REF2021

Institution: SOAS University of London

Unit of Assessment: 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics

1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

1.1 Overview and structure
Research in languages, linguistics, and literature has a long tradition at SOAS (we celebrated our centenary in 2016-17). Our specific expertise lies in the languages and literatures of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, but we theorise from our regions to engage in disciplinary and global contexts. While staff are apportioned between two Departments (Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, and East Asian Languages and Cultures), for research purposes we act very much as one unit, while collaborating with the School's regional centres and institutes. Our UoA currently consists of 24.8 FTEs: 11 staff members in Linguistics, 9.8 in Literature, and 4 postdoctoral researchers (see §2.1).

The **Linguistics Department**, founded in 1932, is the oldest general linguistics department in the UK, and language-based research has defined the School and ensured our global reputation, supported by our extensive library and archival holdings. In the SOAS Library, the **Endangered Languages Archive** (ELAR, funded by Arcadia with £20 million in 2002, renewed with a further £7.5m in 2015) and **SOAS World Languages Institute** (SWLI, launched in 2016), are powerhouses of archiving and documentation projects. **SWLI** promotes interdisciplinary research on languages and multilingualism and connects our academic community with businesses, media and diaspora communities. Both are run by Seyfeddinipur. The **Centre for Translation Studies** has developed area-based translation studies across Asia, Africa and the Middle East, highlighting regional and transregional practices, theories, and philosophies, and acts as an ideal bridge between linguistics and comparative literature.

SOAS Linguists contribute typologically oriented and theoretically informed empirical research on undescribed or under-described languages in order to advance theories of language and increase our understanding of linguistic diversity: Githiora works on Swahili and language contact; Hill on Tibeto-Burman/Sino-Tibetan historical linguistics; Lucas on Arabic dialectology and language contact; Jiang on Chinese linguistics, semantics and pragmatics; Marten on Bantu languages and morpho-syntactic typology; Nikolaeva on transformational theories of grammar and documentation and description of endangered Uralic, Altaic and Palaeosiberian languages; Pizziconi on Japanese linguistics and politeness; Sallabank on minority and endangered languages and language revitalisation; Sato-Rossberg on Asian translation studies; Watkins on Burmese linguistics and phonetics; Yeon on Korean morpho-syntax and linguistic typology; postdoctoral researchers Lovestrand on complex motion predicates, Voica on endangered languages of the Solomon Islands, and Xun on Sino-Tibetan historical linguistics.

Established in 2011 after the success of the AHRB Centre for Asian and African Literatures with UCL, the **Centre for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies (CCLPS)** has brought together literature staff working across the two departments and enabled collaborations, co-teaching and a shared research culture. UoA literature scholars include: Bruno (Chinese poetry and translation); Ferrari (Chinese and trans-Asian theatre and intermedial performance); Hammond (Arabic popular literature and film); Hijjas (Malay literature and manuscript tradition); Hutt (Himalayan Studies); Laachir (North African literatures and cultural studies); Osei-Nyame (African literature); Orsini (North Indian literatures and world literature); Ouyang (Arabic literature and the Silk Road); Pett (English literature and medical humanities); and ERC postdoctoral researcher Goikolea (Spanish colonialism in North Africa).

We have long conducted rigorous research on literatures in Asian, African and Middle Eastern languages as part of area studies. Since the 2000s, our aim has been to produce more **theoretically-informed** and **comparative literary research across our regions**, and to consciously bring our scholarship to bear on the disciplines of **comparative literature** and

world literature. This convergence, we feel, will be key to our **sustainability** and to making our PhD students competitive on the job market.

Also key to our **sustainability** and to greater national and international visibility and prestige (§4.1.1) has been our growing **research income** (almost **£11m** in 2014-20, compared to **£4.9m** for Linguistics in 2008-13), the result of a relatively new culture of ambitious funding applications (§3.1), spearheaded by Linguistics and fostered by the UoA's single research structure with strong input from the School's Research Office (Institutional-level ES, §4.1, also below §3.2.1, 3.2.2).

We believe that our regions, where national languages within national boundaries have never been the norm, provide ideal starting points to consider the contemporary globalised age. Area studies philology can be at the forefront of decolonisation efforts and be technologically savvy, as shown by Hijjas' Leverhulme Leadership project on 're-membering' (awarded 2020, commenced 2021), through large scale crowd-sourced manuscript transcription, libraries in Sumatra that were dismembered by colonialism. Lüpke's multilingual Covid-19 health information material to reaches local communities in Senegal (see ICS) shows how crucial recognising 'small-scale multilingualism' is.

1.2 Research strategy
1.2.1 Feedback from REF2014
The Linguistics sub-panel noted 'particular strengths in providing a supportive and diverse research culture for postgraduate students', 'substantial grant income, leading to benefits for the Unit as a whole', and 'very considerable impacts especially for speakers of endangered and/or minority languages'. The research environment was judged to be 'conducive to producing research of world leading and internationally excellent quality'. Literature was submitted under Area Studies, and although the sub-panel praised the 'impressive environment for research students' and acknowledged that a 'number of staff members in each region produce research of world-leading or internationally excellent quality', it criticised the submission for lacking a cohesive research strategy.

1.2.2 Strategies, goals, and implementation for 2014-20
Learning from the feedback, for this REF cycle we planned an integrated research strategy including:
1. expanding our focus on linguistic and literary diversity and **multilingualism;** influencing **world literature through South-South comparisons**;
2. exploiting our research specialisms and excellence to foster an active culture of grant applications, learning from Linguistics' success, and **substantially increase external research funding**, to support research studentships, postdoctoral fellowships and staff research (§2.2.2, 3.1);
3. building research capacity on **intermediality**: between poetry and music (Bruno), literature and film (Hammond), and theatre and the visual arts (Ferrari);
4. expanding **archives** and data sets available **open access** to the public and to key beneficiaries (§1.5);
5. using external research funding to **support collaborations with colleagues and institutions in Asia and Africa** and bring international scholars to SOAS and increase South-South dialogues (§4.3.1); contributing to the vitality and sustainability of our fields through ambitious research projects, journal and book series editorship, conferences and seminars (§4.3);
6. continuing to partner **with non-academic** beneficiaries such as **local communities**, **writers, translators,** and associations to make Asian and African languages more visible;
7. Pushing for a high level of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in our staffing and research students (§2.4);
8. Providing high-level, interdisciplinary and cross-regional training to Doctoral Researchers to foster a new generation of global researchers (§1.3, 2.3).

1.2.3 Implementation of research strategy, 2014-20

We implemented the research strategy as follows:

1. and 2. We focused on multilingualism and language and literary contact (including translation) as key areas of research and cross-regional collaboration: Lüpke's *Crossroads* project on small-scale multilingualism in Senegal resulted in the award-winning film *Kanraxäel*, an online toolkit for multilingual literacy LILIEMA, 35 journal articles and book chapters, and one impact case study. Orsini & Laachir's £1.7m ERC *Multilingual Locals and Significant Geographies* project innovatively compared multilingual North Indian, Maghrebi, and Horn of Africa literatures. Grant funding increased the number of postdoctoral fellows from 11 to 23 and supported 9 high-quality PhD students, adding greatly to our research environment. We offered robust mentoring to each staff member, including postdoctoral researchers, and shared best practice across the Unit with regards to research applications and impact (§3.2.1, 3.2.2);

3. For her BA Mid-Career fellowship, Hammond produced the multimedia website *Layla the Chaste* to accompany her monograph; Ferrari's monograph *Transnational Chinese Theatres* explored intermedial performance groups in East Asia;

4. SOAS PhD students and staff contributed over 30 deposits to the Endangered Languages Archive (§1.5, 3.2.3) and were awarded several Endangered Languages Documentation Programme (ELDP) grants (£92K to Gawne in 2014 for research into Kagate, a Tibeto-Burman language of Nepal; £62K to Harvey in 2013-15 for research on Gorwaa). ELDP awards contributing to the creation of linguistic corpora include Hill's Documentation and Description of Laitu (£117K) and the audio-visual archive and searchable corpus of endangered Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal and Northern India (£17K). To help decolonise the systemic bias in funding that favours academics from the global North, Seyfeddinipur at ELAR trained local scholars and students from the Global South where the languages are spoken (including India, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico, and Brazil) to enable them to undertake documentation projects and apply for ELDP funding;

5. Research income has allowed us to bring international scholars to SOAS for lecture series, seminars, and conferences. Among our many institutional collaborations with international academic partners, the Consortium for Asian and African Studies (CAAS, with universities in China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Russia, Israel, Netherlands, France and USA) stands out as contribution to disciplinary development and sustainability: our role is critical thinking on area studies from the perspectives of linguistics, comparative literature/world literature, and cultural studies (§4.1). Other examples include Hill's ERC-funded 'Asia Beyond Boundaries' workshops, Ouyang's workshops for the 'Landscapes of Literary Realism' network, and Sato-Rossberg's 'Asian Translation' conferences (§4.3.1);

6. Work with local communities included Lüpke's ICS with communities in Senegal (§1.4.1, point 2), and two student-led Linguistics projects: the 'Sylheti Language Project' with the Bangladeshi community in Camden (§4.2.1), and the 'London Language Landscape Project', funded by the Alumni Association and Google. Ouyang's 'Creativity and World Literatures: Languages in Dialogue' strand of the AHRC OWRI project on 'Creative Multilingualism', and the Multilingual London online festival organised by Orsini, involved artists and creative writers as co-producers of conceptual vocabulary for multilingualism and world literature, while Ouyang's CHASE Arabic Translation Workshops trained translators (§4.2.1);

7. We supported through mentorship female and BAME staff in applying for senior promotion, leading to 6 female professors (from none) and 2 BAME professors (§2.2, 2.4). For point 8, see §1.3 below.

1.2.4 Future strategy

The key points of our strategy over the next REF cycle are:

1. Maintaining our core strategy of in-depth linguistic and literary expertise on Asia, Africa, and Middle East;

2. Maintaining robust mentoring system to support flow of strong applications and current grant income per FTE;

3. Continuing to explore multilingualism within literature, linguistics (language pedagogy and language contact), and translation, with a new focus on poetry performance and migrant literature (Bruno on Chinese intermedial poetry and London Chinese poets), translation (Sato-Rossberg's UKRI Covid grant on translation and health information in local communities, §4.2.2), and manuscript studies (Hijjas's Leverhulme);
4. Using our core of research themes to bring us together into a network of SOAS scholars, but also to establish networks beyond SOAS individually or as a group;
5. Prioritising hirings in Postcolonial Studies, Comparative Literature or Cultural Studies that come with language expertise; using the incorporation of the different area sections into the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics as an opportunity to work even more across areas for South-South comparative and transregional studies;
6. Speaking to mainstream disciplines and debates (Comparative Literature, World Literature, Translation Studies, Postcolonial Studies) from the location of our language-based archives and genres;
7. Fostering cross-regional pedagogy to train a new generation of global researchers (§2.2.2, 2.3).

1.3 Interdisciplinarity
Cross-regional and cross-disciplinary knowledge formation and exchange have been key to our **research projects and collaborations** and underpinned our success in grant applications: Hill's 'Beyond Boundaries' project involved art historians, archaeologists, linguists and historians; Orsini's ERC 'Multilingual Locals' literary scholars and historians from India, the Maghreb and Horn of Africa. Interdisciplinarity shows how **our specialist knowledge is necessary to stakeholders**: Hutt's SWAY project created a database with 50% sources in Nepali for post-earthquake planning and reconstruction. Sallabank's collaboration for language revitalisation and botanical knowledge with Mahidol University (Thailand) was co-designed by community members, botanists and linguists according to Participatory Action Research framework to conserve traditional botanical knowledge and transmit it to future generations (§4.2.1). At SOAS, we are naturally networked with colleagues in other disciplines through the regional Institutes and Centres (see Institutional-level ES, §1): for example, the Centre for African Studies' 2017 conference 'Imagining Africa's future: languages, cultures, governance, development' involved Githiora, Lüpke and Marten. Through SWLI, Seyfeddinipur promotes interdisciplinary collaboration in language research and supports academic staff engaging with governmental, public and private sector organisations through briefings, consultancy, and commissioned research.

CCLPS's interdisciplinary and cross-regional research training includes comparative literature, cultural studies, critical theory, and media studies (2), and supervisory committees routinely include staff across SOAS (IES). This has encouraged original PhD projects of South-South comparison that would have been impossible elsewhere (e.g. Thai and Amharic novels, China-India literary relations). Research students are invited to propose cross-regional and interdisciplinary themes for the annual CCLPS graduate conference: recent themes included 'Decolonising the Cultural Institution?' (2017), 'Empathy in Material Culture and Critical Methodologies' (2018), and 'Science Fiction Beyond the West' (2019).

1.4 Impact strategy
Feedback from the 2014 RAE for Linguistics noted that the case studies were of higher quality than the template, and that 'an integrated strategy from the HEI to facilitate the achievement of impact by all researchers in the unit' was lacking, and the same was true of Area Studies.

1.4.1 Impact in the 2014-20 period
Our impact strategy for this cycle involved:
1. **learning to include impact** as part of all our research applications and activities, thanks to the School's regular Impact training workshops (IES, §2; 3.2.1) and talks at all our Research Away Days;
2. **involving schools and local communities** in our multilingual research to promote positive and pro-active attitudes towards multilingual competence: Lüpke's ICS

      (LILIEMA) was able to quickly retool her LILIEMA toolkit for multilingual literacy and disseminate multilingual Covid-19 health information in rural Senegal that reached local communities more inclusively than materials targeting only the major languages, significantly benefitting local communities;

3. making our work on **linguistic and textual corpora useful for non-academic actors and stakeholders**: Hill's ICS (Digitization of Tibetan texts, based on his AHRC project on Tibetan in Digital Communication), created a corpus of tokenised and part-of-speech tagged Tibetan language texts which made it possible to create online Tibetan language resources for the first time. This has supported work by Google and by Tibetan cultural organisations to develop online resources for Tibetan;

4. **making literatures in Asian and African languages more visible** to push **against current Anglocentrism in world literature**: Orsini's ICS (Beyond the Anglophone novel) involved translating primary texts and producing sample courses to encourage teachers of world literature to include more material from Asian and African languages (see 4 below); its 'Multilingual London Festival' showcased the talent of London writers in Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu and fostered more positive discussions about languages in London's literary life. ELAR (Seyfeddinipur) collaborated with the National Poetry Library on 'Poems from the Edge of Extinction' (2019);

5. making **our research collaborations with museums and libraries vehicles of impact**: Hill's ERC project 'Beyond Boundaries' was a six-year international research collaboration between SOAS, the British Museum, and the British Library; Hijjas's Leverhulme Leadership grant 'Mapping Sumatra's manuscript cultures' involved a partnership with the British Library and crowd-sourced manuscript transcription and transliteration.

1.4.2 Impact strategy 2020-25

On the basis of what we have learnt from our current strategy, we aim to:

1. **build impact into *all* project applications**, sharing experiences and best practice across the Unit;

2. continue to create **textual corpora to be used by different key beneficiaries and community users** abroad or in the UK (e.g., crowdsourced manuscript transcribers from Jawi to Roman scripts in Hijjas's Leverhulme project; London Chinese community in Bruno's research on London Chinese poets and texts);

3. continue **working with communities** (Bruno), writers and translators (Ouyang), and festival organisers to make our language-literatures *visible*. Sato-Rossberg's UKRI project on Covid-19 health information in community languages and communities' behaviour in London will involve a member of the SAGE sub-group on ethnic and minority communities to ensure impact on policy and wide dissemination.

1.5 Open research environment

SOAS Linguistics and Literature staff have enthusiastically embraced the opportunities modern technology offers for open access publishing and online dissemination. Due to our close connections with international researchers in institutions with restricted library budgets, we are strongly committed to making our work easily and freely accessible. Our work on endangered languages and language documentation has also raised **conceptual and methodological questions around open access**: in 2017, Seyfeddinipur of ELAR ran a VW-funded workshop on 'Open Access to Endangered Language data' with UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organization (published in OA journal 'Language Documentation and Conservation', 2019).

Our Open Access strategy is supported institutionally through **SOAS Research Online** (Institutional-level ES, §2; Hill, Marten, and Yeon are among the top 30 downloaded authors of the repository), UKRI Gold OA funding (£7.5K to our UoA), and subvention to OA linguistics publisher Language Science Press. SOAS Linguists (Hill, Lucas, Sallabank, Watkins) are involved in EL Publishing, an **OA online platform for peer-reviewed publications on documentation, description and support of endangered languages** and its OA journal *Language Documentation and Description*, established at SOAS in 2003 (most recent volume,

2018). The *SOAS Working Papers in Linguistics* have been freely available online since 2006. The **Endangered Languages Archive** runs an active blog by staff and students (www.el-blog.org).

Our externally funded research often includes specific OA requirements and funding: e.g., Orsini's ERC is supporting 10 Gold OA papers and 2 OA books. **Project websites** like bantu.soas.ac.uk (Marten), mulosige.soas.uk (Orsini), engagedhumanities.org (Sallabank), soascrossroads.org (Lüpke), and creativeml.ox.ac.uk/research/world-literatures (Ouyang) publish results in open formats (project blogs, wikis, podcasts). Linguistics and CCLPS/MULOSIGE seminars are recorded and available on YouTube (over 80 presentations available). Several Unit members have published **Open Access books**: Gawne *A sketch grammar of Lamjung Yolmo* (2016), Orsini *Tellings and Texts* (2015), Lucas *Arabic and Contact Induced Change* (2020), and Ouyang et al. *Creative Multilingualism: A Manifesto* (2020).

Our **early career researchers** have been exemplary in promoting Open Access: In 2017 Gibson and Gawne were closely involved in developing the School's **Open Academy Workshops** to encourage PhD and researchers to engage with research data management and sharing and online research profiles. Gibson also started **Post-Doc Lunches** where Library staff presented on Open Research; Gawne arranged public **LingWiki** events to encourage additions to Wikipedia pages on linguistics and endangered languages (http://www.superlinguo.com/post/151071110734/lingwiki-soas-2015-2016).

Looking ahead, we aim to continue to share good practice; increase support for research students; and increase uploading of full-texts on SOAS Research Online.

1.6 Research integrity
Research integrity training and research ethics approval are mandatory for all researchers, at all levels and for every project in the UoA (see IES, §4.1). We have introduced Research Data Management training for our MA and research students, in line with School policy (IES, §3.2).

2. People

2.1 Staffing strategy
2014-20 has been financially challenging for SOAS, and for our part of the School in particular, and this is reflected in a reduction during the cycle from 34.2 to 24.8 FTEs through staff retiring and leaving. In response, we have reconfigured our staff resources creatively by rethinking our priorities and strategy. These have included:
- recruiting **new staff able to cover a combination of an Area with a discipline** (Hijjas: South East Asian Studies with postcolonial studies; Lucas: Near and Middle East with Linguistics; both were former BA postdoctoral fellows appointed to T&R posts);
- being an **'employer of choice'** by continuing to be a research-intensive university with a research culture uniquely geared towards the Global South, and a diverse, vibrant, and fair workplace (Dignity@SOAS policy, Diversity & Inclusion training, Decolonise SOAS campaign, see IES, §2.1 and §3.3);
- attracting and training the **new generation of postdoctoral researchers with cross-regional expertise** through large grant applications (§3.1);
- encouraging **promotion of female and BAME staff** through transparent procedures (IES, §3.3), encouraging internal career progression within the School through a new career path for teaching-only staff (since 2018), with the possibility to switch/progress from Academic Education (teaching-only) to Teaching and Research career paths.

2.2 Staff development
All aspects of research and research training for research staff (including postdoctoral researchers) were conducted in line with SOAS' policy for annual Staff Development Reviews (conducted in Departments) and Personal Research Plans (led by Department Research Directors) as described in the Institutional-level ES (§3.1). **Staff Development Reviews** and a

robust mentoring system have led to more and stronger applications in the annual rounds of promotion, also improving our profile in terms of diversity (§2.4).

In turn, leave from grant income (§3.1) has complemented statutory SOAS research leave (IES, §3.1), e.g., Lucas (2016-18), Hammond (2016-17), Laachir (2018-19) and Orsini (2019-20).

We were able to attract as many as **23 post-doctoral researchers** to the Unit over the period, including 6 through external fellowships (British Academy: Dhital, Gibson, Voica, Lovestrand; ELDP: Gawne; Simon Digby Memorial Charity: Lunn) and **15 through our large projects** (AHRC: Bárány, Ismail, Parr, Ritchie; Leverhulme Trust: Cobbinah, Guérois, Hantgan, Stevens, Watson; ERC: Burney, Goikolea, Marzagora; Korea Foundation: Hough, Kim). Post-doctoral researchers, mentored by the PI of their projects, were full members of the relevant department and UoA more broadly, participated in all its research activities and often took the lead in impact and Open Access activities (e.g., Goikolea with N4 library and Burney with MULOSIGE website; see also §1.5). They received impact training, presented their research and research plans at annual research-away days, and benefited from and contributed to the unique cross-regional research environment of the Unit. They frequently co-authored with SOAS colleagues, as reflected in the outputs from our UoA. SOAS provided them full staff facilities, including office space, library access, computing and IT facilities, and access to development opportunities.

Examples of the **impressive career paths** of some of our postdoctoral researchers include:
- Marzagora has become Lecturer in Comparative Literature at KCL;
- Ju has moved to teaching post in Korean at SOAS;
- Gawne is Lecturer in Linguistics, LaTrobe University;
- Bárány is a postdoctoral fellow at the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics;
- Gibson is Lecturer in Linguistics at the University of Essex;
- Gong is a Junior Professor at the University of Vienna;
- Burney is Assistant Professor at UC Merced in the US;
- Ritchie is an Analytical Linguist working in internationalisation for speech technology at Google.

2.3 Research students
Our strategy has been to continue to **attract high quality PhD students worldwide** through our specialist expertise, impressive grant-winning research culture, growing provision of SOAS and dedicated research studentships, and an attractive combination of individual supervision in our often-specialised areas with **group research training** and **career-preparation activities**.

We recruit many students from our own research-driven MA programmes, and Linguistics has a strong record of winning ELDP studentships (ELDP is SOAS-led but its studentships are open to other institutions as well; see 1 above). Other students have been funded by major Leverhulme (3 for Lüpke, 1 for Marten) and ERC (3 for Orsini) grants; further awards have come from Felix India Scholarships (3), China Scholarship Council (3), Meiji Jingu Studentships (2 per year), Wolfson Scholarships (4), and other sponsors (e.g., Commonwealth Scholarships, government funding from Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Turkey).

Between 2014 and 2020, Linguistics and Literatures each attracted on average 10 new research students each year, 52% from overseas (non-EU), and since the last REF, an impressive **120 PhD students reached completion**, supervised by 33 FTE staff, more or less evenly divided between Literatures and Linguistics. The number of PhD students registered at any one time has unfortunately fallen in proportion with the decrease in staff numbers, from 91 students in 2013-14 to 48 in 2019-20.

Our research students are supported by the Doctoral School (see IES, §3.2), and by two Research Tutors within our Unit (one for Linguistics and one for Literature and cultural studies) who also work as Admissions Tutors.

We strive to enhance the academic opportunities and performance of our doctoral students through two dedicated **MPhil/PhD research training seminars**. The interdisciplinary CCLPS weekly training course has been highly acclaimed by all our students and was adopted in 2018 as the research training for all literature and cultural studies students. Students in Linguistics have their own research training seminar, and in addition ELAR offers training opportunities in data management, curating and archiving (§3.2.3). Students can also attend courses in theoretical linguistics offered through the inter-collegiate Advanced Core Training in Linguistics, of which SOAS is a member.

These training seminars are complemented by the range of activities of the Doctoral School, Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network and CHASE (IES, §3.2) through which our students learn the skills (writing, project design, surveys, fieldwork methods, ethics) which have enabled many of them to succeed in their doctoral research and in their post-PhD careers. As part of Early Career Researcher development, SOAS offers funding to PhD students for language training, conference attendance, student-led initiatives and fieldwork.

The Unit has also provided **dedicated platforms** for research students to present their work, thereby gaining experience and skills. Beside the two **annual Linguistics Research Student and CCLPS graduate conferences**, organized entirely by students, Rettová included graduate students in the annual **Asixoxe – Let's Talk!** conference on African Philosophy and coached UG students to present at the annual Swahili conference in Bayreuth (Germany). At the **CCLPS Critical Forum,** research students present their ongoing research in pairs before an audience of peers and staff. Two student-led Linguistics projects, the 'Sylheti Language Project' and the 'London Language Landscape Project', co-ordinated by Senior Teaching Fellow Simard, provided students with local fieldwork experience.

The wealth of diverse and enriching training opportunities has helped many of our research students to secure **academic posts** in prestigious institutions all over the world, including Olszock (Cambridge), Abdelmegeed (American University in Beirut), Gibson (Essex), Jia (Peking University), Mandhwani and Sharma (Shiv Nadar, India), Marzagora (KCL). Others have won postdoctoral fellowships, such as Leese (ERC, Utrecht), Sharma (AHRC, Paris), Voica (BA, SOAS), Barnes-Sadler (Korean Foundation, SOAS), Cobbinah (Leverhulme, SOAS), Lanfranchi (Bayreuth), Lunn (SDMC, SOAS), Moreno-Almeida (BA, KCL), Parr (AHRC/OWRI, SOAS), Ritchie (AHRC, SOAS), Voica (BA, SOAS), Mu (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies). Yet others have launched remarkable careers outside academia (e.g., Basu, project curator for South Asian performance, British Library; Plau, Information Analyst, Wellcome Collection; Ritchie at Google).

2.4 Equality and diversity

SOAS is an institution where Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are a high priority, as described in the Institutional-level ES (§2.1). The research culture in our Unit is founded on a dedication to equality and diversity and inclusion (see §1.2, point 7): our work is intimately concerned with the fragility of diversity in human linguistic, literary and cultural heritage, and this is reflected in our staffing profile and in the researchers and research students we attract. Between 2014-20, our strategy has been to **encourage and support our female and BAME staff in applying for senior promotions**, in order to send a strong signal to early career researchers and students.

We are proud that between 2014 and 2020 **six female colleagues were promoted to Professor** (there were none at the beginning). In our Unit, more than 50% of staff members are women, rising to 58% at professor/reader level.

During the period of assessment, **44% of output-eligible colleagues** employed in the Unit **were people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds**, and **two BAME colleagues were promoted to Professor**. We work in an environment where students from BAME backgrounds are much more likely to find role models and find themselves reflected in the teaching body, and we are pleased to have clear evidence that our Unit is an increasingly attractive choice for PhD students with from BAME backgrounds. From the first two years to the

last two years of the assessment period **the proportion of BAME research students increased from 53% to 80%.**

Around 8% of output-eligible colleagues in the Unit declared a disability, and support when needed is available; for instance, one staff member with impaired vision was provided with an ergonomic chair, a wide screen and a personal desktop scanner and printer. Several staff identifying as LGBTQ are able to do so openly within our section, supported by SOAS policies, for instance during this cycle by providing parental leave for parenthood through surrogacy for one gay colleague.

We recognise that a diversity in staffing and recruitment do not necessarily make for an inclusive environment, and that an open conversation and constant action are needed to achieve that goal. Our Unit complements School policies (see IES, §2.1) with participation in activities promoting EDI. Lüpke was actively involved in the work leading to SOAS obtaining the **Bronze Award of the ATHENA Gender Equality Charter Mark** initiative. Postdoctoral researchers Cobbinah and Gawne were involved with Lüpke in diversity events (Re-presenting SOAS, SOAS Diversity Day). Research students and postdocs in our Unit have been among the founders and regular organisers of the annual **Queer Asia festival** (Lunn), which has grown since 2016 into a 3-day international event, which our Unit supports financially. Staff and students in our Unit are also actively involved in the **'Decolonise SOAS'** campaign, with Rettová contributing the **'Decolonise SOAS through language' strategy**, and former MA Postcolonial Studies students producing a 'decolonise Postcolonial Studies' syllabus; the CCLPS graduate student conference in 2017 was expressly dedicated to the question of 'Decolonising the Cultural Institution?'.

We strive to foster a family-friendly environment which promotes a healthy work-life balance, for instance by scheduling the Linguistics and CCLPS seminar at times which allow staff with caring responsibilities to attend, and by placing a curfew on meetings after 5pm.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

3.1 Research income and related outputs
Our main priorities during this REF cycle have been to: draw on our research excellence to develop a culture of grant application (scaling up from individual seed-corn grants and small applications); increase research funding through large grant applications that generate excellence through cutting-edge projects; and build impact into all research projects.

We are proud to say that we succeeded beyond all our expectations, with an impressive **£10.9 million in research income between 2013 and 2020** (or **£443.1k per** FTE), scaling up from the **£4.9m** for Linguistics in 2008-13. Our high success rate (29%) with large funders like ERC, AHRC and Leverhulme shows the high level of recognition for our research. In turn these large projects have increased our national and international visibility (§4.3.1, 4.4). As a UoA, we are proud to rank highly for research income within SOAS.

Linguists led the way: beside **Lüpke**'s 'Crossroads project' (Leverhulme, £1m, 2014-18), others raised another £1.5m for research on language description and variation: **Lucas**'s AHRC Early Career Leadership Fellowship (£200k) resulted in the co-edited book *Arabic and contact-induced change* (2020). **Yeon**'s project on 'Varieties of Korean: Global, Local, and Individual' (Academy of Korean Studies, £900k, 2016-21) has so far produced 9 articles by the project team. **Marten**'s British Academy Small Grant followed by a Leverhulme project on 'Morphosyntactic variation in Bantu' (£200k, 2014-18) led to six journal articles, mostly co-authored by the project team. **Nikolaeva**'s Leverhulme project (£340k, 2015-19) led to the co-edited OUP volume *Prominent possessors* (2019). **Sallabank** led the language revitalisation strand (£160k) of the ERC Horizon 2020 Twinning project 'Engaged Humanities' with Warsaw and Leiden, which produced *Revitalizing Endangered Languages: A Practical Guide* (CUP), the first practical volume on language revitalisation aimed at practitioners, published with Gold Open Access.

Literature colleagues were first successful in obtaining small grants and individual fellowships, such as **Hammond**'s BA Mid-Career fellowship (2017-18, £132k), which resulted in the bilingual edition and study *The Tale of al-Barrāq* and accompanying multimedia website. Between 2014 and 2020, the **research income for Literatures grew to £3.5m.** We applied for 6 and were awarded 3 ERC Horizon 2020 grants, including **Orsin**i's £1.7m Advanced Grant 'Multilingual Locals and Significant Geographies'*,* which has resulted in three journal special issues, and 15 articles. **Hijjas** converted her ERC bid into a successful Leverhulme Leadership Award on 'Mapping Sumatra's manuscript cultures' (£920k, 2019). **Hutt** received £576k from the AHRC for a project on post-earthquake reconstruction (http://digital.soas.ac.uk/SWAY). **Ouyang** was Co-Investigator and PI for one of the seven strands in the Oxford-led OWRI 'Creative Multilingualism' project (£4m, SOAS share £276k), leading to two edited volumes with Bloomsbury publishers.

3.2 Research infrastructure and support
3.2.1 Operational structure and support: a virtuous cycle
This upsurge in research applications and awards was the outcome of a **strategic investment** by the two relevant departments and the SOAS Research Office, operationalised through **competitive Seed-Corn funding** and pre-award support (IES, §4.1). Annual departmental **Research Away-Days** included guidance on **application writing and impact**, to which we added **internal mentoring** and scrutiny of applications. We used seed-corn funding (altogether £12.9k to our UoA) for investigative workshops, like Orsini & Laachir's workshop 'Rethinking World Literature' (2012) and Hijjas's on 'Digital Humanities for Asian and African Texts' (2016), that led to successful applications to ERC and Leverhulme.

The process of applying for larger grants and project activities has significantly contributed to the dynamic research environment and cohesion of our Unit. Ouyang and Bruno contributed to Orsini's ERC 'Multilingual Locals' project and the 'Multilingual London' festival; Orsini and Laachir to Ouyang's OWRI 'Creative Multilingualism', Lüpke to Orsini's British Academy Hinglish partnership and forthcoming volume, and Orsini to Lüpke's Leverhulme 'Smallscale Multilingualism' workshop.

3.2.2 Structures
Responsibility for co-ordinating research within this UoA is shared between the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics (SLCL) and the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALC), till 2017 part of the same Faculty of Languages and Cultures (IES, §1). The Departments support research staff operationally through an **annual research allowance** of £750. The two Department Heads co-ordinate financial planning and research strategy, approve applications for internal and external funding, research leave, and Visiting Scholar and Research Associate appointments, and oversee Staff Development Reviews and the appointment of mentors. The two Heads are assisted by a further eight officers, including a Director of Research.

Apart from the Research Office (IES, §4.1), the Research Excellence team co-ordinated the School's submission to REF and provided guidance and funding on impact. The Impact team offered dedicated training, support for Impact Case Studies, and internal funding through the Impact Acceleration fund (£22.8k to our Unit), the Engagement and Impact Fund (£3.5k), and Knowledge Exchange Fund (£24k)—overall over £50k to our Unit. The Scholarly Communications Team provided regular guidance on meeting the dissemination requirements of funder, REF and SOAS policies and coordinated deposits to SOAS Research Online.

Beside the **SOAS Library** (IES §4.2), Seyfeddinipur at ELAR also provides advice and workflow models, recording equipment and dedicated technical support to staff collecting language data. Students and early career researchers benefit from the MultiLinguaLab, a dedicated computer room equipped with state-of-the art computers and specialist software for editing, transcribing, annotating and archiving linguistic data.

3.2.3 Archives

Making important contributions to the **creation of databases** for researchers, industry and other stakeholders, and the general public through our work on language documentation and manuscript studies is part of our research strategy (§1.2, point 4). Several Unit members have developed digital collections of speech data: apart from the speech-tagged corpus of Tibetan texts, Hill has also worked on deciphering the Pyu language and on the historical phonology of the Burmese languages. Marten created a database of morphosyntactic profiles of 50 Bantu languages as part of his Leverhulme project on Bantu languages. Hijjas held an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership with the British Library to digitalise and transcribe part of the extensive SOAS Malay manuscripts collection, paving the way for her new large-scale crowd-sourced manuscript transcription programme.

The **Endangered Languages Archive** is a major open-access digital repository of audio, video and textual data of endangered and lesser-described languages, with currently some 450 deposits from languages across the world, 30 contributed by SOAS staff and research students (§1.2). In addition to providing access to the language data and analysis (including metadata), the archive provides online information for potential depositors. Usage statistics for 2016-19 show 9k user logins and almost 4m page hits.

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

The UoA plays a leading role internationally within the discipline of Linguistics, particularly with regard to language description and documentation and the description and theorisation of multilingualism through research collaborations, interaction with stakeholders, our publication series, and roles within subject organisations. Within Literary Studies, the UoA has pushed the discipline of Comparative and World Literature to be more inclusive of non-Western literatures by becoming actively involved in subject organisations and publication series. It has also spearheaded collaborations around inter-Asian translation and performance studies and South-South comparative literature. High-profile international lectures and awards demonstrate international recognition for our efforts.

4.1 Academic research collaborations, networks, and partnerships
Our **national (6)** and **international (21) research collaborations** range from those with universities and research centres in the areas we study (see §1.2, point 5) to broader research networks. These include collaborations with Kenyatta University in Nairobi and the University of Dar as Salaam in Africa; INALCO, the Universities of Nantes, Bamberg, Bayreuth, Warsaw, Tampere, Prague and the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History in Jena in Europe; the Academy of Korean Studies, Mahidol University in Thailand, Nanyang Technological University Singapore Martin Chauthari in Kathmandu and the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi in Asia; the University of South Australia; and in the UK the Universities of Leeds, Kent, Lancaster, Newcastle, King's College London, Nottingham and the British Museum and the British Library. We are active members of the Consortium for Asian and African Studies (see §1.2, point 5).

Some collaborations were led by UoA members: Marten is leading a British Academy project on Bantu languages with the University of Dar es Salaam. Hill was co-investigator in the interdisciplinary ERC-Synergy grant-funded project 'Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State' (2014-20, §1.3), which specifically aimed at breaking knowledge silos and spreading good practices of data collection and management in humanities and social sciences projects (§3.2.1).

As part of his AHRC-funded Leverhulme Fellowship (2017-19), Lucas collaborated with Stefano Manfredi (SeDyL-CNRS, France) to edit *Arabic and contact-induced language change* (published open access by Language Science Press, 2019). His collaboration since 2014 with scholars at Bamberg University (Germany) and the University of Malta led to a special issue of *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* on noun phrase variation in Maltese and Maltese English (2018). He also contributes to the network 'Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics:

Bridging the Red Sea Rift, focusing on language variation and language endangerment and loss', led by Laboratoire de Linguistique de Nantes (France).

Orsini held a British Academy South Asia International Partnerships on 'Hinglish' with Ravikant of the Centre for the Study in Developing Societies (New Delhi) (2012-14, sarai.net/category/projects/hinglish/). She is part of the Postcolonial Print Culture network with Newcastle and New York University, and runs the Magazines and World Literature webinar series with University of Kent (mulosige.soas.ac.uk/podcasts/the-magazine-and-world-literature-webinar-series/).

In other projects, UoA staff were part of a team based outside SOAS: Sallabank was part of the University of Warsaw-based 'Engaged humanities in Europe: Capacity building for participatory research in linguistic-cultural heritage' (ERC Horizon 2020 Twinning Initiative); the project explored language revitalisation from a global perspective, with participants from 15 countries working on 25 minoritised languages, with summer schools, field schools, staff exchanges, and workshops. Sallabank also held two Newton-funded Mobility Fellowships (2017-18) at Mahidol University (Thailand) for projects of digital documentation of botanical knowledge, together with community members and botanists (§1.3), and of capacity building focused on developing youth participation in language and cultural reclamation among minority communities, both based on Participatory Action Research framework. A further collaborative project, funded by the Newton Fund (£100k, 2018-19), brought a group of female linguists from Mahidol to be trained in language archiving and data curation and collection by Seyfeddinipur at ELAR. On their return, they established a digital archive, which is fully localised, and ran workshops for local communities to bring their own data (§4.2.1).

Beside co-leading the 'World Literatures' strand of the AHRC-OWRI project 'Creative Multilingualism' (2016-20), Ouyang was also a member of the ICLA research network on the Leverhulme-funded network 'Landscapes of Realism: Rethinking Literary Realism(s) in Global Comparative Perspective', led by Nottingham and including Aarhus (Denmark), Geneva (Switzerland), Durham, King's College London, Queen Mary University London.

4.2 Relationships with key research users, beneficiaries and audiences
4.2.1 Engaging with diverse communities and publics
Our key beneficiaries and users beyond academia include translators, artists and local communities in the UK and in the countries we work with. Our expertise in languages and literatures makes us **in demand as consultants and advisors** for national and international cultural and governmental organisations. Our linguistic expertise has also proved valuable for IT companies.

In order to **increase visibility and capacity for writers and translators**, Ouyang regularly organizes and collaborates with Arabic translators and authors; she is a long-time collaborator of the Banipal Trust for Arab literature and has worked with the English PEN to promote multilingual literature and Arabic literary translation, as part of her strand of the AHRC-OWRI project 'Creative Multilingualism'. She convenes with Marina Warner (Birkbeck and President of the Royal Society of Literature) a series of CHASE-funded Poetry and Story Translation Workshops (2017-present) for translators from Arabic and creative writers. She served as **judge** for the International Man Booker Prize (2013-15) and the Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation (2017). She has appeared on BBC World Service to discuss the Nobel Prize for Literature, and on BBC Radio Three to speak about Multilingualism in London and the UK.

Orsini, Ouyang and Bruno worked with local **Arabic, Urdu, Chinese, Amharic and Hindi writers and poets** for the Multilingual London Festival (MoL, 2020), a collaboration with the Museum of London, in order to **increase their visibility in London**. In order to promote multilingualism as fun and empowering among schoolchildren and families, the Festival worked with MoL supplementary schools' programmer to commission creative artists from Iroko Theatre and Numbi to organise workshops around Urdu, Somali, and Yoruba; when Covid 19 forced the festival online, they created online resources instead.

Engagement with local communities includes the Linguistics students' Sylheti project, with Surma Community College in Camden, London, producing a wealth of digital resources in the community language; Bruno's ongoing work with Chinese poets in London and the London Chinese community to unearth and value their textual production; Sato-Rossberg's new UKRI-Covid-19 project (§4.2.2); Seyfeddinipur and Sallabank training local communities in language documentation (§4.1.1).

Sallabank is **consultant on languages policy** to the newly established Guernsey Language Commission, l'Académie des langues kanak in New Caledonia, and the Cook Islands Maori Language Commission. She is also on the International Academic Board of UNESCO's Chair of Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and has appeared on their website as 'expert of the month'. Watkins is consultant for the Myanmar Language commission and the National League for Democracy. Marten and others conduct government and diplomat (UK and EU) briefings through SOAS interface (e.g., on Japan & Korea, Senegal, West Africa, South Africa, Zambia, Namibia); Marten is also a long-term consultant for OUP and the Oxford English Dictionary. Seyfeddinipur is advisor to UNESCO's *Atlas of Languages of the World.*

4.2.2 Responsiveness to national and international priorities and initiatives
Our language and regional expertise has enabled us to respond to international priorities, challenges, and project calls. Our UoA responded quickly to the challenges posed by **Covid-19**. Sato-Rossberg has been awarded a UKRI Covid-19 project grant (£500k, 2021-22) to investigate official and non-official Covid-related health information among London's communities in Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Punjabi, Turkish, Urdu, Swahili, and Yoruba (§1.4). Marten set up the **Languages for Lockdown** webinar series for members of the public, involving several Unit colleagues; Lüpke was able to quickly turn her multilingual literacies programme LILIEMA into a tool for Covid-related public health information in rural Senegal (§1.4.1, point 2).

4.3 Contributions to the sustainability of the discipline
The Unit contributes to the sustainability of the disciplines of linguistics, comparative and world literature, translation studies, and literary area studies by strategically promoting new research via conferences and as editors of journals and book series key to these disciplines; by taking a leading role in subject associations; and by training future scholars.

4.3.1 Promoting new research
Several members are directly involved in promoting new research as **editors of key journals and book series** in their disciplines (see also §4.4.). Hill, Lucas, Sallabank, Watkins are involved in the online EL Publishing and its annual *Language Documentation and Description* journal (see §1.5): issue 18 (2020) is an outcome of the Sylheti Project (§4.2.1).

Beside formal weekly seminars, the Linguistics section organises the bi-annual **Language Documentation and Linguistic Theory** (**LDLT**) conference series, which attracts wide international participation. Two other research groups are the Austronesian and Papuan Languages and Linguistics Research Group (APLL), and the South of England LFG meetings, hosted by SOAS. A regular 'Linguistics in the Pub' discussion event alternates with a 'Linguistics at Lunch' session to offer a very informal and accessible platform discussion of selected topics in linguistics; early career researchers run the Grammar Group, a forum for sharing progress and problems in data analysis, and the Shut Up and Write Group, a get-together providing support for writing up research papers. Research students organise an annual Linguistics Research Student Conference.

Thanks to our project funding, we have been able to promote new research and start new interdisciplinary conversations by organising a large number of conferences as well as seminar series. Notable initiatives have included Hill's ERC-funded **'Asia Beyond Boundaries' workshops**, and the lecture series of the Circle of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies. Orsini's ERC project and Ouyang's OWRI/AHRC project and CHASE funding have brought international

speakers (30 from India, Ethiopia, Taiwan, US and Europe in 2015-19) to the regular CCLPS seminar series, and funded free short courses (Orature, Literature and History, 2018), reading groups (World Literature, 2016-18), and Arabic translation workshops (§4.2.1). They also funded **workshops** that have contributed to highlight the importance of Global South and multilingual perspectives on world literature: Reading the World (2015), Multilingual Locals and Significant Geographies before Colonialism (2016), Languages in Dialogue (2017), The West-East Lyric (2017, published as special issue of *Comparative Critical Studies*, 2020), and *Multilingualisms in World Literature* (2018, forthcoming volume with Bloomsbury). Other CCLPS workshops have highlighted popular culture in the Middle East: Laachir's Aesthetics of Politics of Contemporary Cultural Productions in Morocco (with British Council, University of Cambridge and Moroccan British Society, 2014), and Minorities and Popular Culture in Modern Middle East: Representation and Participation (with the Woolf Institute, Cambridge, 2015).

The largest conferences were organised by Sato-Rossberg and the **Centre of Translation Studies**: the 1st and 8th Asian Translation Tradition Conference (2014 and 2017, with over 100 speakers each); the 8th Translation Tradition Conference on Conflicting Ideologies and Cultural Mediation (2016); the 2nd East Asian Translation Studies Conference (2017); and the 7th Asia-Pacific Forum on Translation and Intercultural Studies (APFTIS) on Translation and Journalism (2019, 50 speakers), which led to special issues of the Taylor & Francis journal *Asia Pacific Translation and Intercultural Studies* and *Asia-Pacific Interdisciplinary Translation Studies* (Tsinghua University Press).

Unit members are also part of the London Phonology Seminar and LINKS (London Intercollegial Network of Comparative Literature) and organize and host joint events.

4.3.2 Supporting subject associations
Staff are active members of the main **national and international subject associations** in linguistics, translation, and area studies, and increasingly in comparative literature; these include the Philological Society, the International Association for Colonial and Postcolonial Linguistics, the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies, the British Comparative Literature Association, the British Association for Chinese Studies, the Association of South-East Asian Studies, the International Society of Korean Studies and Linguistics Society of Korea and the Institute of World Literature. Between 2014 and 2020 Ouyang was Trustee of the Modern Humanities Research Association and on the Research Development Committee of the International Comparative Literature Association and on the Council of the Society of Libyan Studies. Both Ouyang and Orsini were on the Executive Board of the BCLA, and Orsini of the Institute of World Literature. Marten was Honorary Secretary of the Philological Society, and Hijjas on the Executive Board of ASEAS. Sallabank of the Advisory Council of the Institute of Modern Languages Research (School of Advanced Study, University of London) and Fellow of the International Centre for Language Revitalisation (Auckland, New Zealand), etc.

4.3.3 Training future scholars
Orsini and Ouyang's involvement with the British Comparative Literature Association (BCLA) led to their teaching at the CHASE-funded Comparative Literature Summer Schools (2018, 2019) for graduate students across the UK and beyond; Orsini also taught at the Institute of World Literature Summer School (2017). After teaching at summer schools across Europe (2009-14), Sallabank taught co-organised and taught on two Newton Fund Researcher Links workshops at Mahidol University, Thailand (2015 and 2016).

4.4 Indicators of wider influence, contributions and recognition
Our national and international reputation is reflected in the honours and invitations to give prestigious lectures, and in the editorship of key journals in our disciplines.
- Hijjas is a managing editor of the SOAS journal *Indonesia and the Malay World,* the main journal on the region;
- Ouyang is Editor-in-Chief of *Middle Eastern Literatures*; she founded and co-edits the *Edinburgh Studies in Classical Arabic Literature* and is co-chair of the Editorial Board the BCLA's *Legenda Studies in Comparative Literature*;

- Orsini is an editor of the BCLA journal *Comparative Critical Studies*, co-editor of a new book series for Cambridge University Press called *Cambridge Studies in World Literature*, and regional editor of the *Murty Classical Library of India* for Harvard University Press;
- Hill is managing editor of the *Journal of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society*;
- Marten edits *Transactions of the Philological Society* and is on the editorial boards of the *Journal of African Cultural Studies,* the *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*, the *South African Journal of African Languages*, and *Marang*;
- Watkins is series co-editor of the *London Oriental and African Language Library*. **Yeon** is co-editor of the *Saffron Korean Linguistics Series*.

In addition, Hill and Marten are members of the AHRC Peer Review panel. Hill is also on the Peer Review Panel of the Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (Research Foundations Flanders). Ouyang is the interdisciplinary member of REF Main Panel D, and Marten is a member of the REF Area Studies sub-panel.

4.4.1 Awards and prizes
Several Unit members and research students have received awards and fellowships for their research:
- Fellows of the British Academy (Orsini 2016, Ouyang 2018, Nikolaeva 2019);
- Madeleine Bunting Fellow, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University (Orsini, 2013-2014);
- A W Mellon Fellow, Centre for African Language Diversity, University of Cape Town, (Marten, July-Sept 2014);
- Fall Fellow, Centre for the Study of Islam and Society, University of Leiden (Ouyang, 2016);
- Winner, Essay category, inaugural International Association of Theatre Critics (China Section) Award (Ferrari, 2019);
- Winner, Arts & Humanities Research Council 10th Anniversary Research in Films Award, 'Best film produced by a researcher or research team in the last year', for *KANRAXËL: The Confluence of Agnack* (Lüpke, 2015);
- High Commendation, Annette Kuhn Debut Essay Award awarded by *Screen* Studies UK, and Screenwriting Research Network Award for Best Journal Article (doctoral researcher Rakesh Sengupta, 2019).

4.4.2 Prestigious lectures
Unit members have been invited to deliver prestigious lectures all over the world:
- Hill: Asian Etymology: achieving faster progress and more secure results, 9th International Conference: New Horizons in Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw, Faculty of Oriental studies (2020);
- Orsini: The Social History of a Genre, Medieval History Journal Annual Lecture, New Delhi (2016); Present absence: Orientalists and Modern Indian Literatures in 19c Europe, keynote at Deutschen Orientalisten Tag, Jena (2017); Why Multilingual Literary History? And How to do it? Conference on Global Congo, University of Milan (Unimi), Gargnano (Italy) (2019); Day-long session of the Platform for Postcolonial Readings (a research network of Universities in the Netherlands) devoted to her ERC project, Amsterdam (2019);
- Ouyang: World Literature and the Silk Roads, CHASE Comparative Literature Summer School, Centre for Modern European Literature, University of Kent (2018); Coffee, Coffeehouses and Empire: The Silk Roads of World Literature. 5th International Symposium on Asian Languages and Cultures (ADES): Intersection of Cultures, Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan (2019).
- Sallabank: Models of Language Revitalisation, Center for Jeju Studies annual conference, Jeju City, Korea (2019); Resilience in Language Policy: Discourses and Practices, Plenary at Language Policy Forum: annual international conference, Edinburgh, (2019); Purism, variation, change and 'authenticity' in language documentation and revitalisation, 7th Conference on Endangered and Lesser-Known Languages, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India (2019); Language sustainability and

"saving" a language, Plenary at conference on Perspectives on language sustainability, Zadar University, Croatia (2016).