

Institution: University of Kent
Unit of Assessment: 33: Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>The School of Arts is a dynamic, multidisciplinary, and socially engaged unit within the Division (former Faculty) of Arts and Humanities. The School comprises 36 (32.75 FTE) researchers working across the live, visual, and recorded arts. The recent introduction and rapid growth of Media Studies, including the appointment of two ECRs, has expanded our disciplinary expertise beyond Film, Drama, History of Art, and Music, and made a significant contribution to our impact profile. Building on our 2014 research strategy, we have focused on collaborative, publicly engaged, and interdisciplinary projects. This has resulted in an increasingly ambitious and creative portfolio of research outputs and impact; £2,254,622 grant income; and an almost 300% increase in PGR completions.</p> <p>Research is generated through four Research Groups (RGs). These were launched following a review of existing Research Centres and a staff-wide consultation which identified the need for a structure based on greater collaboration, inclusion, and responsiveness to external and internal opportunities. The RGs are:</p> <p>Histories and Historiography. Focusing on cultural histories of arts practices and industries, as well as on artistic representations of community, identity, and society throughout history, this RG has strengths in international (including Eastern European, Greek, Indian) and popular arts (including melodrama, alternative comedy, Hollywood). Postgraduate students play a strong leadership role, most prominently through running a subsidiary melodrama film series. Major achievements include archives such as the <i>Great War Theatre Database</i> (AHRC) and British Stand-Up Comedy Archive (University Beacon grant); Pasoulis's <i>Sonic Palimpsest</i> of Chatham Dockyards (AHRC); and Thomas's impact case study.</p> <p>Performance and Theatre Research. Bringing together scholars working across all aspects of live performance (including physical theatre, dance/choreography, music/composition, stand-up comedy), this RG has methodological strengths in Practice Research (PR), participatory arts, and socially engaged research. Thematic interests include neurodiversity, gender and ageing, and European performance practice. Landmark projects include <i>A-Z of Physical Actor Training</i> (Leverhulme), <i>Autism Arts Festival</i> (ACE), and Laera's multiple projects on translation (AHRC). The group co-convenes the European Theatre Research Network with Central School of Speech and Drama.</p> <p>Film, Media, and Culture. The introduction of Media Studies has expanded this RG's expertise beyond film and television and into screen media (including animation, gaming, social media) and industry practice. The result has been projects including <i>Cinema Unframed</i> on Virtual Reality production (AHRC), Frey's ground-breaking study of Video on Demand algorithmic recommender systems (Leverhulme Prize), and Regehr's impact case study on advertising.</p> <p>Aesthetics Research. This group connects researchers interested in political, aesthetic, and philosophical analyses of artworks, practices, and the arts industry. Thematic interests range from pornography to art schools. The RG leads on interdisciplinary collaborations, exemplified by the 'Art, Aesthetics and Medical/Health Humanities' conference and by Smith's interdisciplinary research at Princeton (Rockefeller Fellowship). The group has a strong external profile, having won funding to host the annual BSA Postgraduate conference four times, and secured both BA and GCRF Postdoctoral Fellowships.</p> <p>These RGs connect us across and beyond the Division, and ensure all researchers and PGRs have a 'home' and peer-support network. They also support our School-wide strengths in: community and identity (including participatory arts, gender, and neurodiversity); health and</p>

wellbeing (especially aging, memory loss, and mental health); and creative/industry practice (including film-making, VR, and electronic-acoustics). With over 33% of staff active in PR, practice is embedded across the RGs.

Interdisciplinary collaborations within RGs have been fostered by encouraging members to participate in multiple groups, include colleagues from across the University, and co-produce research events with other RGs/Research Centres at Kent and beyond. Exemplifying this is 'Thomas Ostermeier: Reinventing Directors' Theatre', co-organised with Birmingham, Essex, Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle, Central, Goethe-Institut London, Institut Français, and the Schaubühne Berlin. Widespread student involvement is encouraged, especially through PGR-led conferences and student-staff 'In Conversations'. This supports research-led teaching and diversity in career progression.

Four core priorities underpin the research strategies (2014-20 and 2021-28) detailed below. These are:

- **Ensuring diversity, representation, and an inclusive culture.** We have achieved a minimum of c.40% female speakers and actively invite gender-neutral and non-binary speakers. Visibility of neurodiverse speakers, and speakers with disabilities, has been spearheaded by research projects on autism, and profiled through prominent speakers including Jessica Thom (Touretteshero) and Jenny Sealey (Graeae). Staff research on the Global South, postapartheid spaces, and persecution and genocide studies, reflects our attention to international arts and representation. Events have profiled work by Egyptian, South African, and East Asian scholars/practitioners, as well as Black and Global Majority British practitioners, including Mojisola Adebayo and Jatinda Verma. Interventions and events such as 'Diversity and Disruption' foreground our emphasis on intersectionality: with sessions on period poverty and the intersection of economics, class, and gender.
- **Supporting vibrant ECR research.** This is central to our success and long-term sustainability, as detailed in Section 2. The successful shift from recruiting to developing ECRs is evidenced in strong ECR outputs, grants totalling £832,197, and potential for rapid promotion (e.g. Regehr to SL in under 3 years).
- **Ensuring ethics and integrity across all projects and engagement activities.** Responding to leadership from groups including the Standing Conference of University Drama Departments and the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), we have inculcated a culture of research integrity and transparency. Our Ethics Advisor (an academic leadership role) and the University's Research Ethics Advisory Group approve all projects, ensuring the highest ethical, legal (including GDPR), and professional standards are upheld. Working closely with the stakeholders detailed in Section 4, colleagues such as May and Shaughnessy are also advancing models of ethical research in participatory contexts.
- **Cultivating an open research environment.** Using targeted and match funding, researchers make findings openly accessible via exhibitions, performances, workshops, talks and public conferences, and the production of original, open archives. Brooks has provided institutional leadership on open research as a member of Kent's Copyright Steering Group. Working with Kent's Copyright and Licensing team, she developed and advised on novel processes for identifying and registering Orphan Works, and her work has been used as a case study to inform sector discussion around licensing and open research. All researchers work with Information Services to ensure publications are listed on the Kent Academic Repository and are open-access compliant. Article Processing Charge funds enable gold open-access publication by CC-BY licence. This has been used for publication of articles including May's 'Enhancing Relaxed Performance' (*RiDE*) and Allain's 'Thick Description/Thin Lines' (*Contemporary Theatre Review*).

Research Strategy 2014-20

The School's Research Committee, chaired by the Director of Research, manages the research strategy and identifies research objectives in response to Divisional and University strategy (e.g. Signature Research Themes), issues of growth and sustainability (e.g. challenges faced by the HE sector), and broader national and global research priorities (e.g. UN Sustainable Development Goals). Committee members include RG Directors, an ECR representative, and the EDI Director.

The three key objectives identified in REF2014 drove our principal strategic aim, which was to grow our profile as an internationally recognised centre for interdisciplinary innovation and impact in arts research. We have exceeded our ambitions on all three objectives.

1. To increase the scale and intensity of interdisciplinary and collaborative projects

This has been achieved through a combination of enhanced internal investment for network and project development (£330k more than in REF2014); and the workload flexibility and supportive mentoring detailed in Section 2. Around 40% of staff have developed interdisciplinary research with partners across the University. Outstanding examples include collaborations with History on *Gateways* (£1.098m), one of five national AHRC centres for public engagement with the centenary of the First World War; with Law on *Topologies of Air* (British Council and others see pp.10-11, £181,800) exploring uses of airspace; and with Psychology on *Comedy on the Spectrum* (BA, £8k). Partnerships with Philosophy have underpinned several events, including the conference, 'Aesthetics and Comedy: How to do things with jokes' (BSA Synergy Grant, £6k).

As well as the extensive non-HEI collaborations detailed in Section 4, researchers have collaborated with colleagues at more than 46 UK and international universities. These include European collaborations on *Playing Identities* (European Commission, £59k) and *Audio History of Film* (DFG/Exzellenzinitiative, £60k); and international collaborations with University of Auckland on *Audiovisual Essay's* exploration of innovative new modes of presentation (AHRC, £30k), with the University of New South Wales on *Lesions in the Landscape* (Wellcome, £129k), and with the University of Pretoria on *Imagineering the African City* (BA, £5k). Within the UK, partnerships include with the Universities of Brighton, Bristol, and Edinburgh on *The People's Pier* (AHRC, £39k) exploring the relationships between piers and communities of place; with UCL on *Women We See* (GLA, £19k) on advertising in London; and with RHUL, Kingston, Nottingham, and King's College London, on *Translation, Adaptation, Otherness* (AHRC, £198k). It is noteworthy that these UK examples were all ECR-led.

2. To become a sector leader in public engagement and impact

Our impact strategy has been to encourage ambitious, creative, externally facing research activity enabling us to reach audiences and beneficiaries regionally, nationally, and internationally across five continents. Our approach to public engagement takes two forms: 1) participatory projects where researchers partner with volunteers and/or performers to co-design and co-produce new projects and outputs (e.g. Moving Memory Dance Theatre Company, *Digitizing 'The War Illustrated'*); 2) projects responding to perspectives and experiences, and addressing social problems, where researchers partner with external stakeholders to identify and implement change (e.g. *The People's Pier*, *Women We See*). A number of projects take both approaches simultaneously (e.g. *Playing A/Part*, *Lesions in the Landscape*).

The range of activity within and beyond our impact case studies evidences our success. From 22% of colleagues undertaking public engagement in REF2014, 76% of colleagues now actively engage with the public, resulting in impact on a broad range of beneficiaries, as detailed in Section 4. All primary award holders of AHRC project grants/fellowships have also won follow-on funding, totalling £153,054. This success was achieved through a four-step impact and public engagement strategy, led by the Deputy Director for Research: Impact and Public Engagement (a role introduced in 2014):

- i. Embedding engagement as an essential element in the early stages of project development, including providing time for co-production and community/stakeholder engagement.
- ii. Ensuring administrative resource for the planning, delivery, and evaluation of events and projects. Central to this is our Research Support Officer, who manages data capture and evaluation, has oversight of ongoing impact, and helps identify pathways for further engagement and impact.
- iii. Providing targeted mentoring, best-practice dissemination (including via lunchtime research 'chats', and Public Engagement with Research Network contributions), and formal training (including University and NCCPE workshops).
- iv. Providing financial support through Enhanced Individual Research Allowances for engagement. This, combined with University competitive awards totalling £38,485, enables us to seed-fund projects, initiate collaborations, and generate increased impact.

3. To enhance rigour, innovation, and creativity in the production of high-quality outputs

The production of innovative and creative outputs has been underpinned by our professional facilities, collaborations with industry/professional stakeholders, and £2,254,622 research income. The HESA element of this, £1,500,148, represents an 82% increase from REF2014. Increased rigour has been achieved through mentoring, annual research planning processes, and internal peer review prior to publication. The result is an increase in both the diversity and quality of research. Outputs include 27 monographs, 14 edited volumes, 39 journal articles, 21 PR outputs and 49 book chapters. Creative breadth of outputs is evident across:

- Innovative exhibitions and installations, including *Lesions in the Landscape*, *216 Westbound*, *Art of Drawing*, *Raphael: The Drawings*, *Celebrating Karolos Koun*, and *My Generation: A Festival of British Art in the 1960s*. These have been shown across the UK and internationally, including in Rotterdam, Sydney, and San Francisco.
- Cutting-edge digital outputs (software, databases/repositories, and online archives), including the *Doris* digital dance toolkit (Baring Foundation, ACE), *Physical Actor Training* (Leverhulme), and *Great War Theatre* (AHRC).
- Award-winning PR Films, including *Dark River* (Wellcome/BFI), *Tempest Storm*, and *Machine for Viewing* (AHRC), supported by major media outlets including the BBC, Film4, Channel 4, and Screen Yorkshire.
- New performances staged nationally and internationally, including *Cracking the Crinoline*, (49 performances, including in Paris, Glasgow, and at Sadler's Wells and Southbank Centre); translations of plays by Europe-based writers with a migrant background (Gate Theatre); and *St. Barnabas Hostels' Pilgrimage* created for performance on the mainstage at DCMS's *Ypres 100* commemorations.

Research Strategy 2021-28

We will consolidate our position as an international leader in academic innovation, impact, and socially engaged arts research, by strengthening existing expertise in community and identity, health and wellbeing, and creative/industry practice. We will also support emerging areas of expertise around public policy and services, and global media. Our ambitions will be realised through the cultivation of an open, inclusive research culture underpinned by our EDI and Athena SWAN strategy (Bronze Award, 2020), and three interconnected objectives.

1. To realise more diverse and extensive impact

This will be achieved by fostering new research collaborations with regional, national, and international stakeholders, as well as by strengthening existing relationships with organisations such as Age UK, Sexplain/School of Sexuality Education, Transport for London, and the National Autistic Society. Alongside targeted engagement mentoring and involvement in Divisional and University-wide engagement networks, we will work with the University's new Institute of Creative and Cultural Industries and draw on the experience of its recently appointed Director of Culture and Creative Projects (former director of the Adelaide Festival). We will respond to, and impact on, government and third-sector strategy, as articulated in the UK Industrial Strategy 2017. We will encourage engagement with policy-makers, especially around the creative economies and healthy ageing, building on best practice in the Division.

2. To increase the scale and diversity of externally funded, interdisciplinary research

We recognise that the competitiveness of the funding environment and wider economic landscape requires resilience, creative thinking, and innovation. Alongside supporting 'stepping-stone' small grants, we will take advantage of the new Divisional structure and Signature Research Themes (two of which are co-led by School researchers) to develop collaborative and proactive responses to major UKRI and international priorities. Our strengths in health and wellbeing will be central to this. We will build on successful projects around neurodiversity, ageing, and mental health; expertise in health humanities across the Division; and the 2020 launch of the Kent and Medway Medical School, to lead the establishment of health humanities at Kent. We will also respond to GCRF and UN Sustainable Development Goal opportunities (especially around inclusive education, good health, and gender equality), building on emerging collaborations with partners in the Global South. Throughout, we will identify opportunities for ECRs to partner with, and learn from, advanced career academics on large-scale projects.

3. To ensure the ongoing vitality and sustainability of our research environment

We will provide holistic CPD appropriate to all career stages. In PGR training we will tailor support to a diversity of career ambitions, recognising the changing nature of academic careers. This will be achieved by working with students, alumni, and the Graduate and Researcher College to develop training relevant to current PhDs (e.g. on remote or part-time study). We will use the PDRA Summer Vacation programme to expand PDRA opportunities, learning from Misk's Global Challenges Doctoral Centre success. Building on our excellent ECR support, we will also work with the EDI Director to develop support for staff at mid/advanced career stages, paying particular attention to the impact of intersectional characteristics.

2. People

Staffing Strategy

2014-2020 has been a period of staffing consolidation, building on the rapid growth reported in REF2014. Five colleagues (four female/one male) have transitioned from education/scholarship to research contracts and three (two male/one female) new research appointments have been made. Our strategic focus on engagement and grant capture underpinned these eight appointments and we have already seen significant results, including grants totalling £521,199 and one impact case study. All staff in the submission are on substantive, permanent, Education and Research contracts. This, together with our support for Education and Scholarship colleagues' development, reflects our commitment to developing a stable, secure workforce in accordance with Concordat principle 2.

As detailed below, our staff profile is well distributed in terms of age and gender. It is also notably international, comprising staff from Australia, North and South America, Italy, Greece, Germany, Norway, Ireland, and Belgium. Gender parity is evident in promotions and in submission outputs (48% female; 52% male).

Age profile

Age	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-64%
	8%	31%	31%	30%

Headcount by gender

	Total	Lecturer/SL	Reader/Professor
Male	47%	43%	54%
Female	53%	57%	46%

Promotions by gender

	To SL	To Reader	To Professor
Male	4	2	1
Female	5	2	1

We value and support the development of researchers at all career stages, through a range of mechanisms informed by the seven principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

- Formal research mentoring and planning is provided through an annual two-hour appraisal with the Head of School; an annual Individual Research Planning (IRP) meeting with the Director of Research and the REF Coordinator; and an optional mid-year IRP. Strategic support is also embedded through feedback from the School Promotions Committee.
- Research time is enabled through a dedicated weekly research day during term time, and a term's study leave after every seventh term.
- Financial support is provided for all staff irrespective of contract type/duration, via application to the Individual Research Allowance fund (managed by the Research Committee). This provided an average annual total of £34,200 (average £950 p/p) to support conferences, archival research, PR, and collaborations/networking. Additionally, between 2014 and 2017, Enhanced Individual Research Allowances provided a total of £20k for emergent, innovative, and impactful research.
- Peer support and sharing cultivates an inclusive, vibrant research culture. It is achieved through an annual programme that includes a School-wide research symposium, monthly

lunchtime research 'chats', regular Research Group seminars, postgraduate work-in-progress seminars, and the annual PG symposium.

All researchers are encouraged to take advantage of University CPD opportunities. The New Senior Leaders, Crucial Conversations, and Leadership for Areas of Significant Responsibility programmes have supported more than nine colleagues stepping into new leadership roles. Two ECR colleagues have taken part in the Aurora programme (for women developing leadership) and Shaughnessy and Wood have supported colleagues within and beyond Kent, as Aurora mentors. Staff also attend grant development workshops and the annual impact development festival, contributing to our success in winning 81 grants.

In addition to the support and networking opportunities available to all staff, ECRs are given additional support in transitioning from emergent to established researchers. Since 2014, 11 staff have held ECR status. All ECRs:

- Are assigned a formal mentor;
- Receive a two-year reduction in teaching and administration (50% year 1; 25% year 2);
- Are monitored through a three-year probationary process with annual reviews overseen by the Head of School;
- Complete their PG Certificate in Higher Education within two years of appointment;
- Can top up their Individual Research Allowance through a Research Development Fund totalling £3,500 annually;
- Can join the University's ECR network which provides tailored talks and workshops (e.g. on career planning, balancing conflicting demands, coping with rejection) and opportunities for mutual support through networking.

The result is a thriving ECR culture with achievements including: 20 grants, six monographs, 17 chapters in edited collections, one edited book, 15 journal articles and four PR outputs.

A key focus of our EDI strategy has been the development of leadership opportunities for ECRs. Deputy leadership roles were introduced in 2014 to enable succession planning and address an identified gender imbalance in leadership development. These have provided an effective pipeline for leadership development, and have resulted in ECRs stepping up to more senior roles at earlier points in their careers. ECRs have now served as School Directors of Education, of EDI, and of Research Groups. Every School committee has an ECR representative and Laera is the University's REF Steering Group ECR representative.

Explicit attention is paid to the impact of protected characteristics on all staff. EDI training is mandatory for all, and all School REF Steering Group members took additional training, including on Unconscious Bias. The annual Staff Survey, overseen by the EDI Director, is open to all staff and PG students, enabling us to reflect on and improve our culture. Notable changes since REF2014 include the introduction of weekly mindfulness sessions, and ensuring meetings and research events take place within working hours and are inclusive spaces for all. Other important support includes phased return following leave, access to on-site Occupational Therapy, flexible working opportunities, and parental leave exceeding legal requirements (taken by four staff). Staff are also encouraged to participate in University networks (e.g. Disability Staff Network, LGBTQ+ Staff Network, BAME Network). These provide spaces for discussing equality, sharing information, and promoting good practice.

Staff are incentivised through rewards for significant research activity and impact. In 2016 the School introduced a teaching relief scheme for staff actively developing grants over £350k. The Divisional Incentivisation Scheme (£2k research funding per PI) rewards colleagues submitting large and collaborative applications.

Since the introduction of the Academic Career Map the promotions process has emphasised the value of impact. This directly informed the promotions of Brooks, Regehr, Stevenson, and Thomas. Recognition also comes via the University's Research Prizes, in which colleagues have been successful each year from 2015-2019 (external prizes are discussed in Section 4):

- Regehr: Early-Career Knowledge Exchange Award;
- Laera: University Prize for Starting Research;
- Brooks: Early-Career Research Prize, Humanities;
- Frey: Consolidator Research Prize, Humanities;
- Shaughnessy, Hammer: Research Prize, Humanities.

Research Students

62 PGRs (15 PR) have completed since REF2014: an almost 300% increase in completion rate despite stable staff FTE. Currently 68 students are registered. In total, 14 students received externally funded scholarships (56% increase on REF2014); 32 received internally funded scholarships. Overall, the PGR community has grown steadily, with a 70% increase in registrations. Particular growth areas include health/wellbeing and public policy. These inform the Research Strategy 2021-28.

Through the application process all students are supported by their potential supervisor and the postgraduate administrator. PGR recruitment is underpinned by our commitment to EDI, with interviewers undertaking relevant training and positive action measures used. As a result, the PGR community is becoming more diverse and inclusive. Notably:

- 56% full-time and 41% part-time PGRs are female;
- 24% of students are part-time, a 10% increase since 2014;
- Over 40% of students have returned to study mid-career or post-retirement;
- Our international student body has grown by 20% (including students from the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, and Singapore);
- Diversity is evident in our growing community of neurodiverse PGRs.

PGRs are inducted into the School and Research Group of their choice. All Research Group boards have a PGR member who represents the student voice. Throughout their registration, students are formally reviewed at key milestones: induction (6/12 weeks, full/part-time); probation (10/20 months); reviews (end of year 2/4 and 3/6), and submission review (3/6 months before submission). All PGRs have two supervisors who receive appropriate teaching/administrative relief per student. The majority of supervisory teams are made up of primary/secondary supervisors and a Supervisory Chair. Where two areas of specialism are required, either from within or beyond the School, students are co-supervised. Since 2014, nine students have been externally co-supervised with Psychology, Social Policy, Creative Writing, English, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Philosophy, and the Canterbury NHS Paediatrics team. This is supporting a new generation of genuinely interdisciplinary researchers.

Wellbeing is central to PGR support and is overseen by the School's Student Support Service (3 FTE), which provides drop-in sessions, advice, and signposting of other services. Kent's Individual Learning Plan system supports PGRs with learning, physical, and mental health challenges. Shaughnessy and May model best practice in supervision of neurodiverse PGRs, offering adaptations that are responsive to sensory and communication preferences/learning styles. Students can also intermit at any point, and seven have taken parental leave since 2014.

High-quality training and mentoring of the next generation of researchers and critically informed practitioners is vital. Supervisors use the skills training framework (based on Vitae's Researcher Development Framework) to identify potential areas for development. Since 2014, 29 students have undertaken training with the Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England (CHASE) and 97 students have trained on Graduate and Researcher College (GRC, formerly

Graduate School) courses. Writing support is provided by the Student Learning Advisory Service and the University's Royal Literary Fellows. The School complements this with disciplinary-specific training (e.g. on participatory research). Training for PGRs and their supervisors has been pioneered by Allain, Maes, and Wood (in developing new CHASE-funded doctoral training), by Shaughnessy and May (in GRC workshops on supervising neurodiverse students), and by Brooks (in GRC workshops on supervisory best practice). The School's excellent PGR support is reflected in Shaughnessy and Smith both winning the University's Research Supervisor of the Year award and being shortlisted for THE's Outstanding Research Supervisor of the Year award. Together with Allain's leadership as Dean of the Graduate School since 2016, the School has impacted significantly on PGR and supervisory training across Kent and our consortia partners.

Peer support and learning is cultivated through PGR-organised reading groups and film series, attended by both staff and students. Monthly work-in-progress sessions and the annual PGR symposium prepare students for presenting at national and international conferences. A fund of £500 per student and a top-up fund (average total £8,000 p/a), has enabled 47 students to present at c.121 conferences since 2014. These include annual society conferences (e.g. the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, and Australasian Association of Philosophy) and thematic conferences such as 'Merging Methodologies'. PGR scholarship has been recognised with conference awards, including the British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies postgraduate poster prize (Creighton).

The majority of our PGRs have the opportunity to teach and are prepared through:

- Two University courses on pedagogy and practice;
- A School 'Introduction to Teaching' workshop;
- Mentoring from course convenors;
- A Graduate Teaching Assistant Convenor;
- School representation on the GRC's Graduate Teacher network.

Post-PhD preparation focuses on:

- **Careers.** Students can undertake international residencies and internships during their PhD. Eight students have had placements at organisations including the Globe, BFI archive, and Tate Modern. The GRC and Careers Service provide careers planning support. Colleagues also create opportunities for PGRs to gain skills as research assistants on projects, including *Comedy on the Spectrum*; *Great War Theatre*; and *Playing A/Part*.
- **Outputs.** PGRs are supported in publishing peer-reviewed essays, with work appearing in edited collections and journals such as: *RiDE*, *Celebrity Studies*, *Postgraduate Journal of Aesthetics*, and *Tate Papers*. Supervisors, including Jeffers-McDonald and Frey, have exemplified supportive practice through co-editing book collections (e.g. *Gothic Heroines*) and special issues with PGRs.
- **Research leadership.** PGRs are encouraged to contribute to research groups across Kent and to collaborate with external partners. This has resulted in successful events including 'Masculinity and the Metropolis' (co-produced with the Centre for American Studies), and the British Society of Aesthetics PG Conference (hosted four times). In total, PGRs have organised 21 major conferences and numerous seminars.
- **Impact and public engagement.** Our commitment to outward-facing research begins at PGR-level with opportunities to disseminate research online, via broadcast media (e.g. on the BBC *Free Thinking* series), and in exhibitions (including at the Wellcome Collection; Tate; and UNSW Galleries, Sydney). PR PGRs have also staged work at the Young Vic, Mandela Studios, and Festival of Storytelling.

The success of our PGR programme is evidenced by the positions taken up by PGRs after graduating. Declercq exemplifies this, having been a scholarship PGR, appointed as a lecturer, and now serving as the Aesthetics Research Group co-director. Internationally, British Academy PDRA Grosoli gained a permanent academic post at Habib University, Pakistan. PGRs have also gained academic positions at Queensland, Tennessee, Akron Ohio, Azusa Pacific, Nijmegen, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Lasalle College of the Arts, Yale, and Waikato. National appointments include at Oxford, UEA, Guildhall School of Music, Rose Bruford, Queen Mary, and Birmingham. Many PGRs have also developed careers outside academia: including in government (Policy Advisor for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), in the arts (at Fourth Monkey Education Ltd, C&T Theatre Company, Paul Mellon Centre, and the Tate), and as self-employed practitioners.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

External Funding

An extensive portfolio of funding, awarded by research councils, charities, academic institutions and associations, and trusts has enabled, as well as evidencing, the interdisciplinary, international, and public-facing nature of our research. In total, 24 staff have won external grants from 28 funders, resulting in income of £2,254,622.

HESA grant income totalled £1,500,148. This is an 82% increase since REF2014 and represents a steady, sustained increase in funding. These grants enabled our substantial body of outputs, impact, and intellectual exchange. One-off small grants, for visiting experts (e.g. the UK visit of Studio Rosa, £1.2k Polish Cultural Institute), and conferences/symposia (nine grants totalling £36k) strengthen the vitality of our environment. Large, collaborative awards make substantial contributions to our outputs and impact profile. These include *Playing A/Part* (£678k, AHRC), which is engaging with autistic girls using participatory methodologies and has reached national audiences via the BBC's *Arts in Quarantine* film (£9.6k, AHRC); *A Sonic Palimpsest* (£199k, AHRC, delayed due to Covid-19); *A-Z of Physical Actor Training* (£77k, Leverhulme), which led to Methuen's ground-breaking digital publication; and the ECR project *Translation, Adaptation, Otherness* (£198k, AHRC), which resulted in *Theatre & Translation. Playing A/Part* and *Physical Actor Training* also funded PDRAs. Beyond major grants, seed-corn funding – including from the British Academy, international HEIs, and subject societies – provides a crucial starting point for colleagues moving in new research directions. This is exemplified by Brydon's work in South Africa, enabled by two BA grants totalling £4,958.

All AHRC project grant/fellowship primary award holders have been successful in winning follow-on funding, totalling £153,054. These grants have enabled engagement with new beneficiaries and the generation of substantial impact, detailed in Section 4. *A Web Archive of Theatre Translation Resources* (£62,415), for example, built on the work of *Translation, Adaptation, Otherness*, through partnering with theatres and drama teachers to deliver educational resources on foreign-language plays. For *Imagining Autism*, follow-on funding (*Autism Reimagined*, £23,416) was complemented by funding from non-HESA sources, including The Atkinson, Autism Ethics Network, Big Lottery, and Kent County Council. This portfolio of funding enabled extensive engagement with stakeholders and beneficiaries via a CPD programme, arts centre residences, 'Autism Cafes', and 'Autism Champions'. *Lesions in the Landscape* also exemplifies the importance of a portfolio of funding for impact. In addition to a £129k Wellcome Trust grant, *Lesions* was supported by £40k from FACT Liverpool; Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre, North Uist; CGP London; and UNSW Galleries, Sydney. Together, this enabled Illingworth's *Amnesia Lab* exhibition and impact case study.

Arts organisations, health and education charities, local authorities, and other sources not reported in HESA returns have made a substantial contribution to our research and impact. With c.35 grants, totalling £754,474, these sources represent 34% of total income and have supported a far greater range of outputs and impacts than in REF2014. This reflects our strategy for diversifying and ensuring sustainability of income. Major examples include *Topologies of Air*, an immersive

multi-screen sound/video installation exploring changing uses of airspace (exhibition delayed due to Covid-19). Originally commissioned by The Wapping Project (£45k), the exhibition was supported by the British Council, DCMS, and GREAT through the UK-Gulf exhibition programme (£80k); the production by the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities and the Sharjah Art Foundation (£51.8k); and travel by the ACE Artists' International Development Fund (£5k). Moving Memory Dance Theatre Company has also been supported by a portfolio of funders. These include Ageless Thanet, Kent County Council, Nominet Trust and Baring Foundation, Medway Public Health Commission, Big Lottery, and ACE (39% of total funding). Totalling £340,500, this funding resulted in *Older Women Centre Stage* and the substantial impact discussed in Section 4. It is also significant in being led by an ECR.

ECRs play an active role in seeking and winning funding, supported by the mechanisms detailed in Section 2. In total ECRs have won 25 external grants (10 HESA), totalling £832,197. Of particular note is May's research and impact around autistic arts, supported by one BA and two ACE grants, totalling £61,239.

Fellowships, totalling £135,525, enabled international collaborations and outputs. *The Truth is Always Grey* was supported by a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Fellowship at the University of Duisburg-Essen, as well as a College Art Association grant. Barnard's BFI/Wellcome Screenwriting Fellowship led directly to the production of *Dark River*, which was supported by £85k from the BFI Film Fund as well as receiving substantial support from Screen Yorkshire and Film4.

These successes evidence the effectiveness of our recruitment strategies and grant support system. From concept to completion, the Research Support Officer (RSO) and Director of Research (DoR) provide consistent, dedicated, and tailored support, ensuring that all researchers can improve the quality and ambition of their projects. This happens:

- At the concept stage through peer-to-peer mentoring, encouragement, and informal peer feedback. This takes place within the Research Groups, through School research events and within wider networks;
- At the development stage (at least eight weeks prior to submission), through formal peer review and individual support from the RSO and DoR;
- Post-grant, through the grants administration team. This includes the RSO, who monitors and records impact and engagement activities; the Finance Officer, who liaises with the central grants team; and the School Administration Manager who, working with the Head of Subject and School, manages teaching buy-out and timetabling to ensure appropriate time and resource is provided.

Institutional Investment

We have achieved significantly higher levels of University and Divisional investment: winning £373,129 across different competitive schemes, compared to £40k during REF2014. This has enhanced our research environment in two key ways:

- 1) New research collaborations and networking have been made possible with funding from the International Visitors Scheme, Beacon '50th Anniversary' Scheme, University EU Partnership Award, Faculty Mobility Fund, and the Kent-Ghent Initiative. The latter launched Brydon's *Imagineering the African City* network.
- 2) Competitive Impact and Public Engagement awards (£38,485) have driven large grant applications and outward-facing research by providing 'nurseries' for larger projects, enabling researchers to scope out and test ideas. Projects initially developed this way include: *Autism Arts Festival*; *Playing A/Part*; *Autism Reimagined*; *Moving Memory*; and *Great War Theatre*. These projects have subsequently connected with thousands of beneficiaries and gained substantial external funding.

Whilst we emphasise the importance of external grant capture, School investment of QR funding remains vital in supporting the ongoing production of high-quality research outputs and impact. Investment is determined annually in response to strategic review by the Research Committee, and is channelled in three key ways:

- 1) Individual Research Allowances: a total of £171k supported presentations at 236 conferences and symposia; 63 research trips, including to access archives and national resources; and 41 impact and external engagement activities.
- 2) Enhanced Individual Research Allowances: 31 EIRAs totalling £20k provided increased allowances for annually reviewed areas of strategic importance. These included networking, public engagement, ECR Development, and equalising access opportunities across career stages.
- 3) Research Groups: these are funded annually based on the number of active researchers in each group. £34,350 School investment (and £36k external funding) supported just under 300 research events. These include more than 140 research talks by speakers including Omar Elerian (Italian/Palestinian director) and Oliver Frlić (Croatian director); 23 'In Conversations', such as with comedians Susan Calman, Jo Brand, and Stephen K. Amos; and 69 conferences and symposia, most notably the high-profile 'Cognitive Futures in the Humanities'.

Facilities

A key feature of our REF2014 environment was the opening of the Jarman building. Since then, the Jarman has undergone a series of strategic enhancements totalling £46,000 and aimed specifically at improving PGR and PR facilities. This includes a new dedicated PGR hub, with workstations and lockers. Located alongside staff offices, this has coalesced the PG community internally and with the wider staff community. The £80k invested into equipping the 3D-enabled Lupino cinema has significantly enhanced our research environment and supports our EDI aim of profiling diverse film-makers. It prompted the creation of the annual Ida Lupino Lecture on women in UK TV and Film, and has been the venue for screenings by visiting lecturers. These include Professor Daw-Ming Lee's (Taipei National University of the Arts) film on Taiwan's Ethnographic Films (supported by the Faculty Mobility Fund) and Professor Sue Vice's (Sheffield) presentation on Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* Outtakes.

Our professional facilities and technicians underpin the School's strengths, especially in PR. Facilities include a 120-seat end-on theatre and four black-box drama studios; pre- and post-production, film-editing, and technical suites; a Foley Room and an ambisonics room; three professional recording studios, a sound studio, and a portable/flexible Music and Audio Sound Theatre (MAAST) with immersive multi-speaker system; and a professional art gallery. Our workshop (including costume and props store) is equipped for set building, mould making/casting, sculpting, 3D design/printing, and laser cutting. Strategic investment has significantly improved PR facilities through: installation of Harlequin flooring in two studios; new EM Acoustic PA systems for drama studios and theatre; two iMacs with Q-lab (professional-standard sound design programme); and comprehensive lighting and sound upgrades, including a Behringer digital sound desk. Use of these facilities is supported by nine technicians, all from industry backgrounds, specialising in key areas of production.

This infrastructure continues to attract PGR students, with 31 enrolling on Drama, Film, and Music PR PhDs since REF2014. It also supports the creation of impact case studies and outputs. Drama facilities enabled the development of *The Digital Performer*, *Older Women Centre Stage*, and *Break a Leg*. The music suites underpinned *Irides* and *King's Cross*, and the film studios were essential to *216 Westbound*, *Lesions in the Landscape*, *Cinema Unframed*, and *The Video Essay as 'Liquid Criticism'*. Practice and screening facilities have also been used across 25 international conferences, including 'Kantorbury' (featuring Polish scholars Lech Stangret, Anna Burzynska, and artist Goshka Macuga) and 'Cinema, Embodiment, Pornography'. We also ensure our

facilities benefit the wider community, hosting Fringe previews and making our studios available for use by community groups. The *Autism Arts Festival*, which was staged across our performance spaces and at the Gulbenkian, exemplifies the importance of our facilities in enabling impact. Our collaboration with the Gulbenkian also includes programming the annual Linda Smith Lecture given by comedians including Sandy Toksvig and Barry Cryer.

Since 2014, significant investment has improved the Templeman Library, and Special Collections and Archives. The enlarged and upgraded library, with new PGR facilities including a dedicated 24/7 Study hub and extensive digital resources, underpins PG and staff research throughout the School. The new reading rooms and exhibition spaces have been central to events such as the *Panto Then & Now* exhibition and public symposium. Research outputs and events have also been enabled by the expanded theatre archives. These include the new David Drummond pantomime collection (£160k investment), the British Stand-Up Comedy Archive (£96k investment and growth from five to 18 comedians' collections since 2014), and the Max Tyler Music Hall Collection (£10,000 investment).

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

Research Contribution and Recognition

Research leadership is evidenced across and beyond the University. Allain has served as Dean of the GRC, Brooks as Divisional Director of Research and Innovation, and Frey as Associate Dean for Internationalisation. Nationally, Shaughnessy chairs the QAA Subject Benchmarking Review, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts; and Shaughnessy and Wood have taken on roles in AHRC Strategic Review. Allain, Boenisch, and Shaughnessy have undertaken 'pilot'/peer REF reviewing at RHUL, Lincoln, Reading, and Ulster. Allain was on subpanel 35 in REF2014 and is a REF2021 panel member. Smith, Double, and Shaughnessy's research has been recognised for its international transformation of the fields of cognitive film studies, comedy studies, and arts and neurodiversity, respectively.

Staff leadership of our wider disciplines through peer review has significantly expanded since REF2014. The number of AHRC Peer Review College members (Boenisch, Brooks, Frey, Jeffers-McDonald, Laera, Shaughnessy, Wood), and Leverhulme reviewers (Boenisch, Cinquegrani, Guerin, Maes, Smith) has doubled; and Wood now reviews for the EPSRC. International esteem is evidenced through peer-review activities for funding bodies in 12 countries (vs 7 in REF2014), including Lithuania, Germany, Finland, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, China, Israel, New Zealand, and Singapore.

Colleagues also play leading roles in major disciplinary organisations, including the Society of Cinema and Media Studies (Sub-panel Chair), Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image (Board member, President, Fellow); British Society of Aesthetics (Trustees); Association for Art History (Trustee, Chair of Museums and Exhibitions Committee); Theatre and Performance Research Association (working group founder); and Society for Dance Research (Secretary and Executive member). Our interdisciplinarity is reflected in Fellowships of the Royal Geographical Society; Royal Society of Arts; Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce; and membership of Academia Europea. More than 90% of staff are HEA Fellows or Senior Fellows.

Externally, 12 staff have served as External Examiners on UK degree programmes, and colleagues have served as external validators for new degree programmes at East15/Essex, Roehampton, Central School of Ballet, and Rambert. The 63 doctorates examined at 31 UK universities encompass a range of interdisciplinary areas, whilst examinations at 11 international universities evidence the international reach of our research. Eleven staff have served on professorial appointment committees. Shaughnessy also served as the UK expert on the international review panel, and subsequent validation panel, of Hong Kong Academy's Performing Arts Programme. Allain has served as visiting reviewer at NUS, Singapore.

Editorial positions facilitate the development of new knowledge. Since REF2014, 28 staff have taken on editorial roles for 41 journals across multiple disciplines. These include: *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*; *Tate Papers*; *Visual Culture in Britain*; *Comedy Studies*; *Contemporary Theatre Review*; *Gender Studies*; *Theatre Topics*; *Theatre Journal*; *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*; *Shakespeare*; *Screen*; *Digital War*; *Projections*; and *Northern Lights*. Notable international examples include *Imagine*, *Note di Storia del Cinema*; *Kunsttijdschrift Vlaanderen*; *Polish Theatre Journal*; *Rebeca* (Brazilian Journal of Cinema and Audiovisual Studies); and *Theatre Research International*.

Staff are editors for book series, including Methuen's interdisciplinary *Performance and Science* series, *Animation* (Palgrave), *German Film Classics* (Camden House), *Studies in Screen Industries and Performance* (Palgrave), and *Performance Studies* (Exeter University Press). All staff are active in peer reviewing academic publications, with over 250 reviews undertaken, including for international and interdisciplinary journals such as the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, *Body and Society*, and *Interacting with Computers*.

The international significance and quality of our research has been recognised through numerous awards and prizes. Thomas's Ashmolean *Raphael* exhibition won a Global Fine Art award and the *Apollo Magazine* Exhibition of the Year prize. Allain won the Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz (Witkacy) Prize for promoting Polish theatre abroad, and Frey won the Philip Leverhulme Visual and Performing Arts Prize. Illingworth was shortlisted for the prestigious 2016 Jarman Award. In outputs, Sayad won the British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies (BAFTSS) award for Best Journal Article, and Frey's *Extreme Cinema* received BAFTSS Best Monograph Honourable Mention. Newall won the American Society for Aesthetics Outstanding Monograph Prize, and Laera's *Translation, Adaptation, Otherness* (AHRC) won the TaPRA Early Career Research Prize. Whilst at Kent, Radosavljević won, and Boenisch was shortlisted for, the TaPRA David Bradby prize. Other shortlists include Wood's *Software, Animation, and the Moving Image* (Society of Animation); Frey's *Permanent Crisis* and Stanfield's *Cool and the Crazy* (BAFTSS); and Smith's *Film, Art, and the Third Culture* (Kraszna-Krausz).

PR outputs have received multiple awards. *Tempest Storm* won Best Documentary and Audience Choice at the Atlanta Underground Festival, and Best Documentary Pitch at Toronto's Hotdocs International Documentary Festival. *Machine for Viewing* was in competition at the 2019 International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam and in the Official Selection for the 2020 Sundance Film Festival. Since REF2014, *Selfish Giant* has won seven international awards, including the Europa Cinemas Label for Best European Film, the Hitchcock D'Or (Dinard Film Festival), and Best Film (Ghent Film Festival). It was nominated for seven British Independent Film Awards (BIFA) and one BAFTA (Best British Film). Moving Memory's *Beyond the Marigolds* won the 2017 Kent Creative Award, recognising impact on the region, and their 'Moving Well' workshops were shortlisted for the Europe-wide Smart Ageing Prize 2020.

Recognition and influence are indicated by more than 100 keynotes and invited lectures presented in the UK, Europe, Japan, America, South Korea, and Australia (in addition to papers delivered at 227 conferences/symposia). Researchers have given high-profile talks at national and international cultural institutions, including the British Museum; BFI; Deutsches Filmmuseum, Frankfurt; Museum of Fine Art, Boston; and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane. In competitions and awards, Allain was invited to be a competition juror for the Iran International University Theatre Festival; Frey has sat on the Society for Cinema and Media Studies committees for the Best First Book and Katherine Singer Kovács Essay awards.

Colleagues have won fellowships, and been invited to undertake Visiting Professorships, at institutions including the International Research College, Berlin; Universität Bremen; Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin; Ruhr-Universität Bochum (Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship); University of Queensland; Macquarie University, Sydney; and Princeton (Rockefeller Fellowship). Barnard received the inaugural BFI/Wellcome Trust Screenwriting Fellowship; Illingworth, the Women's Playhouse Trust Fellowship; and Laera, a fellowship from the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

External research collaborations are enabled financially through University networking schemes and the grant income detailed in Section 3. University Academic Visitor schemes have enabled us to host 11 international guests and develop interdisciplinary research. Key visits include John Lutterbie (co-founder of the interdisciplinary Center for Embodied Cognition, Stony Brook) and Dean Irvine (Dalhousie, founder of Agile Humanities Agency). Colleagues have also collaborated on projects with more than 46 UK and international universities. Projects supported by the University's EU Partnership Award have responded to international priorities, as exemplified by Guerin's collaborations on *Living with Industrial Disasters and Environmental Risk*. Research groups also provide important financial, practical, and organisational support for collaborative events. This has underpinned 69 significant symposia and national/international conferences organised both at Kent and elsewhere. Major collaborative examples include 'Turning the Page: Digitalization, movie magazines and historical audience studies' (with University of Ghent), 'The End of Fashion' (with Massey University, Wellington), 'Philosophy of Portraits' (with University of Maryland), and 'Celebrating Karlos Koun' (with University of Oxford, introduced by the Greek Minister of Culture). Colleagues are also active in developing and convening research networks. Significant examples include the 'Re-' Interdisciplinary Network (with University of Cambridge), the Aesthetic Value Network (with University of Murcia, Fundación Séneca), and the expansion of the European Theatre Research Network in partnership with Central.

Engaging with Beneficiaries

Through participatory and co-production research methodologies we have engaged directly with beneficiaries and research users. The co-production projects, *Great War Theatre* and *Digitizing 'The War Illustrated'*, recruited and trained over 300 nationwide volunteer researchers. Volunteers were aged between 8 and 80+, and included diverse semi-/retired professionals and people re-entering education. Participatory research projects have connected with marginalised and harder-to-reach groups including: neurodivergent adolescent girls (*Playing A/Part*), autistic creatives (*Autism Arts Festival [AAF]*), older women (Moving Memory [MM]), and people with memory loss (*Lesions in the Landscape*). MM's work, in particular, has connected intergenerational groups and reached extensive audiences across multiple productions/projects (*Still Stomping* alone reached audiences of c.4000, 200+ workshop participants, and 20 trainees/performers). This reach is mirrored in the AAF: co-produced with 68 autistic advocates and artists, the two festivals reached audiences of 14,500.

Autism Reimagined (AHRC follow-on from *Imagining Autism*) exemplifies how public/third-sector partnerships enable colleagues to reach key research users. Partnering with the National Autistic Society and arts centres in Southport and Merseyside, *Autism Reimagined* provided CPD training for 258 teachers/TAs (as well as social workers, school governors, occupational therapists, and other support workers) nationwide. This was in addition to training 130 mainstream/55 SEN teachers in Kent and developing peer-to-peer skills/knowledge-transfer mechanisms by training 'Autism Champions'. Partnerships with both SEN and mainstream schools in Kent also facilitated after-school 'Autism Cafes' and 'iA for Families' workshops, benefiting c.150 parents/carers. Other projects have also reached beneficiaries and users via stakeholder partnerships. Regionally, these stakeholders include South East Dance, Ageless Thanet, four primary schools, two Age UK groups, local residential/nursing homes, and Kent and Canterbury GPs. National partnerships include with Sexplain/School of Sexuality Education, the Mayor of London's office, Sydney De Haan Research Centre, the National Autistic Society, and Snape Maltings.

Partnerships with external arts and heritage organisations underpin the 300+ public research activities, events, and performances/presentations through which we connect with diverse audiences and beneficiaries. High-profile national stakeholders include: the BFI (including multiple invited talks by Jeffers-McDonald and Frey); The National Archives; V&A Museum; Young Vic; London Bubble Theatre Company; and Nottingham Playhouse. International partners connecting us to audiences include: Auora Museum, Shanghai; Medical Museion, Copenhagen; QAGOMA, Brisbane; Piccolo Teatro, Milan; Tiny Hero Productions, Amsterdam; Michael Chekhov Europe; and Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires.

Researchers have worked closely with a number of organisations to develop innovative, research-led programming. Plays rediscovered, written, and translated by researchers have been performed extensively, including at DCMS WW1 centenary commemorations in Manchester and Leper; at Kings Theatre, Portsmouth; Theatre Royal Brighton; and the Gate Theatre, London. Double's partnerships underpinned the 2015 Edinburgh Fringe's 'Talking Comedy' events. Researchers have also curated exhibitions and programmed work for the Whitechapel Gallery; FACT Liverpool; the Wellcome Collection; IWM (*216 Westbound* is now in the permanent collection); and Close-Up Film Centre, London. Internationally, researchers have programmed content for the Anand Foundation, Delhi; the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery, Washington DC; and Corpus experimental dance company, Copenhagen.

Regionally, we collaborate with key stakeholders to connect with and benefit audiences in Kent. We regularly programme and produce talks/events for the Gulbenkian: including programming three new arts festivals (*Outdoor Horror*, *Autism Arts*, and *Projections*). We work closely with the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, most prominently advising on the *Marlowe 450* season and WW1 centenary community-production *Return of the Unknown*. Our collaboration with the Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, Canterbury, includes exhibitions on the photography of Tony Ray-Jones and pop-art pioneer Eduardo Paolozzi. The Memoranda of Understanding (instigated by Allain) with Canterbury Cathedral and the city's University of the Third Age (U3A) group, have also been key in reaching local audiences, including via the interdisciplinary Cathedral-University *Questions of Space* festival and annual U3A-University conference. Beyond immediate civic partners, researchers have programmed events for Turner Contemporary, Margate; Theatre Royal Margate; Folkestone Quarterhouse; Historic Dockyard Chatham; and smaller community arts organisations including Dover Youth Theatre and Sheppey Little Theatre.

Engagement and impact within the creative and heritage sector is achieved through work in advisory, governance, and consultancy roles. Illingworth is an Associate of the IWM; Vass serves as a consultant to Forsythe Productions; and Allain was a consultant for the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama (2015-18). He also chaired the Marlowe Theatre's senior management committee and sits on the Digital Theatre+ Advisory Board. Brooks and Double are new acquisitions advisors for Special Collections and Archives (contributing to its 2018 Archive Service Accreditation). Brooks sits on the Kings Theatre Portsmouth's archives steering group.

Staff regularly connect to beneficiaries, intervene in public discussions, and improve access to research, via local news and specialist media outlets. Significant examples include *The Stage*, *Sight and Sound*, *Learning Disability Today*, *THE*, *TLS*, *Chortle*, *New Scientist*, *Hystrio*, and *The i*. Beyond impact case studies, high-profile national and international media coverage of research has been achieved through features in the *New York Times*, *Times of Malta*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *Telegraph*, and *Sunday Post*. Research has also been featured on the BBC: in 'Bitesize' educational programming; on the BBC website; in Radio 4 programmes including *Great Lives*, *Fry's English Delight*, *All in the Mind*, and *The Cultural Front*; in podcasts such as *1800 Seconds on Autism*; and on BBC1 *Newsnight*.

Researchers have produced and collaborated on films, documentaries, and podcasts to reach international audiences. Illingworth (Random Acts/Channel 4) and Shaughnessy's (BBC *Arts in Quarantine*) research has been the subject of mainstream documentaries and short animations. Double's podcasts – *History of Comedy in Several Objects* (with Quirk), and *Breaking a Leg* – have achieved 13,500 downloads. ECR Regehr reached significant audiences via two BBC3 documentaries: *The Secret World of Incels* (which prompted widespread social media discussion including over 37,000 reactions on Facebook alone) and her collaboration on *Secrets of Sugar Baby Dating*. Her podcast *How Researchers Changed the World* (Taylor and Francis, rated 4/5 by *Podcast Review Show*) has reached audiences of over 17,000 (39% North America, 19% Asia, 29% Europe).

Impact and Contribution to Society beyond Impact Case Studies

Our research has positively impacted on the health and wellbeing of marginalised and harder-to-reach communities. Changes in attitude and a positive impact on sense of identity and value are evident across our socially engaged research. Projects have placed marginalised groups centre stage, challenged negative perceptions (e.g. of ageing, of disenfranchised white youth, and of autistic humour and creativity), and reduced stigma (e.g. around neurodiverse behaviours). Impacts include increased perception of lifelong and neurodiverse creativity; increased interests in self-advocacy; reduced anxiety and loneliness (especially during the Covid-19 pandemic); a sense of being valued and appreciated; and increased physical health, confidence, and emotional resilience. Online provision of 54 'Moving Well' workshops, socially distanced performances for care settings/isolated people, and volunteer research opportunities have positively impacted on experiences of the pandemic. All projects see benefits in mutual support, communication, and community building: often intergenerational and trans-geographical. Beyond immediate impacts, external research also shows that positive psychological and social effects have protective benefits for health and health behaviours.

Our research has enhanced educational and social outcomes for young people, volunteers, and research participants. This includes improving access to foreign-language plays in drama curricula, and enhancing quality and inclusivity in sex/relationship education. Barnard's *Selfish Giant* has informed discussion of class and identity in secondary schools, and Smith's work features in A level Film Studies curricula. The education of autistic children has directly benefited from teachers and parents gaining new understandings of autistic communication, and feeling empowered to use *Autism Reimagined* techniques to improve classroom and home life. Evaluation of these interventions reveals positive change in 70-80% children, including in areas of social impairment, socialisation, play, interests, and confidence.

Research participants have gained new skills (technical, facilitation, research, archival), knowledge (including history and copyright law), and creativity. Significant numbers of participants report wanting to apply their new skills and confidence beyond projects. They also seek further opportunities to perform, study, volunteer, and undertake independent research. Some MM trainees have gone on to volunteer independently in local adult care settings, whilst others have gone on to launch the 'Kick up a Fuss' collective. The company's work has also inspired other community dance groups emerging in areas of social deprivation across Kent. Misk's collaboration with Raby inspired the VR artist to take up a funded PhD at Monash, whilst former *Imagining Autism* practitioner, Williams, attributes her career development and current position as Manager of Spare Tyre Theatre (ACE National Portfolio) to her work on *Imagining Autism*. Barnard's films have nurtured talent from under-represented backgrounds in Yorkshire and provided employment pathways: including in acting, with both 'non-actor' leads in *Selfish Giant* now having on-screen careers.

Our research has informed the work of creative practitioners and professionals within and beyond the arts, contributing to knowledge spillover in the wider economy. Double's work (including *Getting the Joke*, British Stand-up Comedy Archive and *Break a Leg*) has been acclaimed by comedians: for increasing the cultural significance of stand-up comedy, changing how comedians write and archive their material, influencing teaching of comedy, and inspiring efforts to grow the Indian comedy scene. As dramaturg, Radosavljević shaped the 2015 *Oresteia*, which gained a West End transfer and was lauded as 'one of this year's theatrical sensations' (*Guardian*, 30/5/15). MM's online training resources and *Autism Reimagined* techniques have been taken up by artists, facilitators, and companies, including Dacorum Community Dance and What's Coming out of the Box. More than 130 practitioners have also developed new skills and knowledge via MM's forum for exchanging experiences/practice. As part of *Marlowe 450*, Allain co-directed *The Massacre at Paris* for the Cathedral crypt, deepening the cast's understanding of the value of physical theatre training. He also shaped the Marlowe Theatre's regional and participatory programming, as part of their transition to an independent trust. Beyond theatre, Allain draws on his experience with Methuen to inform thinking around digital publishing.

Models of co-production have also informed approaches taken up by varied groups, including local history projects; mental health nursing teams; and Clevedon Pier, which took forward the community event model developed during *The People's Pier* (AHRC). Methodological innovations have also been adopted as best practice by research users. AAF's autism-friendly audience packs were adapted for use at the 2018 Edinburgh Fringe and 2019 Edinburgh International Science Festival, where user feedback commended this as a key intervention which created an enabling environment for autistic audiences. The packs received extensive media coverage and a mention in a Scottish Parliament motion recognising the Fringe's progress in accessibility. Internationally, May's work informed a 2019 British Council report on accessibility in Canadian theatre.

The AAF also exemplifies researchers' impact on the development of emergent artists. It led to tours for commissioned work, inspired new company Stealth Aspies and its successful ACE application, and motivated the launch of a monthly neurodivergent comedy night in Brighton. In Paris, as European coordinator for *Artslant*, Guerin ran a residency program for emerging artists, as well as mentoring young and emerging artists towards exhibiting their work. Allain's consultancy for the Conservatoire for Dance and Drama enabled conservatoire practitioners to develop their practice and positively shaped the education of emergent performers.

In conclusion, our research has contributed to economic sustainability and prosperity in the creative sector, provided volunteering and employment opportunities, informed service provision, created community cohesion, shaped inclusive arts practices, and improved mental, physical and emotional health. Equally importantly, it has challenged attitudes, informed understanding, improved communication, and achieved positive impact from the local to the global.