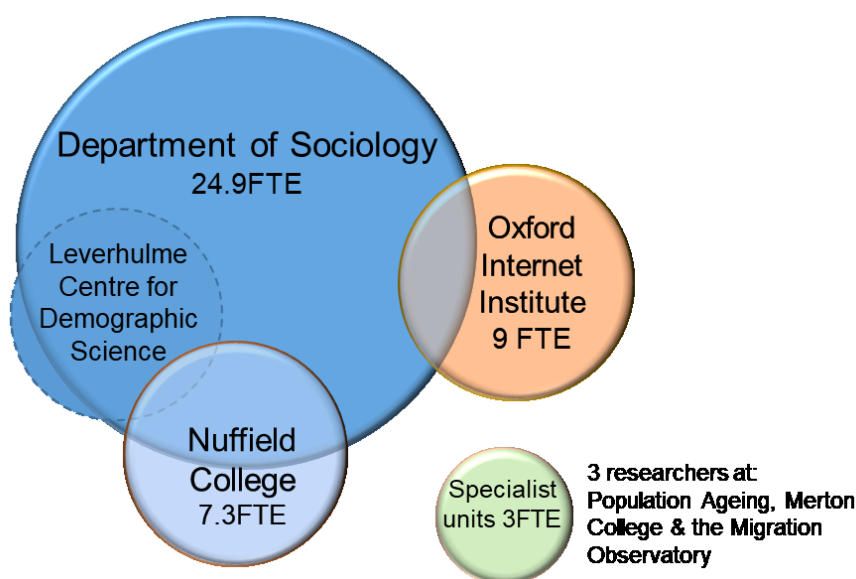


<b>Institution: University of Oxford</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: UOA 21 Sociology</b>
<b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b>

**1.1 Context and structure**

Oxford Sociology is a thriving, interdisciplinary community centred around the **Department of Sociology**, which hosts the **Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science (LCDS)**, and includes researchers from the **Oxford Internet Institute (OII)**, the Sociology Group and the Centre for Social Investigation (**CSI**) at **Nuffield College**, plus sociologists in specialised research units across the University. We collaborate to conduct theory-driven empirically rigorous research spanning the spectrum of sociological scholarship and using the full range of methodological tools available, addressing the most pressing societal challenges of our times to generate powerful public impact.



**Figure 1 UoA21 Oxford Sociology (44.2 FTE)**

Key to our success is our inclusive and supportive research environment which attracts researchers at the forefront of their fields and gives them the freedom to innovate. Our academics come to sociology from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, including demography, economics, criminology, politics, classics, history, socio-informatics, and epidemiology. Together, they deliver theory-driven, interdisciplinary empirical research tackling issues such as social inequality, ethnic and gender discrimination, political misinformation, health inequality and COVID, and cybercrime.

The international and collaborative nature of our research environment has positioned Oxford Sociology as a global player, enabling us to attract researchers from across the world (over 70% of our staff and students are not from the UK originally) who are at the forefront of methodological developments and innovative data use. Internationally, Oxford Sociology enjoys a strong reputation for its long tradition in empirical sociology (reflected, for instance, in consistent top-5 in subject rankings, since 2018, across QS, Shanghai Ranking, and THE World University Rankings). We also occupy a unique role in the UK sociology landscape in that we focus on empirical research with a comparatively large proportion of researchers working with quantitative methods and innovative use of (new forms of) data.

Cross-collaboration across Oxford Sociology is fully embedded in our research culture and strategy. The Department’s close working relationship with Nuffield College is evident in the six joint appointments, joint supervision and scholarships, and location of the new departmental building opposite the college. With OII there are joint positions (e.g. Neff), joint research projects (e.g. ‘Domestic AI’), joint seminar series (e.g. on social networks), and shared supervision and teaching. The Department hosts the LCDS with overlapping positions in the Said Business School and the Institute for New Economic Thinking. We encourage and facilitate interdisciplinary

collaboration across the social sciences in Oxford, nationally, and in particular with international partners. This approach is epitomised in our integration of a diverse range of research areas:

**Table 1. Research Areas and a selection of notable achievements**

<p>Social inequalities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breen’s <i>Education and Intergenerational Social Mobility in Europe and the United States</i> (SUP) provides a state-of-the art analysis of the evidence for education as a driving factor in social mobility.</li> <li>• Heath’s work documents racial discrimination in the UK labour market based on field experiments sponsored by the UK government and H2020.</li> <li>• Based on unique longitudinal data collection, <i>Growing up in Diverse Societies</i> (OUP) by Jonsson et al. provides a comprehensive analysis of the integration of immigrant children in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden.</li> <li>• Kan’s European Research Council (ERC) project (€2million 2018) GENTIME addresses gender inequality in time use across East Asian and Western societies.</li> </ul>
<p>Families, population, and demography</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £10million Leverhulme Trust Centre grant (M.Mills, Kasyhap, Monden, Kirk, Breen, Ermisch) to start the Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science. Launched in October 2019, LCDS quickly shifted to COVID-19 research and published 46 papers in its first year, 16 on COVID-19.</li> <li>• ERC grants: CHRONO (M.Mills €2.5million) investigates the links between biology, health and family; FAMSIZEMATTERS (Monden €1.9million) studies how family size matters for the (re)production of social inequalities.</li> </ul>
<p>Crime, justice, and governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hamill’s Wellcome &amp; MRC funded project (£250,000) combines ethnography, agent based modelling and social network analysis to innovate social scientific techniques to combat the health crisis stemming from the proliferation of sub-standard and falsified medicines.</li> <li>• In <i>Home Free - Prisoner Reentry and Residential Change after Hurricane Katrina</i> (OUP), Kirk describes his implementation and evaluation of a real-world solution to criminal recidivism, a housing mobility program for former prisoners.</li> <li>• Lusthaus pioneers the social scientific study of cybercrime in his book <i>Industry of Anonymity</i> (HUP) – the basis of a growing research programme.</li> <li>• Payne’s <i>Transitional Justice and Corporate Accountability from Below</i> (CUP) advances human right violation victims’ rights to truth and justice.</li> </ul>
<p>Social movements and political sociology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESRC-projects by Richards and Heath (£308,000) provide insights into electoral behaviour in the UK’s General Election and Brexit referendum.</li> <li>• Fisher co-develops and executes the methodology for the accurate exit polls, incl those that stunned the nation in the 2015 and 2017 UK General Elections.</li> <li>• Howard’s ERC-funded (€2million) Computational Propaganda project analyses misinformation campaigns. His book <i>Lie Machines</i> (YUP) examines the world’s successful misinformation initiatives—including those used in Brexit and U.S. elections.</li> </ul>
<p>Digital societies, Big Data, and Artificial Intelligence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neff’s book <i>Self Tracking</i> (MIT) analyses how the increasing ubiquity of wearable devices which track movement shapes daily life. Her BA Mid-career fellowship addresses gender and the production of data.</li> <li>• Lehtonvirta’s ERC-funded (€1.5million) project <i>iLabour</i> exposes the changing nature of work in the Gig Economy.</li> <li>• The Oxford Internet Survey, the only ongoing survey of Internet use in Britain, led by Blank, charts the growth of internet penetration across society over the past decade (DCMS funded).</li> <li>• ‘Domestic AI’ by Hertog &amp; Lehtonvirta, a multi-method ESRC-funded project, is shaping our understanding of the impact of AI on informal work and care.</li> </ul>

**1.2 Research and Impact Strategy**

Engagement, knowledge exchange and impact have all been at the heart of our efforts and we continue to place emphasis on the autonomy of our faculty, nurturing the flexibility and freedom to follow lines of enquiry and funding opportunities which arise according to academic curiosity and societal needs. This has enabled our researchers to flourish, delivering high-quality publications and academic as well as societal impact.

Table 2 summarises growth and change compared to REF2014. We have achieved growth in staff numbers (Cat A) in line with our research ambitions. The size of the PhD cohort has remained relatively stable in line with our emphasis on quality over quantity and University-wide quota.

**Table 2. Strategic growth and change in Oxford Sociology**

	REF2014	REF2021
Submitted staff (headcount)	35	46
Submitted staff (FTE)	32.9	44.2
Early Career Researchers	15	17
Female	26%	30%
PhD awarded (average per year)	12	13
PhD awarded (total)	59.5	91.5
Research income (whole period)	£12.3M	£ 24.9M
Research income (average per year)	£2,452,676	£3,561,937

1.2.1 Implementation of our 2014 strategy

In REF2014 we committed to four strategic objectives. These have been achieved and developed during this assessment period as follows:

**Objective 1. Expand further by recruiting outstanding sociologists to develop our distinctive research profile.** We identified strengthening the existing profile of Oxford Sociology while diversifying our research agenda, as a key priority in our REF2014 submission. Since then, we have invested in new appointments of academics at different career stages. We attracted a new Statutory Professor in Sociology (M.Mills), a Professorship in Sociology (Breen), a new chair at OII Professor of Sociology, Information and International Affairs (Howard), and we created new Associate Professorships (Kashyap, Social Demography; and Neff, Professor of Technology and Society). We partnered with Oxford’s Department of Politics and International Relations to create the Oxford Q-Step Centre for quantitative methods teaching, and appointed a new faculty member to lead these efforts (Kirk). As part of the LCDS we hired two Departmental Research Lecturers (Block & Rahal) and a Deputy Director (Dowd, Associate Professor of Demography & Population Health). We maintained our long-term commitment to supporting ECRs through the appointment of Departmental Lecturers (Tropf, Richards), a career development post with a strong emphasis in research. In addition, we have supported 12 ECRs to secure externally-funded competitive postdoctoral fellowships, such as BA Postdoctoral and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships. These appointments have allowed us to diversify the breadth of our research areas (e.g. health & sociogenomics, internet & technology, economic sociology, computational sociology), as well as maintain our existing strengths in social stratification and mobility, political sociology, and quantitative methods.

**Objective 2. Continue growth in research income (including funding for doctoral students) while diversifying its sources.** Compared to REF2014, we grew our research income by 103%, while the number of funded projects increased by 13.5%. We diversified our sources of income by increasing the number of sponsors to 65 (i.e. by 16%). This success has been achieved by creating an inclusive and supportive research culture which encourages researchers to not only pursue ambitious research funding applications, but also provides the necessary environment in which they can fully realise their research agendas after the award (detailed in Sections 2 and 3). Compared to REF2014, the number of successful grant applicants more than doubled to 30 in 2014-2021 (of which 37% female and 30% ECRs).

We have significantly increased funding for doctoral students. The proportion of funded students increased and self-funded students fell from 1/3 to 1/5. We achieved this through direct re-investment of fee income into student awards (11% in 2019/2020). New philanthropic funds have also been established, e.g. the Halsey Scholarship, and the Shirley Scholars Fund, which supports graduate students working at the frontiers of knowledge in technology, data, and Artificial Intelligence. Nuffield College introduced guaranteed full-funding for our top-ranked students. This increased the annual investment in Nuffield studentships from £78,000 in 2013 to £202,000 in 2017-2021. We also allocated funds towards studentships in grant applications (5 through ERC, and 12 for the next 10 years through the Leverhulme Trust LCDS grant).

**Objective 3. Enhance impact for non-academic users.** Knowledge exchange and impact are an integral part of our research strategy. Beyond the research facilitators' support (see section 3), our researchers benefited from embedding an expert Research Impact Facilitator within our research support structure, who has been pivotal to the development of impact activities including our case studies. The emphasis on building a culture of sustainable impact is imprinted on colleagues through the delivery of impact induction sessions for new starters and regular workshops and training for all staff members. The Research Impact Facilitator works with researchers on funding bids to help embed impact in proposed projects, as opposed to the outdated approach of regarding impact as a 'value added' activity. The interdisciplinary nature of the facilitator position – they are part of a Divisional team of Research Impact Facilitators – also greatly aids cross-department cooperation on public engagement with research and knowledge-exchange activities.

The success of our impact strategy is epitomised by the fact that our four submitted impact case studies represent only a small sample of our impact activities, and by the agility our researchers have shown to produce impactful research during this REF cycle. Our initial longlist of impact case studies included examples of: Shaping the legislative agenda on closing the immunity gap on 'the disappeared' in South America (Payne); Re-orientating UK cyber-policy from a 'protective' to a 'preventative' stance (Lusthaus); Measuring global gender inequality indicators using online data in real-time (Kashyap); Predicting UK election results (Fisher); Framing UK policy for coping with an aging population (Leeson); Informing UK science policy regarding the regulation of genomic data collection, usage and interpretation (M.Mills and Rahal). See also Section 4.

**Objective 4. Establish a new centre for population studies.** One of UoA21's greatest successes since REF 2014 has been securing a £10million grant from the Leverhulme Trust for the Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science (LCDS), the first Leverhulme centre to be funded in the Social Sciences. Established in autumn 2019 for an initial period of 10 years, this major interdisciplinary research centre aims to disrupt and realign how we measure and model populations by infusing new types of data, methods and unconventional approaches to tackle the most challenging demographic problems of our time. The Centre brings together multiple disciplines from sociology and demography to criminology, economics, statistics, molecular genetics, biology, history, and marketing and business. It has partnerships with the University of Cambridge, Princeton University (US), Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (Germany) and industrial partners. New collaborations in Africa are being developed through Professor Doodoo, former Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Development at the University of Ghana, who joined us as British Academy Global Professor in January 2021.

1.2.2 Research and Impact Strategy for the next Five Years

The 2014 strategic objectives have been mutually supportive, with the recruitment of outstanding sociologists, the establishment of LCDS attracting external research income, and enhancing our impact beyond academia. In the next five years, we will continue to build on our overarching aims of consolidating and enhancing our research excellence and our contributions to the discipline and to society.

**I. Continue to facilitate excellence in research** across all research groups and clusters. This continues to be our first aim as it underpins impact and an environment to attract, develop, and retain the strongest researchers.

**II. Consolidate and increase investment in and support of ECRs** to continue being a springboard for outstanding ECRs to become independent PIs, permanent lecturers in the UK and around the world, and practitioners in industry and government. We will achieve this by maintaining and refining our structured and holistic programme of mentoring, appraisals, tailored access to facilities and resources, and training provision. We will encourage ECRs to work closely with our Research Impact Facilitator and the University's Policy Engagement Team to devise personal impact pipelines and portfolios. We continue to encourage and facilitate funding schemes designed for ECRs, including those that require long-term commitment.

**III. Increase diversity in our staff and research students** that enables us to continue to achieve excellence and increase multidisciplinary and international research collaborations. In our Athena SWAN self-evaluation process (see section 2), we confirmed and redoubled our commitment to increase the number of women within our senior academic staff and enhance career progression for female staff and students. We aim to achieve this over the next five years through a focussed and reflexive recruitment and development strategy, as well as promoting part-time and flexible working, supporting and encouraging applications to the University's Returning Carers' Fund, and ensuring our search committees are gender-balanced and well-trained. The Equality & Diversity Committee will oversee implementation of our 64-point Athena Swan action plan.

**IV. Continue to attract the very best students and widen access** by providing fully funded places to all our PhD students by the end of the next REF period. Full funding allows us recruit the best students in the world and train the next generation of sociologists regardless of background or financial situation. We will achieve this by building on ongoing initiatives in development (i.e. creating new endowed scholarships through matched-funding with philanthropy), partnerships with industry and non-commercial partners, and grant funding for scholarships. We have already secured support for scholarships through a new Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarships grant ("Moving Beyond Inequality" £270K) starting in 2021.

**V. Continue to increase the impact of our research** on the lives and wellbeing of people across the world by helping to reduce social inequalities and injustices. As in REF2014, enhancing the impact of our research continues to be a core aim. Over the next period, we will build on the momentum we have achieved by: firstly, increasing our co-production of research across the Unit to collectively leverage our interdisciplinary expertise. Secondly, by using the University's Policy Engagement networks and through mentoring for ECRs and to shorten the pathway to impact by drawing on expertise and local knowledge by working directly with local partners in government, NGOs and industry. Finally, by enhancing our research visibility beyond academia through the appointment of a dedicated Communications Officer in 2020.

1.2.3. Strategy development, implementation and monitoring

Issues related to research strategy, policy and practice as well as funding and impact priorities are led by the Research Committee. Chaired by the Research Director (currently Hamill), this comprises the Head of Department (HoD), Research Facilitator, representatives of the LCDS,



and representatives of other academic and fixed-term research staff. Research and impact are also standing items on all key committees, especially those that have full membership and bring together all sections of the staff, including ECRs, established faculty, and student representatives. Our governance structure encourages participation in decision-making. In 2016, we modified our constitution to increase representation of ECRs and fixed-term staff across all committees. This structure ensures we are driven by our academics' research interests and can react to societal challenges and funder priorities in an agile manner.

#### 1.2.4 Open Research Environment

Our researchers embrace the turn to Open Science. Open Science advocates such as Engzell, Hogan, and Rahal encourage and help staff and students to use non-commercial open repositories for publications (e.g. SocArxiv); to produce code and replication packages (e.g. Github); and to develop open tools and teaching materials. Rahal is a steering group member of 'Reproducible Research Oxford', an Oxford-wide network (<https://ox.ukrn.org/>). Many staff and students actively participate in this network and the recurrent Berlin-Oxford Summer School on Open Research. Our researchers work with the University and Plan S to make all research open access from 2021.

We actively support the shift from licensed to open software (R and Python) that makes research accessible for everyone around the world. We support this in teaching too: all but two modules across our unit have already switched to open software, and those two will follow soon. Moreover, our researchers contribute Open Science tools to the global community. Three prominent examples are: 1) Network Canvas (<https://networkcanvas.com>) – a open source cross-platform suite of software for surveying personal networks, designed around the needs of researchers and participants by Hogan in partnership with Northwestern University; 2) the GWAS Diversity Monitor (Rahal & M.Mills) that tracks the diversity of participants across all published Genome Wide Association Studies (<https://gwasdiversitymonitor.com>); 3) the new approach Hale developed, in partnership with US universities and GESIS, for inferring demographics from online profiles, identifying inclusion biases, and correcting for these biases – their open-source Python library tool is used several thousand times per month.

#### 1.2.5 Research Integrity

The **Departmental Research Ethics Committee** (DREC), led by the Research Director, is part of the University's ethics structure and ensures that all research projects abide by the University's Integrity in Research Code. DREC reviews all ethics applications at first stage. Due to the sensitive nature of much of our research, these reviews provide significant input into each project plan. DREC works with the Central University Research Ethics Committee on particularly complex projects. We provide mandatory research ethics training for all our researchers and students at the local level. Since 2020, our researchers also follow compulsory training through the Social Science Division's Epigeum research integrity course.

## 2. People

**Oxford Sociology is our people.** Our support for each other determines our success in all areas. Our diversity in both staff and students is critical to our wellbeing as well as to ensuring the continued social relevance and impact of our work. We are committed to further progress here and are currently working towards Athena SWAN Bronze recognition. Recruiting, developing, and retaining academic and research staff of the highest calibre and at all career stages is paramount to our research objectives, the rigour of our research agenda, and the quality of our teaching.

### **2.1 Equality and Diversity**

Oxford Sociology is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity, and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all our people are respected - staff and students alike. Our public research, most obviously on

social inequalities, reflects these concerns; as does our engagement in the wider University, for example as a contributor to the recently-established Oxford and Colonialism network, a project which aims to critically engage with colonial legacies in the institution.

The Department of Sociology will submit its application for the Athena SWAN Bronze award in April 2021. Although this submission was delayed due to the pandemic, we are already embedding the principles into our research strategy and culture. In the academic year 2019/20, our Self-Assessment Team undertook an in-depth review and identified a 64-point action plan. Of these, key steps already enacted include the establishment of the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC). A sub-committee of the Steering Committee, the EDC is responsible for critical reflection on, and monitoring of, the embedding of the principles of Athena SWAN and the Race Equality Charter.

A key weakness motivating our efforts here relates to gender. The number of female permanent staff and Associate or Full Professors increased from four to seven since REF2014, but this remains far below our expectation. As Table 3 shows, the number of BAME faculty increased from 2 to 6 (13% of our staff). We have recently (January 2021) welcomed the Department’s first Black Professor (Dodoo). Over 70% of our staff were not born in the UK, with 16 different countries represented. We will continue to ensure that each future appointment is an opportunity to attract as diverse a pool of applicants as possible, and are also addressing specific blockages identified within the Athena SWAN action plan.

These include the progression of women from PGR to ECR to PI and permanent positions, as well as the number of direct appointments of women to senior positions. A focus of our approach to research facilitation is to support people to make the step to PI, and awareness of past gender inequalities informs our approach. For example, Hertog joined on a postdoctoral position in an ERC Project (GENTIME) and was supported to develop her own ESRC project, on which she is now PI.

**Table 3. Changes in members by staff category, REF2014 and REF2021**

Staff category	REF2014		REF2021	
Fixed-term postdoctoral researchers & lecturers	17	49%	20	43%
<i>of which women</i>	5	29%	7	35%
<i>of which BAME</i>	0	0%	4	20%
Associate & Full Professors, permanent researchers	18	51%	26	57%
<i>of which women</i>	4	22%	7	27%
<i>of which BAME</i>	2	11%	2	8%
Women	9	26%	14	30%
BAME	2	6%	6	13%

The selection of REF outputs was a rigorous process to ensure parity of treatment across all staff. Starting in spring 2019, with an additional call in late 2019, all members were asked to nominate outputs they felt were their most REF-excellent work. Nominated outputs were then reviewed by two readers according to the REF criteria. Based on the review grades, the REF Lead and REF Coordinator made final selections. The distribution of outputs was as follows: one output: 15 staff; two outputs: 15; three outputs: 5; four outputs: 5; five outputs: 6. The selection of impact case studies was made collectively by the REF Working Group in September 2020 on the basis of the significance and reach of their impact.

To increase access for students with caring and work responsibilities, we introduced a part-time PhD programme and increased places on part-time MSc and MPhil routes into the PhD. We participate in the university-wide UNIQ+ internship programme and, in 2019, we launched the Nuffield Undergraduate Scholars Institute. Both are fully paid summer programmes to expand access to students whose socioeconomic background or other life circumstances have made it more difficult to consider graduate study.

We do not tolerate any form of harassment and expect all members, visitors and contractors to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration. The Department of Sociology, OII and Nuffield College each have local Harassment Advisors who advise in complete confidence on alleged or apparent breaches of the University's harassment policy. This support is complemented by two divisional Harassment Advisors, and the University's Harassment telephone line. Unconscious bias training is mandatory and, in 2019, we introduced voluntary bystander training.

## ***2.2 Academic staff***

**We strengthen our research areas and research leadership by developing and attracting researchers at the forefront of their disciplines and giving them the freedom to explore innovative research and create impact, by our commitment to fostering the optimum work environment and facilitating career development opportunities at all career stages. These activities are underpinned by our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.**

Since 2014, we have invested in international leaders in their area of research with a number of key appointments (Breen, Dowd, Howard, Kashyap, Kirk, M.Mills, Neff, Vedres), all of whom are at different stages in their professional careers but each with a well-established track-record. Their leadership in their respective fields has guided our research agenda and developed workstreams – some of which have evolved into research centres, such as LCDS led by M.Mills (whose outputs are returned to UoA1, demonstrating our interdisciplinary nature). The appointments of M.Mills, Dowd, Neff and Kashyap enabled us to increase female representation among Statutory and Associate Professors, and thus increase the proportion of women in our academic leadership (M.Mills was Head of Department 2015-2018).

The fact that all our staff are highly research-active – as evidenced by more than 700 research outputs and over 150 grants in this REF period – is testament to the success of our approach. Another indicator of its success is that the pool of staff applying for grants has become more diverse. Not only have we increased the number of funders (see section 3), but more importantly, more women, ECRs and BAME staff; staff with care responsibilities; and staff across more topics and methodological approaches, have applied for and received competitive grants that allow them to pursue their research goals (examples include Kan, Kolpashnikova, Zhou, Hertog). A further indicator of our supportive environment is that, since 2016, we have had a 100% success rate in promotion applications: two Associate Professorships (Dowd, Vedres) and full Professorships (Neff, Monden, Lehdonvirta, Kirk).

### *Induction, mentoring, and development*

All staff members, regardless of career stage, participate in our locally designed comprehensive induction programme, introducing resources, policies, and the administration team who support research, grants, and fellowship applications.

We allocate mentors to all ECRs and fixed-term researchers. Mentors offer advice on research, publications, impact, balancing different responsibilities of an academic job, and career planning. New permanent staff also receive mentoring during their five-year initial period of office, after which they are appointed until retirement. We offer a voluntary annual appraisal to permanent faculty in addition to Oxford's compulsory five-year appraisal. The appraisals are important opportunities to explore aspirations, address any challenges experienced by faculty, and plan sabbaticals and promotion applications over the longer term.

### *Protection of research time*

The research time of permanent faculty in their initial period of office is protected through reduced administrative and examining duties; we do not ask new recruits to take on significant administrative roles, such as course director or chair of examinations, during the probation period. This allows appointees to thrive and establish their research agenda.



The Department has increased research allowances for faculty members to £2,000 per year and has widened eligibility to include staff on fixed-term contracts. Additional research allowances are provided by Colleges. The increased spend on research assistance by graduate students (a total of almost £50,000 in 2019/2020 only) creates mutually beneficial opportunities for staff and students in which established faculty and ECRs are able to draw upon a pool of high-quality research students, and graduates are able to gain valuable experience from researchers who are at the forefront of their fields. More than 30 MSc and PhD students work as research assistants across the full range of our research projects at any one time.

In 2017 we implemented a workload management scheme to monitor teaching and supervision loads, administrative, and examining responsibilities. This scheme has allowed us to recognise previously 'invisible' labour, such as external research collaborations, journal editorial roles, and external examining. These activities are extremely valuable and strengthen our links and research networks in the UK and abroad (details in Section 4). Moreover, the new scheme has helped us allocate teaching and administrative duties more efficiently and fairly, to better protect research time of all members and uphold our values of equality and diversity. This helps to ensure that early- and mid-career academics can progress their research agendas. We operate a flexible approach to teaching buy-outs, which enables our researchers to focus their efforts on their research projects. All permanent members of staff are entitled to one year of sabbatical leave in every seven to fully focus on research.

We actively promote divisional and University opportunities to support our staff, such as The Returning Carers' Fund. One researcher (Rotondi) commented how this fund had been a great help: she used it to employ a Research Assistant to accommodate new childcare responsibilities and bring her project back on stream. She then moved on to a permanent lectureship (in Switzerland).

All researchers also have access to the Business Engagement team in the Division and Oxford University Innovation. Both give workshops in the Unit on how they facilitate exchange between academia and business, industry and third sector parties. See also 1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 3.2 for more details on our support to staff to achieve the impact, engagement and partnerships described in sections 1 and 4.

### **2.3 Early Career Researchers**

Oxford Sociology hosts a vibrant community of 17 Early Career Researchers (ECRs). They form a diverse cohort. Some are funded by individual fellowships from the British Academy (3) or European Commission (1), some work on externally funded projects (5) (Leverhulme Trust, Horizon2020/ERC), while about half (8) are directly funded by the UoA. Two are appointed as Departmental Lecturers (Rahal, Richards) and one as Associate Professor (Kashyap). Over the assessment period, we have increased the number of female ECRs as part of our objective of increasing the proportion of women across all levels and to support female career progression to senior leadership positions.

ECRs are essential for a vibrant and innovative research culture, and a central element of our approach is to ensure ECRs have opportunities to develop and are maximally supported to make the next step in their career. We have balanced the type of appointments to create equilibrium between ongoing research and new research ideas. The creation of two new Departmental Lectureships with significant research time allowed us to hire two ECRs (Richards and Tropf) who developed different research agendas (Tropf has since taken up a permanent position in France). The LCDS offers many opportunities to ECRs and all positions are for at least three years. Likewise, Nuffield College postdoctoral positions are for three years and fully focussed on research, enabling ECRs to establish a solid research trajectory early in their careers.

We are committed to developing the next generation of research leaders. We follow, and aim to exceed, the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. To be a true springboard where ECRs can focus on their research and build their skills and CVs for the next

step in their career, we offer professional development support to ensure they benefit from an enhanced layer of support in addition to that offered to all members of staff (see section 2.2).

During this REF assessment period, many ECRs hosted by Oxford Sociology made the step to permanent appointments as Assistant Professors (e.g. Van Winkle, Przepiorka, Tropf, Loopstra, Garratt, Zhao, Di Stasio, Behrman, Nivette and Rotondi) or Associate Professors (Sironi & Aksoy at UCL, Kashyap, Reeves and Hale at Oxford, Pettinicchio at Toronto, Yasseri at UCD), as well as Senior Research Fellows (Hogan at Oxford) or full professor (Barban at Bologna); while others made a successful step to industry (e.g. Altintas to Facebook). Many secured external funding to become a PI with us (e.g. Rahal, Kolpashnikova and Lusthaus) - a clear demonstration of our ability to create a research environment which serves as a springboard for research leadership for those at an early career stage. "I don't want to give an academy awards speech, but many thanks to everyone on this. There has been so much work and support from so many people to make this happen" wrote Lusthaus upon receiving his research grant with the Home Office. Another example, Rovira, who arrived on a short-term contract to finish supporting a particular research project, successfully went on to secure a BA Postdoctoral Fellowship after having been fully supported through the application process by our Research Facilitation team and Divisional workshops. The strength of our approach is also evidenced by the distribution of REF outputs: 35% of our ECRs contribute three or more outputs, which is similar to non-ECR staff (34%).

#### *Personal development review*

We have introduced a Personal Development Review (PDR) scheme for ECRs and fixed-term staff who are not eligible to take part in the University academic appraisal process, which is designed for permanent and more senior members of staff. Staff have the option to have their PDR either with their line manager or with another senior faculty member of their choosing. This scheme allows a two-way discussion of all aspects of career development. As a result of these conversations, we have enhanced our induction process, ensured that tailor-made training takes a prominent place during ECRs' time at Oxford, and increased representation and the opportunity to gain experience in governance.

#### *Grant and fellowship application support*

Having expanded our Research Facilitation team during the assessment period, we have been able to enhance the support we provide for ECRs in applying for external funding and preparing them for their next professional step. We foster a supportive culture where ECRs and faculty help each other by peer-reviewing proposals and holding mock interviews for grants and jobs. After a recent Research Committee meeting one fixed-term researcher (Hertog) wrote: "As a junior researcher, I do really appreciate how much thought goes into enabling continuing support for early career applications, which may not be generating much money in and of themselves, but are so crucial for establishing careers".

## **2.4 Research Students**

Oxford Sociology offers three MSc programmes (Sociology; Social Data Science; Social Science of the Internet), one MPhil degree (Sociology and Demography) and three DPhil (PhD) programmes (Sociology; Information, Communication and the Social Sciences; Social Data Science). We have awarded 13 doctoral degrees on average per year, for a total of 91.5 over this REF period (the decimal reflects the interdisciplinary nature of our research environment, with co-supervision across other UoAs, primarily Politics and Area Studies).

In any one year, we are home to about 60 PhD students. We recruit students from a wide range of disciplines. Our graduate intake is highly international (in the last three years: 60% overseas, 17% EU, and 23% UK), hailing from all continents. We recruit to our PhD programme on the basis of an application form, a research proposal and two writing samples. We seek evidence of research excellence in terms of previous degree achievements and writing samples, taking account too of our capacity to offer supervision and any necessary training required for individual projects.

The success of our programme is evidenced by our students' solo-authored peer-reviewed article and book publications (unfortunately ineligible for REF). A strong and visible indicator of success are the destinations of our students. Among doctoral students graduated since 2014, six students (two male and four female) have already secured an Associate Professorship/Senior Lectureship (at Oxford, Strathclyde, Ottawa, UT-Sidney, Tsinghua, and Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile). The largest group, about half, hold postdoctoral and (senior) research fellow positions, mostly at research universities and institutes in the UK (including Oxford, Glasgow, Manchester, LSE, Southampton) and abroad (Bamberg, ETH, Hertie School Berlin, INED-Paris, NYU, Yale, Zurich). A further 28% hold lectureships/assistant professorships, often with tenure, in the UK (including Edinburgh, Exeter, LSE, Manchester, Oxford, UCL) and abroad (including Hong Kong; Leipzig; American University of Beirut; Universidad Autónoma de Chile; Bocconi; Maastricht). A smaller group (10%) goes onto research-intensive jobs in national or international government (e.g. BEIS and ESRC in the UK; Danish Ministry of Finance, and the World Health Organisation) or consultancy jobs, while the remainder pursue a variety of careers. We regularly invite alumni to talk to our students about their careers in and outside academia.

### *Support*

The majority of our PhD students (>80%) received partial or full scholarship either through our direct sponsorship, our participation in the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership, research grants (ERC and LCDS), or Oxford-wide schemes such as Clarendon and Rhodes Scholarships. Many students also win a scholarship from other local and overseas private and national foundations. We have also developed industry-supported studentships, for instance the Futures of Online Consumption project with Tesco Labs.

In 2018, we introduced writing-up awards to help students close to completion, and hardship awards (in addition to the University's hardship fund) for all students. We spent £22,000 in 18/19, £50,000 in 19/20 and have doubled this in 20/21. Upon receiving a writing-up award, one student (Simonsson) wrote "I am so immensely grateful for this and past financial support from the Sociology Department, which has really made a huge difference". This student subsequently progressed to a postdoctoral position at University of Wisconsin-Madison.

We support students with disabilities to ensure that we provide them with an appropriate study and working environment in the Department, including any special adjustments based on the assessment of the University's Disability Advisory Service.

### *Supervision and monitoring*

In addition to one or two supervisors to guide the research, PhD students also have an advisor at their college who provides pastoral and general advice. Supervisor(s), together with the student develop annual bespoke training and development plans. They review and comment on the student's progress and needs in our Graduate Supervision Reporting system. This allows timely identification of potential problems and extra support to be put in place where needed. A crucial part of the programme is formal assessment of the student's work by two additional faculty. At the first stage, the assessors interrogate the feasibility of the project. At the second stage, in the third year, the assessors scrutinise two substantive chapters and provide a detailed report with constructive feedback.

### *Training and development*

Our structured research and training programme prepares students for academic life and the wider job market. Our students partake in a compulsory suite of research seminars, professional development workshops, skills training courses, and departmental seminars throughout the duration of the degree. Examples of workshop topics include: managing an academic career; publishing the thesis as a book; publishing journal articles; reviewing for journals; giving a job talk; and careers outside academia. Second-year PhDs present work in progress to faculty and fellow students at the annual Oxford Sociology PhD Conference to practise their presentation skills and receive feedback in a supportive environment. Most students present their work at national and international conferences, supported by a research allowance. They further benefit from our international training partnerships and summer schools (section 4).

*Representation*

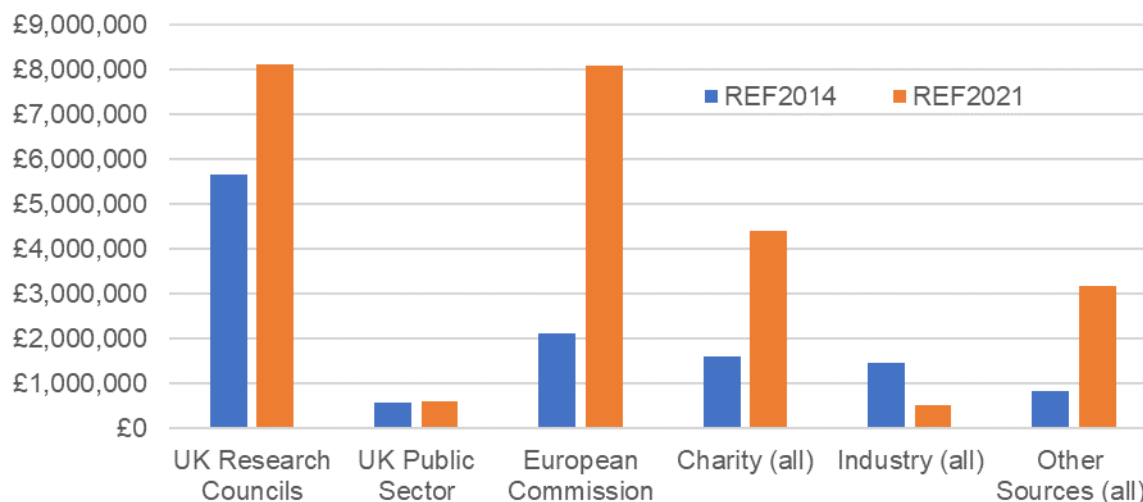
During this REF period, we have added student representation to our Graduate Studies Committee and Departmental Committee. Three times a year, research students also put forward suggestions and feedback to the Department’s leadership through the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee. As a result, and in support of equality and diversity goals, we have introduced transparent processes to apply for additional funding support and to allocate Teaching Assistance and Research Assistance opportunities.

**3. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

**3.1 Research Income**

We value high-quality research regardless of whether it requires external funding. Our researchers pursue grants from the most appropriate sources, whether or not full economic costs are covered, to fulfil their research visions.

**Total income has doubled to £24.9million compared to the REF2014 period (£12.2million).** This includes £8.1million from research councils such as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and British Academy, £8million from the European Commission, and £4.4million from charities such as the Wellcome Trust, Leverhulme Trust, and the Open Society Foundation. We won over **150 grants** since 2014 from an increasingly diverse array of **65 funders**, including large international foundations and industry sources, as well as UK and European research councils who remain among our core funders. The significant increase in our research income since 2014, together with the diversification of income sources, demonstrate we have met our strategic research income objective detailed in our REF2014 submission. Our highlights include: **10 competitively-awarded individual European Research Council (ERC) grants** (Starting (2), Consolidator (4), Advanced (3), Proof of Concept (1)) with Dowd recently winning a further £2million ERC Consolidator grant to start in 2021; **12 prestigious individual Fellowships** awarded by the British Academy, ESRC and European Commission (£2.1million). We also won a £10million **Leverhulme Trust Research Centre grant** (2019-2029) for the multidisciplinary Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science (LCDS). Nuffield College provides rent-free accommodation (worth £330,000) and a further £750,000 in financial support to the LCDS over 10 years. Awarded in 2019 to deliver a step-change in the social sciences, the LCDS will appoint 32 people to academic and research posts over the next years. This will create a unique and diverse research environment within Oxford Sociology, shaping a new generation of scholars. This dynamic research environment is already attracting world-class collaborators and new sources of funding (e.g. Dowd’s ERC Consolidator grant, one BA Global Professorship, one BA Newton fellowship, and three MSCA fellowships starting in 2021) which will assure further growth and consolidate the strength of Oxford Sociology.





**Figure 2. Research income by source, REF2014 and REF2021**

**Our funding sources have significantly diversified since 2014:** whereas in the last REF period we drew 46% of our funding from UK research councils, we have reduced this dependency to 33% (Table 4). Conversely, funding from the EU Government has increased from 17% to 32%, whilst funding from charities has increased from 13% to 18%. Note that the reduction in industry income is mainly due to the planned end of the HBSC-funded global ageing survey in the previous REF period. We have established 14 new industry grants in current period. The number of different funders increased by 16%. We anticipate continuing this diversification of our funding sources in the coming years.

**Table 4. Share of different funding streams**

	REF2014	REF2021
UK Research Councils	46%	33%
UK Public Sector	5%	2%
European Commission	17%	32%
Charity (all)	13%	18%
Industry (all)	12%	2%
Other Sources (all)	7%	13%

We have won more than 10 competitive grants (£250,000) supporting impactful research projects, including substantial knowledge exchange with government, industry and the third sector. We also make careful use of internal grant schemes, such as the **ESRC Impact Acceleration Account** and **Public Engagement with Research Seed Fund**, to provide funds for researchers at all career stages to develop, deliver and evaluate research projects which have impact and public engagement as their core objectives. One example is Dowd’s *Dear Pandemic* website, Facebook and Twitter project (see section 4).

To maintain our high success rates in applying for research funding, we support our researchers in applying for **internal and external seed funding**, such as the Oxford John Fell Fund. These sources of funding enable our researchers, particularly ECRs, to test ideas and prove concepts and then apply for larger external grants. In this REF period, we won 48 seed funding awards, of which 36 internal (£591,000) and 12 external (£124,000). 42% of these awards were to ECRs and 56% to female staff. ECRs who received internal seed funding and subsequently secured their own external grants as PI include Rahal (BA Postdoctoral Fellowship), Loopstra (Trussell Trust), Lusthaus (Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Home Office), Langner (ESRC), Rovira (BA Postdoctoral Fellowship), and Kolpashnikova (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship). Upon receiving this BA Postdoctoral Fellowship award, Rahal wrote: “I am not sure what to reply with other than my most sincere gratitude and thanks for making this a possibility. It’s a real honour to be a part of this Department and I enjoy every day of it. Thanks again for enabling this continuation”.

**3.2 Research Infrastructure**

We have developed a healthy model of sustainable external funding with a strong infrastructure to support applications, post-award management and impact. Compared to the previous REF period, during which there was less than 1 FTE research facilitation support available, our researchers now benefit from a **Research Facilitation team** which supports the **Research Director** and **Research Committee** (the Department and OII have a similar structure and facilitation team). This blended academic and administrative infrastructure enables all our researchers to make competitive applications to the widest possible set of funding schemes, and can be linked to our increase in grant income since REF2014:

- The **Research Director**, to lead on the overall research strategy and objectives.
- The **Research Committee** meets on a termly basis to coordinate research strategies, funding applications and research initiatives. The Research Committee also peer reviews funding applications and provides strategic advice and feedback on proposals.



- **Research Facilitation Team**, comprising of a **Research Facilitator** and **Senior Research Officer**. The Research Facilitation Team, which has expanded during the assessment period, supports researchers throughout the research funding process, from application to award stage. They provide advice on proposals, devise budgets and liaise with the Research Committee on peer-review of applications. Staff at all career stages are given practice in mock interviews for awards that involve an interview process. The Research Facilitation Team also implements an internal research communications strategy to ensure funding opportunities are disseminated effectively and are targeted towards the research strategy of the Department. Researchers also benefit from specialist advice, training, and support from **Division-based Research and Impact Facilitators**.

The success of this approach is evidenced not only by the overall level of research income, but perhaps more importantly by the increased number of grant holders across career stages and topics. Moreover, this full programme of support throughout and after the application process, makes it possible for our researchers to hold multiple research grants and be agile when new opportunities emerge.

We continue to ensure that our approach to securing funding is underpinned by the values of inclusion, equality and diversity (see section 2), with the Equality and Diversity Committee monitoring funding support and success across staff. We are mindful that our funding bids make a positive contribution to the diversity of the UoA and continue to ensure that ECRs, particularly women, are fully supported in their applications for external research funding. This will also contribute to increasing the number of women in senior posts.

### **3.3 Research Facilities**

The Department of Sociology moved to a redeveloped building in April 2019 supported by £2.2million investment by Nuffield College. The new premises include an entire floor to accommodate LCDS (provided rent-free as part of Nuffield College's institutional support for the Centre). The building has been designed to address the particular needs of Sociology's current research teams, as well as anticipating future expansion. Moving research staff dispersed across different locations in Oxford to a single site opposite Nuffield College has allowed for a cohesive and integrated physical environment which has fostered intellectual networking and collaborations among the entire community within the UoA.

Sociology faculty were engaged as users throughout the design and building phases of the new building, resulting in customised video conferencing/live streaming options in teaching and meeting rooms and an overall inclusive space, with much attention given to all aspects, including accessibility and single gender-neutral toilets.

Our new building has a dedicated secure data room for a unique initiative by Kan funded by the UK-Japan ESRC programme in collaboration with Hitotsubashi University and the Japanese National Institute of Population and Social Security Research. This world-premiere data room offers our researchers and other UK-based academic access to Japanese micro data from the Japanese Statistics Bureau and Japanese National Statistics Centre; data which has never before been accessible remotely outside Japan.

In addition, the new building has improved working space for researchers at every career stage. Permanent faculty members have single-occupant offices. Postdoctoral researchers are allocated a workspace in a single or shared office, a significant improvement over sharing open-plan working with research students as was previously the case. Doctoral students now have their own desk in an open-plan area. The new building also has dedicated working spaces for visiting researchers at all career stages which are located among the faculty and postdoctoral offices to encourage interactions and collaborations. The state-of-the art lecture and meeting facilities enable us to bring lectures, research and stakeholder workshops, and conferences fully online with interactive audiences. We have already hosted research events with global reach, such as the annual Summer Institute for Computational Science held at Oxford Sociology in 2019 which

included live-streamed lectures to and from Princeton University and other universities around the globe.

Computational research support is provided by a dedicated IT team and all staff members are provided with the appropriate computing resources upon joining the unit. Researchers who need more computer power, for complex network analysis, simulations, genetic data, or other demanding projects, further benefit from access to the Big Data Institute (part of Oxford's Medical Science Division) via LCDS, and to Advanced Research Computing which provides High Performance Computing services to all Oxford researchers.

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

We have a collaborative and international outlook, and support faculty to lead and participate in multi-disciplinary projects with partners locally and across the world. Engagement, knowledge exchange, and impact are at the heart of our efforts. The benefits of our research go beyond academia to have a direct impact on non-academic partners, as evidenced by the size of our income from charities (£4.4million), and a diverse range of other sources (£3.2million) that includes funding from UN agencies. We nurture the next generation of sociologists through international summer schools and global training partnerships.

##### **4.1 Support for academic research collaborations, networks and partnerships**

Collaborations are founded on the principles of equal partnership, long-term commitment and are driven by the research interests of our faculty.

##### National and international networks and partnerships

Varese leads the Extra-Legal Governance Institute, a collaboration with scholars at Cambridge and King's College London. Its members study problems of organised crime, cybercrime, paramilitary, insurgents, and traffickers; and engage with policymakers and stakeholders (e.g. police, Europol) to improve understanding and interventions. LCDS collaborates with Cambridge on digital and computational demography facilitated through a LCDS-funded postdoctoral position in Cambridge. Hale and Schroeder are Faculty Fellows at the Alan Turing Institute, where Hale leads two research projects.

The Global Family Change network originated in Oxford and brings together scholars from Oxford (Monden, Andriano, Kashyap), University of Pennsylvania, Barcelona (UAB), Bocconi and Northwestern to provide a comprehensive lens on the complex ways in which families are changing around the world. With two teams of Oxford and Berlin-based researchers we actively contribute to OX|BER, a strategic research partnership between Oxford and the Berlin University Alliance. Sustainable links with Berlin will strengthen our bids for collaborative European funding as part of our future-proofing strategy following Brexit. Digital Gender Gaps, a collaboration led by Kashyap with the Qatar Computing Research Institute and supported by Data2X (based at the UN), tracks progress on gender inequalities in internet and mobile access across the world. Leeson co-ordinates the Latin American Research Network on Ageing and the Central and Eastern European Research Network on Ageing at the Institute of Population Ageing. The Oxford Internet Survey run by Blank (with sponsorship from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, BT and Google) is the UK's contribution to World Internet Project [www.worldinternetproject.com](http://www.worldinternetproject.com), the international project that joins 38 nations in studies of the social, economic and political implications of the Internet.

##### Fostering collaborations and networks through visitor programmes

In addition to welcoming **more than 200 seminar speakers** during this REF period, our active and inclusive academic visitor programmes hosted **over 90 short and long-term visits** by researchers of all career stages, both senior leaders as well as upcoming stars, from across the world. Notable visitors include Robert Putnam (Harvard), Megan Sweeney (UCLA), Anette

Fasang (Humboldt), Tyson Brown (Duke), Andrew Abbot (Chicago), and Paola Profeta (Bocconi). These visits provide a stimulating environment for students and staff, and result in joint publications and research initiatives. Examples are the Global Family Change network, OX|BER projects resulting from Fasang's visit, and a successful grant application by Kirk and Robert Sampson (visiting from Harvard) to the National Collaborative on Gun Violence Research. The OII visiting fellow programme facilitates knowledge exchange and impact by hosting senior leaders in government, industry, and civil society.

#### Training networks and summer schools

We believe exchange and collaboration should be part of an academic's training from the start of their career, and therefore we invest in training networks and summer schools. Accessibility and inclusivity are central to these initiatives. We are partners in the **Consortium on Analytics for Data-Driven Decision Making (Can3D)**, a training network of 32 Canadian and international universities funded by SSHRC Canada; and the **International Max Planck Research School for Population, Health and Data Science (IMPRS-PHDS)** which brings together multidisciplinary faculty and students in a three-year programme. We also have an active PhD student and staff exchange with **Sciences Po** in Paris. We host three summer programmes: 1) **OII's Summer Doctoral Programme** which brings together around 30 students from around the world whose PhDs cover aspects of the digital society; 2) **Oxford Genomics for Social Scientists Summer School** in collaboration with the University of Michigan trains the next generation of scholars in the emerging field of sociogenomics; 3) the **Summer Institute in Computational Social Science at Oxford**, part of the Princeton-based initiative (<https://sicss.io>), brings together students and junior faculty for two weeks of intensive study and interdisciplinary research.

#### **4.2 Contributions to wider society and economy**

Oxford Sociology researchers make significant contributions to many social and economic challenges in the UK and globally. Our four impact case studies (Heath, Howard, Lehdonvirta, M.Mills) detail only a small selected portfolio of our contributions. This section illustrates the breadth of our impact through noteworthy examples in three key areas.

##### *Impacts on and KE with local community and UK government*

A team of ECRs worked with Warneford Highworth Secondary, a school in an economically-disadvantaged area, to implement a collaborative project on **A-Level Sociology teaching**. CSI conducted a year-long qualitative study into **homelessness in Oxford**, providing a holistic understanding of different homelessness experiences and exploring the roles played by homelessness prevention and relief services. One example of student-led impact is Schulte who advises **community air quality** monitoring projects and co-designed the research and engagement component of OxAir, the Defra-funded **Oxford City Council's** future air quality programme. Lusthaus' pioneering 'Human Cybercriminal Project' led to commissioned work by the **Home Office** on cybercrime. The **Social Mobility Commission** commissioned CSI to co-design a framework for improving social mobility.

##### *Impacts through international governmental organisations*

Many of our researchers advise or are commissioned by international governmental organisations. Recent examples include Fisher and research students collaborating with the **UN Development Programme** to design and analyse the largest ever global survey on climate change attitudes ('**Peoples' Climate Vote**'). Kashyap and Rotondi led a study for the **Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)** and **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** supported by **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** to document the digital rural gender divide in Latin America and the Caribbean. Lehdonvirta advises policymakers and international organisations in Europe, the US and Japan on digital technologies and how they shape the organisation of economic activities. He is a member of three EU DG expert groups, the **European Commission's Expert Group on the Online Platform Economy**

and the **High-Level Expert Group on Digital Transformation and EU Labour Markets**. He is engaged in contract research with **Cedefop** and **ILO** ('Online Labour Observatory').

*Impacts through working with global industry*

The **Internet Leadership Academy** is a short course developed by OII and supported by **Google**. It has hosted telecommunications ministers, national MPs, European Commission officials and leaders of industry associations. Neff is strategic adviser on the social impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the **Women's Forum for the Economy & Society**. Her project 'AI & Data Diversity' with **Microsoft** advances public understanding of how data diversity improves social equality. She collaborates with **Google** on the interactive guide 'A-Z of AI' (published in 64 countries and 17 languages) and advises **Vira**, a start-up on digital health for women. Kashyap collaborates with **Facebook** to predict internet and mobile use patterns by gender and understand global variations in digital gender gaps. Hale's research **supports fact-checking on WhatsApp** and other messaging platforms through his collaboration with **Meedan**, a technology non-profit in the US that builds software and initiatives to strengthen journalism, digital literacy, and accessibility of information. Meedan's open-source software incorporating Hale's research is used by **India Today, AFP, Globo, Agência Lupa, Africa Check**, and other **fact-checking organisations**.

**Coronavirus Pandemic Rapid Response**

The ability of our researchers to pivot to producing high-quality research with notable impact during the current COVID-19 crisis is also a **marker of the success of our impact strategy**. M.Mills' case study highlights the swift response to the pandemic, but space constraint did not allow the full extent of the impact to be told. Dowd's public engagement and Block's work on **Social Bubbles** had significant debate framing impacts and policy influence. Dowd co-initiated '**Dear Pandemic**' by Those Nerdy Girls, an interdisciplinary all-female social media collective of researchers and clinicians, to **counter misinformation and aid the general public** in understanding the science around the pandemic. Howard and Hale have been researching the diffusion and spread of COVID-19 related **misinformation on digital platforms**, including anti-vaccination communities, for the **UK FCDO**. Engzell was the first to robustly document primary **school children's learning** loss during lockdown and to show learning loss is **unequally stratified**. His SocArxiv paper received considerable policy and media attention, and invited presentations at the OECD, World Bank, European Commission, and Dutch Ministry of Education. **Chief Inspector of Ofsted**, Amanda Spielman, also referred to the study during a parliamentary select committee. Moreover, when the **Dutch government** announced a €8.5billion investment to address learning losses due to COVID-19 it cited Engzell's paper as a main piece of evidence.

**4.3 Indicators of wider academic influence**

Oxford sociologists continue to play major roles in the national and international academic community through learned societies, editorial responsibilities, reviews, and advisory roles. The Department and Nuffield College are active (and founding) members of the **European Consortium for Sociological Research (ECSR)** comprising more than 90 leading sociological research institutes and university departments across 26 European countries. We have provided several board members (Jonsson in this REF period) and hosted the 2016 annual conference. LCDS is an active board member of **Population Europe**, the network of Europe's leading demographic research centres. Individual examples include Blank who is council member of the **Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology** section of the American Sociological Association; Dowd is a member of the **Board of Directors of the Population Association of America**; Kashyap serves on the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (**IUSSP**) Panel on **Digital Demography** and IUSSP's **Early Career Taskforce**; and Hogan is steering board member of the **International Network of Social Network Analysts**.



Across our UoA, **15 members** gave over **70 invited keynotes** at international conferences. All staff served as reviewers and many take more onerous roles. We provide **editors** for **six journals** in this REF period: *Population Studies* (Ermisch), *European Sociological Review* (M.Mills), *Advances in Life Course Research* (Billari, until 2016), *Global Crime* (Varese), *Policy & Internet* (Lehdonvirta), *Journal of Population Ageing* (Leeson). Breen is Deputy editor of *Sociological Science*. **20 members** are/have been **associate editors** or **editorial board members** for **36 journals**: *Acta Sociologica*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Annual Review of Sociology* (2x), *Big Data and Society*, *British Journal of Criminology*, *Chinese Sociological Review*, *Current Epidemiological Reports*, *Demography*, *Economic and Social Review*, *Electoral Studies*, *Electronic Commerce Research*, *European Sociological Review* (3x), *Human-Machine Communication*, *Information, Communication & Society*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, *Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *Journal of Computational Social Science*, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* (2x), *Journal of Elections*, *Public Opinion and Parties*, *Journal of International Business Policy*, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, *Journal of Research in Crime & Delinquency*, *Journals of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, *Max Weber*, *Nordic Journal of Media Studies*, *PloS One*, *Proceeding of the International Conference on Web and Social Media*, *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, *Social Forces*, *Social Media + Society* (2x), *Social Networks*, *The Information Society*, *Virtual Reality*.

Our faculty serves regularly as **panel members and reviewers** for **major UK and international funders**, half of them have done so too for national and international funders outside the UK. M.Mills has been appointed to the **ESRC Council**, and Breen served on the **ESRC Research Committee**. Panel and committee memberships are too numerous to list, so we summarise them in Table 5.

**Table 5. Panel memberships and review activities for funding bodies.**

	<b>National</b>	<b>International</b>
<b>Public funding</b>	ESRC ad hoc reviews; EPSRC; ESRC Peer Review College; GCRF Review group; joint ESRC-MRC-WT Population Research Resource steering group	Horizon202 and European Research Council (reviewers & panel members); Open Research Area; more than 20 National Science Foundations (including US, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, Scandinavia, Ireland, Israel, Chile, Peru)
<b>Private funding</b>	Nuffield Foundation; Wellcome Trust; Leverhulme Trust; Guardian Media Group’s Venture Fund on Responsible Technology.	Riksbanken; Wallenberg Foundations; Russell Sage Foundation; Qatar Foundation; William T. Grant Foundation.

Our faculty sit on many **national and international advisory boards** of numerous research projects and major research institutes, including the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (UCL), ESRC Research Centre on Micro-Social Change (MiSoC), ESRC National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM); and the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES). Oxford Sociology is also a board member of the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) that provides open-access cross-national panel data to understand societal challenges in 20 European and four non-European countries.

Finally, members of Oxford Sociology have been recognised for their contributions to scholarship through numerous **prestigious awards and prizes**. We count four Fellows of the **British Academy**: Breen, Ermisch, Heath, M.Mills. Jonsson is member of the **Swedish Royal Academy of Science**. For their services to social sciences, M.Mills received an **MBE** (2018) and Heath an **OBE** (2013). In recent years, three of our faculty were awarded the **European Demographer Award**: Tropf (2017, now in Paris), Kasyhap (2019), Aburto (2021). M.Mills was awarded the **Clifford C. Clogg award** for **mid-career achievement** from the Population Association of



America (2020). Blank (PI of the Oxford Internet Survey) received the **William F. Ogburn Career Achievement award** from the Communication, Information Technology and Media Sociology section of the American Sociological Association in 2015. Fisher won a **Television Journalism Award** (2018) and a **Political Studies Association Special Recognition** award for the 2017 exit polls. We celebrated two winners of the **European Consortium for Sociological Research Best PhD Thesis**: Van Winkle (2019) and Kashyap (2018). Hale received the **Political Studies Association book prize** in 2017 and Howard won the *Foreign Policy Magazine* **Global Thinker Award** in 2018 and National Democracy Institute's **Democracy Award** in 2017.