cultural Connections: Wales, Europe and the World (Abrams; Claydon; Conran; Hagger; Hiscock; Radulescu; Roberts; Skoulding; Thomas; Thorstad; Webb) • Creative Writing and Film (Abrams; Conran; Frame; Price; Rumens; Skoulding) <p>Research in these areas is fostered through the work of five research centres founded and directed by our staff, who provide leadership in a rich research environment, enhanced research training opportunities for PG training and staff and ideal hubs for the growth of research impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Stephen Colclough Centre for the History of the Book • The Centre for Arthurian Studies • The R. S. Thomas Centre • ContemPo – The Centre for Contemporary Poetry

- Centre for Film, Television and Screen Studies

These clusters and their affiliated centres, explored below, build on research collaborations, nationally and internationally, and are central to our growth strategy in recruiting postgraduate researchers, developing large grant capture, and fostering collaborations institutionally and further afield.

Material Texts and Material Culture

Research in this area brings together expertise in literary and historical texts and contexts across centuries, with a focus on materiality, adopting a historicist perspective, including the editing of early texts and music. There is particular strength in the area of medieval and early modern studies, building on the interdisciplinary research collaborations fostered in the former Institute for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (IMEMS; 2006-2018, directed by **Claydon**, **Radulescu** and **Wilcox**), with the National Library of Wales, the Bangor University Library, Archives and Special Collections, and several other repository libraries that **Radulescu** has worked with as a member of the Association for Manuscripts and Archives in Research Collections. Ground-breaking research is focused on key editing projects in medieval music and theorizing the medieval manuscript miscellany (**Cunningham** and **Radulescu**, respectively) and material objects used in communication (**Johns**'s work on medieval seals and gender; and **Koehler**'s on Victorian communication in the age of the postal system). Research impact in this cluster has arisen from the IMEMS Hengwrt Chaucer Project at the National Library of Wales [see REF3_2] led by **Niebrzydowski**.

Emerging new areas of enquiry in this cluster are evident in the work of ECR **Durrant**'s research on the use and re-use of early printed Welsh bibles from the Bangor University collection. His second research project, which crosses over early modern sociology and the (material) printed text, involves a funded Manchester-led collaboration with Manchester University, on the topic of secrecy and Masonic networks. **Koehler** has recently been elected to the editorship of the *Thomas Hardy Journal* (a journal for both the scholarly community and the general public), which marks her as an emerging research leader in the field. Furthermore, **Koehler**'s research on Victorian communication media and technologies, her new British Academy grant focusing on the history and culture of engineering bridges in Wales and new AHRC networks grant, along with **McCue**'s BA-funded work on nineteenth-century periodicals bring research in this cluster forward chronologically and present new opportunities for interdisciplinary projects.

Going forward, this research cluster seeks to increase capacity and grant capture, drawing particularly on the synergies between key research centres and Bangor University's Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates (ISWE) (on whose steering committee **Niebrzydowski** sits) and working closely with the Archives and Special Collections to improve access to and use of the rare materials in research projects and impact activities. Additionally, Bangor University aims to consolidate the unit's international standing in book history through public events locally, nationally (including PGR training in collaboration with the National Library of Wales) and internationally (including the biennial Early Book Society conference to be hosted in July 2021 by **Radulescu**). Significant investment in the development of the Library, Archives and Special Collections, as well as new donations and acquisitions have enhanced research expertise and strengths in these areas. They have also enabled the foundation of two new research centres that foster activities in this research cluster:

The '[Stephen Colclough Centre for the History and Culture of the Book](#)', founded by the late Dr Stephen Colclough, and launched in 2016, is now co-directed by **Niebrzydowski**. The Centre builds on the 'Cultures of the Written Artefact' cluster, formerly part of IMEMS, which provided the environment for the Hengwrt Chaucer Project [see REF3_2]. The Centre also runs a series of public 'Shankland Lectures' in the historic reading room of Bangor University's library, increases the digital accessibility of research resources, hosts research and PGR training conferences and symposia, and participates in external events by invitation (e.g. 'Leafing Through the History of the Book', Hay-on-Wye, 2018).

The '[Centre for Arthurian Studies](#)', founded and directed by **Radulescu** since 2016, builds on a long-standing international profile in the field since the inception of Bangor University and on strong collaborations with the International Arthurian Society, the International Celtic Congress and Celtic Studies Associations across the world. The donation of the Flintshire Harries Arthurian collection in 2015 and **Radulescu's** roles as President of the British Branch of the International Arthurian Society (2015-18) and editor of the *Journal of the International Arthurian Society* (2011-17), and the society's decision to place its archives in the custody of the Centre have enhanced the Centre's international standing. Its numerous research events (lectures, conferences), PGR training and work with schools and heritage have increased research impact [see **REF3_2**]. Future opportunities for building highly impactful research are present in **Radulescu's** collaborative project with Royal Mail on a limited series of stamps, and the invitation to host the 27th triennial International Arthurian Congress in 2024.

Cultural Connections: Wales, Europe and the World

Research in this area focuses on the literary and historical negotiation of cultural boundaries within Wales and beyond. In the context of Wales, the interface between linguistic and cultural communities is explored in **Abrams's** work on the Jewish communities in Wales and **Webb's** focus on Welsh writing in English, in particular Edward Thomas, Dylan Thomas and Lynette Roberts. A Welsh medieval focus is seen in BA postdoctoral researcher **Thomas's** work on the political relation between Wales and the wider world and Welsh identity in medieval texts, and **Robert's** research into collective identities in medieval Europe.

Trans-national and cross-linguistic work on the culture and institutions of medieval and early modern Britain within the European context includes seminal work by **Hagger** on Norman rule in Normandy, **Thorstad's** work on the sixteenth-century travelling household and **McCue's** research on the interface between British and Italian culture in the nineteenth century. **Hiscock** has undertaken two major projects in this field exploring the reception of Ariosto's 'Orlando Furioso in English culture and the Marie Curie Sklowodska-funded 'The Court of Elizabeth I: A European Drama' (at Montpellier III).

Skoulding's expertise in creative adaptation, experimentation and inter-cultural dialogue is the foundation for networking events and conferences such as Poetry and Sound in Expanded Translation in 2018, which included public readings. Seminars have regularly been linked with public performances, for example, multimedia poets Olga Pek (Czech Republic) and Zuzana Husárová (Slovakia) followed by a performance in the Arts Council Wales-funded North Wales International Poetry Festival in Bangor, and Samira Negrouche (Algeria) performed in Theatr Arad Goch in Aberystwyth after her talk as part of a project with Literature Across Frontiers. This connection led to **Skoulding** and Negrouche's 2019 training workshop for literary translators in the same venue as Wales Literature Exchange.

Research in this cluster benefits from the activities of the Centre for Arthurian Studies and the Stephen Colclough Centre for the History of the Book, as well as:

The '[R. S. Thomas Centre](#)', co-directed by Tony Brown, now Emeritus Professor, was founded in 2000 following the appointment of R. S. Thomas to an Honorary Professorship. The Centre, like the Centre for Arthurian Studies, is unique in the world; it includes all aspects of Thomas's work and hosts rare materials that attract international researchers and collaborations, as well as creating impact through the organisation of local and national events. The Centre fosters work in the area of Welsh Writing in English with dedicated facilities to researchers working on Thomas's archive as well as supporting PGR research. The Centre is currently advising on the renovation of Thomas's house, Sarn-Y-Plas, by the National Trust.

Creative Writing and Film

Research in this area explores the creative process and includes internationally respected practice as research, as well as research into creative practice and authorship / auteurship

across a variety of genres and media. Areas of specialism include intercultural representation, class, and bilingualism in Wales. Writers from Bangor work with prestigious institutions in the UK and abroad, such as the Society of Authors, the Poetry Society, the Southbank Centre, the Hay Festival and the Institut Français. They are frequently invited to read, perform and discuss their work at international festivals in Europe and Latin America, supported by Wales Arts International and the British Council. Creative writers' work often relates to a Welsh background or landscape, such as **Conran's** prize-winning first novel, *Pigeon*, **Rumens's** acclaimed collection *Animal People* and **Skoulding's** 2020 Wales Book of the Year Poetry Award. Research in poetry focuses on experimental ecopoetics, and translation as a creative practice. The ongoing strategy in this area is to foster key themes of creative translation, ecopoetics and place, and explore anticolonial synergies in a global context.

Research and practice in the area of creative writing interfaces well with work in the area of film and screen with a complementary focus on the creative process. There is a core specialism in the study of Anglo-American film, with work on filmmaking and the industry, authorship, representations of stereotypes and history on film, and the screenplay. **Abrams, Frame, and Price** all have research interests that are significantly though not exclusively focused on American artistic and intellectual cultures. Recent book publications by **Abrams** (*Stanley Kubrick, Eyes Wide Shut*) and **Price** (*Storyboarding, Robert De Niro at Work*) are strongly focused on archival research and on exploring the relationships between precursor texts (storyboards, screenplay drafts, meetings, etc.) and realized films. **Frame's** *The American President in Film and Television: Myth, Politics and Representation* was runner-up in the 2016 British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies' Best Monograph Awards. Research in this area has led to significant international collaborations and ongoing research impact, such as that arising from participation in the public Festival No. 6 and, in conjunction with BAFTA, hosting *Keeping Faith* and film composer Samuel Sim. Through extensive public engagement, **Abrams** has helped to increase public understanding of Stanley Kubrick's work, especially concerning the role of ethnicity. Both **Abrams**, as co-founder of *Jewish Film and Media*, and **Price**, as editor of the *Journal of Screenwriting*, have been involved in editing and managing the key journals in their fields. Success in this area also includes the work of award-winning students (who have won BAFTA awards among other prizes), extensive industry links (BBC, Chwarel, Barcud, Cwmni Da, The Daily Telegraph) and postgraduate work placements (Llangollen International Eisteddfod).

Research in this cluster is enhanced through the work of two research centres:

ContemPo, the [Centre for Contemporary Poetry](#), founded in 2006, connects Bangor with the universities of Aberystwyth, Brighton, Plymouth and Surrey, and is directed by **Skoulding**. It hosts a series of video-linked seminars, symposia and conference panels on critical and practice-based poetics research in five UK universities. Invited poets and critics from the UK, USA, Africa and Europe have contributed talks, including the distinguished poet and translator Peter Hughes, visiting writer at Bangor 2018-19. Seminars also provide valuable presentation experiences for our own postgraduates. Having run for 15 years via university videoconferencing suites, ContemPo has moved to Zoom in 2020 and seen an expansion in audiences, which now include 40-50 academics from institutions across the world and poet practitioners.

The **Centre for Film, Television and Screen Studies**, founded in 2019, formalizes links across the university and beyond in terms of the study of different forms of media but most prominently film. Co-directed by **Abrams** and **Frame** and further including **Price**, it serves as a platform for organising further research and networking developments across Bangor University. The Centre hosts a dedicated seminar series, with academics and industry professionals, as well as various academic events on *The American New Wave: A Retrospective* (2017), *2001: Beyond 50* (2018), and *40 Years of Alien* (2019). The first and third of these have led to forthcoming edited collections of original essays, published by Bloomsbury Academic and Oxford University Press, respectively. The Centre's research income has been enhanced through grants from the British Academy; the

Rothschild Foundation Europe; the US Embassy in London/British Association for American Studies Small Grants; the British Association for American Studies Conference Organisation and the British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies.

Research policies

As outlined in REF5A, research in these areas is supported at University level with mechanisms to ensure research integrity through the University Ethics committee, as well as Codes of Practice and Policies covering Research Ethics, Academic Integrity in Research and Research Data Management. Each academic school has a dedicated Research Ethics Officer who is the main point of contact for queries and referral of proposals to the College Ethics Committee. Publication is undertaken in line with Bangor University's Open Access Policy. Beyond the oversight at University and College level, researchers are regularly made aware of the Codes of Practice and Policies relating to research. These are factored into staff and PGR research training programmes and updates on any changes are highlighted in staff bulletins. Peer review, both internal and external, is central to all aspects of research to ensure both quality and integrity.

Section 2. People

Staffing strategy

The unit's staffing strategy is geared to promote and support excellent research of national and international significance, to maintain strength and depth across areas of world-leading excellence, and to advance local and global engagement and impact. Along with fostering the unit's expertise in the established strength areas, it is central to develop the research profiles of ECRs through mentoring and leadership. Since 2014 Bangor University appointed three ECRs to strategic posts in order to enhance research strengths in key areas of this unit (**Durrant, Thorstad, Thomas**). **Durrant** works on seventeenth-century print culture and the material text; **Thorstad** brings new expertise in late medieval and Tudor history, and **Thomas's** British Academy postdoctoral fellowship has enhanced our Anglo-Norman and Anglo-Welsh research.

The success of this staffing strategy is seen in the fact that 100% of submitted researchers are on permanent contracts. Beyond the three ECR appointments, this REF period saw two retirements, several staff moving to part-time or to a full-time permanent contract from a temporary part-time one, and three junior staff moving to positions elsewhere. The total of 21 staff now submitted includes eight professors, three readers, three senior lecturers, six lecturers, and one British Academy postdoctoral fellow. Researchers have been supported in their career progression, with eleven being promoted in the REF window since 2014: **Conran, McCue** and **Webb** to Senior Lecturer; **Cunningham** to Senior Lecturer in 2015 and subsequently to Reader in 2018; **Hagger** to Reader; **Niebrzydowski** and **Skoulding** to Reader and subsequently to Professor; **Abrams, Price** and **Radulescu** to Professor; **Frame** and **Roberts** have also moved between Lecturer 1 and Lecturer 2 in the same window.

Staff development

As an institution with a strong track record in world-leading research and a signatory since 2019 to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, Bangor University is committed to staff support at institutional, College and School levels (REF5A). Central to this is the **role of senior academics in mentoring early and mid-career researchers**. This is done formally through the annual Professional Development Review process which involves careful career planning, publication milestones, impact and grant capture, workload management and identification of development needs. Early career staff are mentored by the Directors of Research and Impact in each discipline area and School, as well as senior staff involved in

directing relevant Research Centres at Bangor. ECRs are encouraged to take leadership roles in the organization of collaborative research events, with **Durrant** running a research seminar series for the literature area, and **Thorstad** leading another for medieval/early modern history. ECRs are further supported to take leadership roles in research impact lectures and events, for example, **Durrant** led on organising Shakespeare's Globe on Tour visit (2019), mentored by **Wilcox**.

Researchers in this unit also benefit from a study leave scheme which allowed ten members of staff during the current REF period to undertake a sustained programme of intensive research, leading to substantial progress in publications, impact development and grant applications. Outcomes include the publication of monographs, several major edited volumes, and grants including a Marie Curie fellowship (**Hiscock**); AHRC network (**Skoulding**); and AHRC Leadership fellowship (**Skoulding**). Research staff are expected and encouraged to protect at least one day per week to focus on research during teaching-intensive periods, in addition to the more coherent research periods outside teaching weeks, in order to retain research momentum (including the preparation of large grant applications) and maintain the vigour of a research-led teaching environment. To enable this, teaching is strategically supported by graduate teaching assistants.

PGRs

The provision for postgraduate researchers within this unit is of international standing. 51 PhDs were awarded in the period, representing an increase of 240% since REF 2014 (15 PhDs). PGR students at Bangor benefit from a generic institution-wide training programme with workshops held throughout the year, and more discipline-specific College-based guidance, plus a School-based team of expert supervisors. **PGRs are fully integrated into the research culture of their Schools and the College more widely** and are encouraged to attend research seminars, conferences and other research events at Bangor and elsewhere. Students complete an annual progress review each year that is chaired by a member of staff not involved in the supervisory team. The chair receives confidential reports from the student and the lead supervisor, and will act on any issues or conflicts that arise. The meeting discusses the students' progress, addresses training needs, and discusses skills and career development.

Our PGRs have benefited from the support of prestigious competitive funding linked to Bangor University (PhD scholarship from The Worshipful Company of Drapers, awarded to the Centre for Arthurian Studies; Bangor University 125 Anniversary scholarships) and international PhD awards (China, Jordan, Thai, Ghana, Malaysia Government Funding Scholarship awards). Successful PhD supervision by members of this unit has led to invitations to examine theses nationally and internationally, in Wales, the United Kingdom (Queen's Belfast, Birmingham, Cambridge, Oxford, Durham, Royal Holloway, University of London, Sussex), Ireland, Europe, Canada, Japan, China and Australia.

Our doctoral students are successful in the academic and commercial job market with most employed within 6 months of completion. Many PGRs have gone on to lecturing positions in the UK and internationally (in this REF period, two AHRC-funded doctoral students have since secured lecturing jobs at Bangor University, as well as published significant outputs; two others are now Senior Lecturers in Film and Media at other HEIs); others have taken up posts in allied professions including curatorships at prestigious museums and repository libraries (including year-long projects at the British Library), and academic book publishing (Commissioning Editor at Palgrave). All PhD programmes have resulted in prestigious publications, some of which have received prizes; for instance, PGR work in film studies received awards from BAFTA and the Royal Television Society, was screened at world-class festivals, and secured development funding from the BFI and BAFTA.

This high level of success at PGR level has been achieved by a significant range of discipline-specific support and training. This includes innovative training through competitive funding provided by Bangor University internships (**Abrams, Durrant, Niebrzydowski, Radulescu**), which are frequently linked with the research centres and Bangor University Library Archive. Projects have included cataloguing and digitising the Flintshire Harries Arthurian Collection and rare books for the Colclough Centre; editorship of a research centre newsletter; organising research conferences and public events; and training through teamwork in impact events [see **REF3_1**]. There is also regular medieval manuscript palaeography and early printed books training organised by **Durrant, Niebrzydowski** and **Radulescu** at the National Library of Wales, John Rylands Library, Chetham Library and in situ at Bangor.

PGRs also benefit from training in the area of editing and publishing texts, with graduates going on to careers in publishing (e.g. Steiner and Bell; Palgrave), with some having returned to give workshops on careers to current students, and collaborations with the Society of Young Publishers who came to give a workshop as part of the Shankland lecture series in 2019. PGRs are also mentored by staff to encourage leadership of research reading groups, as well as assisting with editing research journals (e.g. *Journal of the International Arthurian Society*), the in-house PGR journal *Dovetail* (founded 2011) and co-organising the annual interdisciplinary postgraduate conference 'Medievalism transformed' (2005-), which covers all aspects of adaptation and appropriation of themes and motifs in all disciplines, medieval to modern, attracting up to 150 participants. There is also support for PGRs to present work in local research seminar series in each discipline area, but also in research centre-led series and events, or research networks led by staff in the unit (e.g. creative writing workshops and the AHRC network events 'Poetry in Expanded Translation' led by **Skoulding**; 'Dirt and Taboo' gender studies conference, organised by **Niebrzydowski**; 'Trust and Risk in Literature' international network running between Bangor, Aarhus, Kofu University in Japan and University of California, Irvine, co-directed by founding member **Wilcox**; 'King Arthur in Wales and Beyond' symposium, organised by **Radulescu**; BA-funded 'British Jewish Contemporary Cultures' led by **Abrams**).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Principles of equality and respect for diversity are at the heart of this unit, with a pronounced ethos of openness, inclusivity and cultural awareness across the disciplines that is also reflected in research, for example, by **Abrams's** work in the area of Jewish Studies and **Johns's** work on gender. The gender balance across the unit (based on head count) is 47.6% male / 52.4% female. Concerning PGRs, the profile is balanced equally. Of those promoted in this cycle, it is 54.5% male / 45.5% female. At professorial level it is 44.4% male / 55.6% female. Of the new appointments in this cycle, 66.7% are female. Senior roles held by our female researchers (**Niebrzydowski; Radulescu; Skoulding**) provide strong role models for others. The profile of researchers in the submission concerning nationality is diverse with 20% from outside the UK, resulting in an international and culturally sensitive outlook. Furthermore, 29% are either native or fluent Welsh speakers with a notable commitment to learning the language to a high level. All Schools adhere to Bangor University's Welsh-English bilingual ethos, ensuring staff can communicate in the language of their choice.

All Schools involved in this submission are committed to the principles of equality, diversity and social inclusion embedded in the mission statement of Bangor University, aligned with Athena SWAN charter principles. Each School has a nominated Athena Swan / Equality Lead who sits on the College-level Equality, Diversity & Sustainability Committee and takes the lead on developing School-level submissions to Athena Swan. Two submissions for Bronze awards are underway. Each Head of School is tasked with ensuring that staff are aware of and comply with Bangor University's Equal Opportunities and Harassment and Bullying policies, Welsh Language policy, and other relevant policies and procedures. The HoS must also ensure that an ethos of equal opportunity is supported and fostered by enabling issues to be safely raised and resolved, and strategically reviewing initiatives and decision-making to ensure all obligations are met.

Equality of Opportunity concerning research support, access to facilities and input into research management structures is embedded in the committee structures and practices for managing research. Gender balance of committee membership is also comparable to wider staffing, and %FTE (or temporary reduction in hours) is not a factor when deciding eligibility for committee membership. All research-management committees are held in 'family friendly' hours and staff are made aware of flexible working policies to balance caring responsibilities and career progression. Support is given to staff taking parental/adoption leave; maternity pay is available from the first day of employment and pre- and post-maternity support and advice is offered to improve retention of mothers returning from maternity leave.

Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

External funding: Individual research grant income across the period from both national and international funders, including charitable foundations, compares favourably with REF2014, given changes in the staff composition of the unit. In the second part of the REF window precedence has been given to the preparation of larger grants such as the ERC, with a longer timeframe for completion. Such projects have been supported through institutional seed funding and have led to new successes (British Academy, AHRC fellowship). Activity is now fostered further by a College-wide mentoring programme led by the College Academic Lead for Grant Capture.

In total GBP164,214 in external funding has been awarded in this cycle. Grant capture has centred on major research projects on pre-modern history (**Thomas**, British Academy post-doctoral fellowship GBP82,869 in its first year); creative writing and translation (**Skoulding's** international AHRC network 'Poetry in Expanded Translation', GBP30,637) and film (**Abrams**, Kubrick: a five-day project at the Lorentz Center in Leiden; and co-convening the British Jewish Contemporary Culture network, seed-funded by the Rothschild Foundation Europe and The British Academy, to a combined total of GBP24,637); **Price**, Storyboarding British Academy, Royal Society, and the Royal Society of Edinburgh grants, c. GBP3,432). Other funding has been secured by **Koehler**, for her project on epistolary aesthetics and Victorian imagination (Mayers Huntington Library fellowship, GBP4,756), and **Niebrzydowski** (GBP1579 from UK charities) for the Hengwrt Chaucer and the Bangor Pontifical Projects.

Additionally, our creative writers have successfully attracted travel funding from numerous charities and partners. **Skoulding** has received sustained support for travel costs from Wales Arts International, totaling GBP7,500 over three years, in match-funded partnership with a range of prestigious international poetry festivals to which she has been invited to present her poetry in translation. These include Managua, Nicaragua (2016); Guyaquil, Ecuador (2017); Pereira, Colombia (2017); Safi, Morocco (2018); Buenos Aires, Argentina (2018); Schamrock Women's Poetry Festival, Munich (2018); Costa Rica (2018); Medellin, Colombia (2019) and Santiago, Chile (2019). As Hay Festival Fellow 2019-20 **Conran** has been fully funded through a partnership between the Arts Council of Wales and the Hay Festival to participate in international literary festivals in Mexico, Segovia, Peru and Colombia, to a total value of GBP10,000.

Internal funding: Strategic investment has assisted our research through seed funding (e.g. institutional-level tailored funding for ECR research development – **Durrant; Koehler**); School-level competitive seed funding to stimulate research projects leading to grant applications (**McCue**, who successfully secured a British Academy small grant); competitive internal awards totaling GBP15,000 from the ESRC award to Bangor University for impact acceleration supported our two impact case studies (**Skoulding**, for work with the local community on the River Adda project [REF3_2]; and **Radulescu**, for her Quest 2018 project, grounded in her research on Arthurian legend adapted in order to raise literacy levels for primary and secondary school pupils) [REF3_1]. Other internal awards from the Bangor Alumni Fund and student internships have contributed to the enhancement of PGR training, and **Skoulding** SCoRE acquired seed funding from the Welsh Government GBP600 (2019).

Infrastructure and Facilities:

Physical:

There has been substantial strategic investment in Arts and Humanities-related physical infrastructure since REF2014. This has enhanced both research and impact across the disciplines. Bangor University opened its GBP51,000,000 Arts and Innovation Centre, Pontio, which houses two theatres (Theatr Bryn Terfel and the Studio Theatre), the White Box exhibition space, a cinema and a variety of integrated performance spaces (for circus and dance). Pontio enables sustained development of research impact with the local community, in particular through the Y Llechan (Slate) series of visiting writers, which since 2017 has hosted approximately ten free public poetry and fiction readings a year to audiences of 50 to 100, featuring staff book launches and a range of presentations by UK and international writer-researchers. The space has also enabled postgraduate writers to gain experience in presenting their work in public. **Skoulding's** 2017 conference 'Poetry and Sound in Expanded Translation' made use of some of the more distinctive facilities in Pontio, for example hosting a live-streamed performance in artist Joep Van Lieshout's Caban, a semi-outdoor space designed for public debate and creative interaction. Pontio is also the venue where Shakespeare's Globe on Tour events have been held, introduced by **Wilcox**, and facilitated by **Durrant**. In addition, the city's 'cultural quarter' has been further enhanced through a GBP1,400,000 Heritage Lottery Fund grant (with Bangor University as partner) to rehouse Gwynedd Museum (renamed Storiell) which hosts a large proportion of the University's collections, leading to involvement of our staff in curating exhibitions (**Abrams, Niebrzydowski, Wilcox**). Bangor University's music facilities have also undergone a GBP3,000,000 renovation with a complete refurbishment of the Music Building and Studios and provision of high-quality practice facilities. There has also been investment of GBP95,000 in the University Archives with improved storage and access, enabling the Archives to gain National Archives accreditation and providing more opportunities for public engagement.

The historic Arts and Crafts Shankland Reading room in Bangor University's Main Library (part of the original, purpose-built university library, funded by the Worshipful Company of Drapers in the early twentieth century) is now frequently used for book launches and research events open to the public. This iconic reading room has become a key venue for our research and impact events, particularly since the inception of the Shankland lecture series organised under the aegis of the Colclough Centre in 2015. The room is also host to exhibitions of rare books curated by our staff on special anniversaries or events organised by the research centres. This has the advantage of sharing research in the context of Bangor University's wider architectural and cultural heritage, including the parts of the museum collection displayed in the reception space outside the library. The Shankland reading room is also the prime location for our impact and engagement activities with primary and secondary school pupils and their teachers.

A dedicated conference team supports academics in the organisation of research events, including catering and venues across the university. Where research events are held through virtual means, Bangor University's videolink suite and reliable technical support over many years have fostered the development of ContemPo. Welsh-language translation and interpretation

provided by Bangor University enable multilingual interaction, for example in the Wales International Poetry Festival, held in 2014, 2015 and 2017 organised by **Skoulding**.

Textual and Material

Our research culture and societal impact in all three research clusters have been substantially supported through significant acquisitions and in-kind donations to Bangor University Library, Archives and Special Collections, which is host to three of our key research centres. Among these acquisitions are the Flintshire Harries Arthurian collection (over 2,000 items) in 2014, and new papers of R. S. Thomas (part of the research centre of the same name), the latter being funded in part by grants from the Victoria and Albert Museum (GBP18,500, the first grant of its kind in Wales) and The Friends of National Libraries (GBP10,000). Researchers have access to a wealth of collections and research centres including the Welsh Library, the Arthurian Centre (which holds one of the major collections of Arthurian Literature in the world), the R. S. Thomas Centre (providing access to the poet's papers and ephemera), the Stephen Colclough Centre for the History of the Book (including digitisation equipment), Bangor Cathedral Library, the Welsh Children's Literature collection, Bangor Archaeology collection and Bangor Art collection (one of the largest university collections in the country). Bangor University Library is the largest Welsh repository after the National Library of Wales (NLW) with over 250,000 manuscripts and 30,000 books. Researchers also have access to the facilities of NLW Online. Music researchers benefit from access to the Crossley Holland collection of 600 ethnic European instruments and over 300 pre-Columbian instruments along with the largest collection of facsimiles of medieval and renaissance music in Wales.

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

Across the unit, there is significant and wide-ranging collaboration with other research institutions and external research users within Wales, the UK, Europe and further afield. These collaborations have made a significant impact on research in key disciplines as well as increasing public understanding of literature and culture. Much of the collaborative work undertaken has directly benefitted the general public through new understanding of localities and communities and enhanced cultural opportunities. Key non-academic audiences who have engaged with and benefitted from research in this unit include: the Education sector (such as WJEC); the Heritage sector (including NLW; CADW; National Trust); and organisations in the areas of Creative Writing and Media (including Literature Wales; BBC; S4C; BAFTA). This represents a considerable contribution to the research base, the economy and society with impact evident across all disciplines, enhanced by national and international networks, flagship events, and public engagement events as follows.

National and international networks and key collaborations

Niebrzydowski was a member of the Women's Literary Culture and the Medieval Canon, an International Leverhulme Network, led by Surrey (2015-17). **Radulescu** was a member of LATE (Littérature arthurienne tardive en Europe), led by the Rennes and Connecticut (2016-20), and member of an ERC COST Action network consisting of 120 researchers working on medieval manuscripts (2014-17). **Claydon** is a member of the international 'Restoration' network, which organizes bi-annual conferences. **Wilcox** is one of the founder members of the international research network on Trust and Risk in Literature 2015-20 (with Aarhus, Denmark; Kofu, Japan and California, Irvine); **Hiscock's** work was recognised with a Marie Curie Sklowodska research fellowship as part of an established collaboration with Montpellier (2016-18). **Skoulding's** Poetry in Expanded Translation AHRC Network (of which **Conran** was a member) included partnerships with the National Poetry Library and Kunsthalle Mulhouse. Three new research networks are currently in progress: **Abrams's** on Kubrick Studies, **Hiscock's** on early-modern research, with Sheffield-Hallam University, and **Radulescu's** on Arthurian studies, with international collaborators from around the world. Both networks stem from regular online lecture series that have developed since 2020.

External collaborations also include international and national visiting scholars to the Arthurian, Colclough and R. S. Thomas Centres, with over 100 international visitors annually and 5-10 residential international fellows for all the centres. New and continuing strong collaborations with repository libraries and research libraries have included those with the National Library of Wales, Chetham Library, Manchester, John Rylands Library, Manchester, the British Library and the Robbins Library at the University of Rochester, USA, as well as service on local and national scholarly and non-academic societies (**Radulescu** as the only academic member of the Association for Manuscripts and Archives in Research Collections).

Flagship events

The Annual Lectures of the Colclough Centre and the Centre for Arthurian Studies (with prestigious speakers from Oxford, St Andrews, and University College London) regularly attract audiences of more than 60 and 40, respectively; the Y Llechan guest creative writers series (featuring writers such as Nia Davies, editor of *Poetry Wales*; Forrest Gander, USA and Sandeep Parmar, Liverpool), attracted up to 200 in audience; more recently, an online research lecture series (Centre for Arthurian Studies) had audiences of more than 90. The events of the Centre for Film, Screen and Television Studies reach global audiences of 60-100 and attract participants from north America, Europe, Israel and Australia. Further, a fortnightly video-conference seminar was organised under the umbrella of IMEMS (Institute for Medieval and Early Modern Studies) until 2018 with audiences from 25-40.

Public engagement activities

These academic and professional collaborations have enabled the development of a range of public engagement activities, as well as co-working with key organisations locally and nationally. There have been over 60 local, national and international poetry and fiction readings/book launches and public events and more than 40 invited public lectures stemming from our research on literature, history, music, film and culture (medieval to modern), including invited participation in more than 35 international public festivals and events, held in locations as diverse as Bangor University Library and Pontio to London, and as far as Berlin, Germany; Mexico, Spain, Croatia, Morocco, Costa Rica and Colombia. Contributions to **public debate** on research topics arising from research and publications include regular columns in *Ha'aretz* (Israel) and *The Forward* (USA) by **Abrams**; articles in the *Conversation* by **Webb** on Edward Thomas; **Skoulding** on Lynette Roberts; **Radulescu** with several articles on King Arthur, medievalism and children's literature; **Durrant** on the historical novel; and consultancy for public media outlets and websites (BBC Wales and BBC radio: **Abrams, Durrant, Koehler, Niebrzydowski, Radulescu, Skoulding, Webb, Wilcox**).

Further activities aimed at enhancing public understanding of key research areas include **Wilcox** and **Niebrzydowski's** collaboration with Storiel to curate the exhibition 'A Passion for Books', in collaboration with local book artist (now scheduled for 2022), as well as tours of Bangor University's art and ceramics collection for the general public ('Paintings, Pots and Poems') that have encouraged public engagement with the extensive holdings of the University's Archives and Special Collections. **Radulescu's** collaboration with local Creative Writing practitioner Gillian Brownson, as part of Bangor University's ESRC IAA project 'Quest/Hymgais' (2018-2019) has informed teaching practice and introduced schoolchildren to new aspects of their literary heritage. In the broader national sphere, **Webb's** opening lecture at the major bilingual exhibition at the National Library Wales on Hedd Wyn and Edward Thomas in 2017 enhanced understanding of the work of Thomas in Wales, leading to another exhibition on the poet at Swansea Museum in 2017 and **Webb's** keynote address at the Cardiff Centenary Conference on Edward Thomas. Researchers have been invited to 'Festival no. 6' (2018, 2019); the 'Not the Hay' festival (2018) and regular local cultural festivals – from the Conwy food festival to Llandudno Winter Lights (2019) and the Mostyn Gallery talks (2019), the R. S. Thomas festival in Aberdaron, and national events such as the 'Hay Literary Festival', the International George Herbert Festival (Salisbury) and the Cheltenham Literature Festival.

Skoulding's leadership of *Hidden Rivers from A to B*, a collaborative cross-artform project linking urban space in Bangor and Paris, supported by Bangor University's ESRC Impact

Acceleration Account (including collaboration with local artists and Storiell) has led to increased community engagement with local history in the revamped art space of Storiell and the arts centre Pontio. Diverse collaborations extend beyond academic networks and local communities, including pioneering outreach and impact-generating activities led by **Koehler**. As a member of the executive of the Thomas Hardy Society (THS), **Koehler** has been involved in an extensive programme of outreach to secondary pupils and teachers, including workshops in North Wales on the WJEC AS level, which will be continued during her recently awarded British Academy grant. This selective list of collaborations builds on existing as well as emerging collaborations within Bangor University, among the research centres and networks led by our staff, and external partners, more specifically continuing collaborations with our Library Archives and Special Collections (including 'The Women's Suffrage Symposium', 2018, led by **Niebrzydowski**; the 2019 Library and Archives week dedicated to the celebration of 65 years of palaeography teaching, initiated by **Radulescu** and with contributions from **Durrant** and **Niebrzydowski**).

Academic Recognition and Wider Contribution

The strength of Bangor research in this unit is underlined by numerous accolades and key responsibilities, including awards, residencies, elected memberships to panels and societies, editorial commitments and conference engagement, as follows.

Awards

Creative writers have received national and international recognition by the most prestigious award-giving fora, ranging from the Michael Marks Award for Best Poetry Pamphlet for **Rumens' Bezdělki** (2018); the Cholmondeley Award from the Society of Authors for **Skoulding's** entire body of poetry (2018) and the Wales Book of the Year, the Rhys Davies Trust Fiction Award and the People's Choice Award (2017), and International Dylan Thomas Award (2017) for **Conran's Pigeon**. **Conran** was also longlisted for the Author's Club Best First Novel Award (2016), and *The Museum of Disappearing Sounds* by **Skoulding** was shortlisted for the 2014 Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry. Her *Footnotes to Water* is a Poetry Book Society Recommendation and winner of the 2020 Wales Book of the Year Poetry Award. For their scholarly achievements, **Cunningham** won the Donald Tovey Award (Oxford University, 2016 – for his examination of the production and dissemination of trio sonatas in printed and manuscript culture in England c.1690–1714), and **Hiscock** the 'Ben Jonson Discoveries Prize' for his pioneering article (2014).

Residencies

Conran has held the prestigious International Hay Festival Creative Wales Fellowship (2019-20), the Writers Residency with Inuit Language Committee, Princes Trust (2017), and the Writers Residency with The Camden Trust (2015); **Cunningham** competitively won a visiting fellowship Bodleian Library (2018); **Rumens** was Poet in Residence at the Harvard Centre for Hellenic Studies, Nafplio, Greece (2019); **Skoulding** had a three-month residency as Laureate of the City of Paris and the Institut Français at Les Récollets in Paris (2014) and held a week-long residency with the Slovenian Writers' Association in Ljubljana in conjunction with a festival performance (2015); and **Wilcox** was visiting research fellow in residence at the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies in 2016.

Elected memberships to panels and societies

The academic standing of key researchers is reflected by membership on the AHRC peer review college (**Abrams, Hiscock, Radulescu**); AHRC strategic panel (**Hiscock, Niebrzydowski**); and AHRC funding panels for main grants, leadership fellowships and early career fellowships (**Claydon, Radulescu**), contributing to research strategy on a national level. Likewise, research and creative expertise have been recognized through election to membership of prize-giving panels: The 2020 Forward Prizes (Poetry) for Best Collection, Best First Collection and Best Single Poem, March – October 2019 (**Rumens**); Thomas Hardy Society Annual Patrick Tolfree Essay Prize 2019 (**Koehler**); chair of the jury for the Richard L Greaves Prize (for scholarship on early modern literature and religion), Edmonton, Canada, 2019 (**Wilcox**); judge of National Poetry Competition for the Poetry Society 2014 (**Skoulding**).

Research excellence has also been recognized through election to a Fellowship of: the British Academy (Emeritus Professor T. Corns); the Learned Society of Wales (**Abrams**, Emeritus Professor P. Field, and **Niebrzydowski**, 2020; Emeritus Professor A. Brown and **Radulescu**, 2018; **Wilcox**, 2016), the Royal Historical Society (**Radulescu** 2018; **Abrams** 2015) and the English Association (**Radulescu**, 2019). Among our early career staff, **Koehler** succeeded in winning participation in the sought-after competitive programme Welsh Crucible: (2019); and **Thorstad** is on the steering committee for the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates and on the Board of Trustees for the Castles Studies Trust. **Radulescu** was president of the British Branch of the International Arthurian Society (2015-18) and member of the international committee of the same society.

Editorial commitments

Researchers have edited and/or continue to lead international journals: **Abrams**, *Jewish Film & New Media: An International Journal*; **Koehler**, *Thomas Hardy Journal* and *Hardy Society Journal*; **Price**, *Journal of Screenwriting*; **Hiscock**, *Yearbook of English Studies* and *MLR* English Literature editor; **Radulescu**, *Journal of the International Arthurian Society* and *Bibliography of the International Arthurian Society* (2011-17); **Skoulding**, *Poetry Wales* (until 2014); and/or serve as advisory and editorial board members: **Abrams**, *Jewish Culture and History*, *Jewish Historical Studies*, *Journal of European Popular Culture* and *Marginalia: A Review of Books in History, Theology & Religion*; **Conran**, *New Welsh Review* board member; **Cunningham**, *Purcell Society and Musica Britannica*; **Niebrzydowski**, *Pedagogy and Profession* (journal of the New Chaucer Society); **Wilcox**, *Scintilla* as co-editor. Guest editorships of special issues of prestigious international journals include **McCue**, *YES* (2017); **Skoulding**, *Poetry Wales* (2018), *English* (2020); **Radulescu**, *Arthuriana* (2019).

The international standing of researchers in specialist fields has been recognized through invitations to edit book series and major multi-volume works: **Abrams** is a Stanley Kubrick series editor for Liverpool University Press; **Hiscock**, *Yearbook of English Studies*; series co-editor, *Arden Early Modern Drama Series*; **Price**, advisory board member for Palgrave Studies in Screenwriting; **Radulescu**, invited to co-edit the *Medieval English Literature in a Trans-European Context* (Routledge) and the two-volume, 400,000-word *Cambridge History of Arthurian Literature and Culture*; **Webb**, co-editor of the *Writers of Wales* book series; **Wilcox**, member of the editorial team for the first *Complete Works of Aphra Behn*, forthcoming from CUP (editing *Oroonoko*), on the editorial advisory board for the multi-volume edition of *The Complete Letters of Richard Baxter* (to be published by OUP) and now a consultant editor for the new database of Women's Life Writing (Adam Matthew Digital).

Conference engagement and invited plenaries

Researchers have (co)-organised 21 international conferences and eight symposia, on topics ranging from screenwriting (**Price**, London, 2015) and seventeenth-century poets from the Welsh Marches (**Wilcox**, Gregynog, 2015) to the British Academy-funded 'Ariosto and English Culture' (**Hiscock**, British Academy, 2016). A series of international events formed part of the AHRC network 'Poetry in Expanded Translation' led by **Skoulding** (London/Mulhouse/Bangor, 2017-18). The biannual 'Restoration conference' was held in Bangor, organised by **Durrant** and **Claydon** in 2019, and by **Claydon** in 2015 and 2017. Our reputation in the fields of medieval

manuscript and Arthurian studies has led to invitations to host the biennial Early Book Society conference in 2021 and the International Arthurian Congress in 2024 (**Radulescu**).

Researchers have given more than 100 conference papers at international congresses, conferences and symposia, and 61 plenaries and invited lectures at prestigious specialist international conferences, including **Hiscock's** plenary lectures at the European Research Association Conference at the Università di Roma Tre, Rome (2019, audience c. 300) and the University of Istanbul LITCRI congress (2015, audience c. 150); **Johns's** plenary at Canterbury Christ Church University and Lancaster University conference (2014; audience c. 100); **Radulescu's** invited plenaries at University of Lisbon (2018) and the 90th conference of the Department of English and American Studies, University of Belgrade (2019), audiences c. 200; **Skoulding's** plenary at 'Représenter la ville: les mots, les gestes et l'esprit' conference, Université Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée (2019); **Wilcox's** plenaries at the 'Crossing Boundaries in Drama' conference, Wuhan, China (2015; audience c. 400) and at the 'Herbert in Paris' conference, the Sorbonne (2017, audience c. 250).