

Institution: The University of Leeds
Unit of Assessment: 31 Theology and Religious Studies
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p><i>Unit Context and Structure</i></p> <p>Theology and Religious Studies (TRS) at Leeds is a subject area within the School of Philosophy, Religion and History of Science (PRHS), which is part of a new, enlarged Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures (AHC) established during this REF period. All 12.6 FTE staff whose work contributes to this submission are members of PRHS. UOA31 is one of two units of assessment within the School, the other being UOA30 (Philosophy). Overall management of TRS staff (§2), and strategic leadership of the subject area, is provided by the head of TRS (currently Stiebert, previously Tomalin, Muers) who is also a Deputy Head of School (DHoS) and a member of School Management Group (SMG). UOA31 research is overseen and managed by a School Research (and Innovation) Committee whose ex-officio members are as follows: Director of Research (and Innovation) (DoRI); Director of Impact (DoI); Director of Postgraduate Studies (DoPS); several Research Centre Directors; and the Leaders of UOA30 and UOA31 (McLoughlin).</p> <p>Research Centres balance the general and specialist needs of researchers. The nexus of communication, into and out of Research Centres, is Research Committee. In top-down communication, the committee conveys, through Centre Directors, the general strategic objectives and priorities of the University (via Faculty and School) to researchers on the ground. In bottom-up communication, researchers convey, through Centre Directors, input to annual strategic planning in relation to research aims and objectives (see below): each centre has an annual general meeting at which a record of activities is reviewed, plans are formulated and shifts in aims and objectives are discussed. Information, good practice and challenges originating in any one centre are shared with the committee by Centre Directors and then with researchers on the ground.</p> <p>In TRS research culture and strategy at unit level is shaped by the leadership of two major research centres – the Centre for Religion and Public Life (CRPL, led during the REF period by Tomalin, van Klinken, Starkey/Stiebert) and the Centre for Philosophy of Religion (CPR, led during the REF period by Wynn, Burley/Scrutton). Staff in TRS may be associated with either or both Centres. In the study of contemporary religion, CRPL members have aimed to develop multi-researcher areas of internationally-excellent expertise around: i) religion and gender, especially in international, postcolonial and development settings (Tomalin, Stiebert, Starkey, van Klinken, Muers); ii) minority religions, ethnicity and diaspora in translocally-connected UK contexts (McLoughlin, Singh, Starkey, Tomalin). For its part, CPR aimed to develop and promote a distinctive approach to philosophy of religion characterised by breadth of engagement – with dimensions of religious life and lived experience not normally central in this field e.g. spiritual practice (Wynn), happiness and wellbeing (Wynn and Scrutton) - and with non-‘Abrahamic’ religious traditions (Burley, including work on ritual/sacrifice), as well as with the environmental humanities (Skrimshire).</p> <p><i>Research strategies</i></p> <p>The overall quality of the unit’s REF2014 submission was assessed as follows: 4*(33%), 3*(49%), 2*(18%). TRS had undergone “transformative” new developments in the diversity and</p>

scope of its research expertise with feedback suggesting “a reorganisation that has provided a well-wrought and sustainable staffing policy”. The key aim for this REF period has been to capitalise on the opportunities afforded by these changes, **building and promoting a distinctive and coherent approach in each area of strength i.e. the study of contemporary religion** (identified as our main existing strength at REF2014) **and philosophy of religion** (identified as an area for future work at REF2014).

To further develop our outstanding research environment, supported by improvements to research facilities, infrastructure, and working environment (§3), we have pursued the following objectives: to recruit, retain and effectively support and develop internationally-excellent researchers (§2), so as to individually and collectively deliver a balance of the highest quality outputs (REF2) and impact (REF3, see below) addressing key societal and grand disciplinary challenges, enabled by sustained internal and external research collaboration with a range of academic/non-academic partners at intersecting local, national and international scales, enabled by increasing external income (§3,4), and thereby attracting the very best postdoctoral researchers (PDRs) and postgraduate researchers (PGRs) (§2/REF5a).

These objectives have been addressed in ways described throughout this document, with the following being some headline achievements: 10 promotions including 5 new Chairs in contemporary religion [see §2]; the funding of 2 new permanent early career appointments (including a University Academic Fellow (UAF) in Religious and Cultural Transmission, £202,297 total investment front-loaded by the University); recruitment of 4 fixed-term PDRs (§2); 25 PhDs completed (22.5 FTE) and 15 (current or completed) AHRC-funded scholarships (§2); £1.2M HESA research income, including 5 awards over £100K and 3 Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) awards (§3); the publication of 12 monographs and 135 journal articles among other outputs (a selection in REF2); and much-improved accommodation [§3].

Impact strategies

The unit’s impact profile at REF2014 was 4*(20%), 3*(60%), 2*(20%). Feedback acknowledged that our “longstanding-commitment to impact and public engagement” was “clearly embedded ... very effectively into ... strategic planning”. To further develop our impact PRHS reconfigured the DoI role (Tomalin, currently Stark UOA30) as a core part of SMG, articulating a new School Impact Strategy (2016). Its aim was to ensure an overall environment in which excellent research is consistently linked to impact of outstanding quality, significance and reach. Increased grant capture across small and larger projects, as well as impact-led and sector-based funding, was targeted (§3). The aim was to enable more CRPL members to flourish as inter/national impact leaders, whilst also supporting CPR members to increase their experience e.g. in local and inter/national networking, events and activity that attract the interest of non-academic practitioners (Scrutton, Burley §4).

Key developments instituted during the REF period include: i) recruiting Singh (§2) as a potential impact leader given his previous, interdisciplinary impact-focused work (‘Arts Engaged’, Leeds, 2012-15); ii) recruiting Starkey (§2) - a former social worker and AHRC Cultural Engagement Fellow (‘Keeping Faith in Health’ 2016) - to add professionally-informed expertise to the unit; iii) creating new opportunities during research days for local stakeholders to reflect on how academic partnerships might benefit their work; iv) building pilot research partnerships via our well-established student placements; v) increasing the general visibility of Leeds TRS’s work via a CRPL public-facing website and ‘Religion in Public’ and ‘Faith and Activism’ blogs (8,953 unique visitors, 2018-20); vi) creating PRHS strategic investment and dedicated impact

expenses funds (§3); vii) assessing the impact potential of all new projects via internal peer review (§3); viii) work-loading (50-100 hours p.a. 2018-21) for case study leaders; ix) employing a part-time (now permanent) Impact Support Officer (Phillip) (0.5 FTE) to collate evidence and draft (4 possible TRS) case studies; x) introducing Impact Fellowships for PGRs.

Our case studies (UOA31-1/UOA1-2) reflect long-term strengths in impact-centred research that deepens strategic research relationships with minority religious communities, as well as government, media and NGOs, to effect significant cultural and policy changes. Such work originates in the Community Religions Project (1976-). Bringing minority organisations together with other relevant stakeholders through research creates a space allowing all parties to benefit e.g. Tomalin and Starkey's work on public health (§4) and McLoughlin's UK Hajj sector consultations. Our impact is as likely to be international as local. Even where international links are initially made on an individual-researcher basis (e.g. Singh's work with Canadian Sikh organisations or Muers' work with the World Council of Churches §4), our strategy is to identify nodes of multiple connections where we can increase our international impact by developing more established partnerships (e.g. the signing of a new 3-year memorandum of understanding (MOU, 2019-22) between CRPL and the Desmond Tutu Centre for Religion and Social Justice, University of the Western Cape, South Africa, based on several Leeds researchers' connections and shared interests with the partner organisation).

Interdisciplinarity

TRS at Leeds is a multi-disciplinary unit (including philosophers, social anthropologists, theologians, sociologists, text scholars) within a multi-disciplinary School (where CPR is a 'hinge' connecting to TRS, Philosophy and History of Science). Intentionally realising the benefits of a multidisciplinary context, we see conversations across disciplinary boundaries as integral to our research culture (e.g. a CRPL vision statement on the overarching 'Leeds approach' to interdisciplinary research on contemporary religion - *contextual, critical, committed, collaborative* – emerged from consultations among centre members e.g. Stiebert and van Klinken across Biblical studies and the social-sciences). Interdisciplinarity starts in a very practical way, too, within the University (§4, REF5a); both CRPL and CPR have multi-disciplinary memberships that extend beyond TRS, and host seminars that attract attendance from across the University. van Klinken is also the director of a whole-University interdisciplinary research centre (Leeds University Centre for African Studies).

Our commitment to ongoing conversations across disciplinary boundaries bears fruit when we bring TRS expertise to address specific challenges requiring input from many disciplines (REF5a) – and this is strongly reflected in our publications (REF2), research grant profile (§3) and our collaborations (§4). During the REF period the majority of submitted staff have conducted innovative interdisciplinary research e.g. with new disciplinary conversation partners across CPR (Scrutton, psychiatry; Wynn's PDRs, Willows and Boulding, science-engaged theology; Skrimshire, environmental humanities; Burley, anthropology/literature).

Open research environment

The University of Leeds provides the infrastructure and systems to ensure that open access to research is REF-compliant (REF5a), and also to ensure the effective management of research data (data management plans form part of every grant application). Members of the unit were already making use of the repository, established by the 'White Rose' consortium of the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York, to secure open access to their research since before

this became mandatory. During the REF period deposits in TRS have increased from 6 (31/7/13) to 184 (31/07/20) with a 25,356 increase in downloads. Members of the unit contribute to the management and editing of several open-access international journals (e.g. Skrimshire, van Klinken §4). Recognising that monographs form a significant proportion of TRS outputs, for instance, unit members have also discussed subject-specific open access issues through TRS-UK (Muers) and sub-disciplinary professional bodies.

Research integrity and ethics

The unit is committed not only to maintaining best practice in research ethics, but also to contributing to conversations across and beyond the discipline about the complex ethical issues arising from researching religion. An open-access companion resource to the British Association for the Study of Religions Ethics Guidelines is being developed by/for undergraduates on the CRP website. Throughout the REF period we have always had at least one representative on Faculty Research Ethics Committee (currently Singh), building up a body of local expertise by rotating service. Discussions of research ethics are integrated into Research Committee's internal peer review of grant applications. A CRPL research day focused specifically on research ethics in the study of religion, moving beyond a narrow focus on 'passing ethical review' to a broader conception of ethical practice in research, related to questions of engagement, reflexivity and positionality. Follow-up events explored the interaction between research ethics and researcher engagement and activism.

Future strategy

To ensure that our research and impact remains vital and sustainable during the next five years TRS will renew the application of basic principles in light of changes in the wider environment, those principles being to maintain and enhance our two key areas of research strength. We will continue to support and develop new and existing early and mid-career staff during Burley's tenure as DHoS (2021-24), prioritising the sustainability of research time to achieve our objectives, balancing workloads and wellbeing. In terms of new infrastructural support (§3), a Research and Innovation Development Manager has been appointed to the Faculty's Cultural Institute (CI, 2019-) to strengthen external partnerships, while a PRHS Research Manager role is also under discussion by SMG.

Recently promoted research leaders are now in their prime (§2) and we expect further promotions. Following Wynn's departure to Oxford (2020) an existing member of CPR (Hewitt, Leverhulme PDR) will also take up a post as Lecturer in Philosophy and Religion (2021-) joining TRS staff. PRHS recognises the need to make a demonstrable commitment to diversity in new appointments; another new Lecturer (2021-) position identifies race/race theory (as it intersects with religion/philosophy) as one of two areas of need. TRS will also continue to pursue outstanding postdoctoral fellowship applicants who add value to CRPL and CPR.

10 ongoing (Kirby, McLoughlin, Stiebert, Skrimshire, Tomalin, van Klinken) and 2 new (Scrutton, Starkey) externally-funded projects are a strong starting point for high quality outputs and impact during the next REF period, as are our project-based international partnerships and MOU with the Desmond Tutu Centre. Capitalising on increased numbers of researchers engaging with non-academic partners (e.g. in environmental humanities, gender-based violence and the cross-centre area of health), we are promoting 'follow-on' funding opportunities to support staff in developing impact while also reviewing workload for case study leaders. We are building on our experience of attracting longer, larger interdisciplinary research council grants (REF5a) in this

REF period – and seeking to exploit post-Brexit EU opportunities – while at the same time committed to a strategy of seeking income from diverse sources including applied/challenge-based calls and contracts/consultancies for government/public bodies and charities (§2) (e.g. a cross-CRPL/CPR Templeton bid involving Burley and van Klinken). We are also diversifying support for PGRs: Skrimshire is Co-I on a Leverhulme Doctoral Training Partnership (Extinction Studies, 19 studentships, 4 Faculties, 2021-); Tomalin is negotiating 2 co-sponsored Salvation Army studentships.

2. People

Staffing strategy and staff development

There has been a 15% increase in the number of submitted staff from 10.8 FTE (REF2014) to 12.6 FTE (REF2021). Having invested significantly in philosophy of religion prior to REF2014, at the beginning of this period we identified a specific strategic need to broaden and deepen our capacity in the study of contemporary religion. A general strategic need has been to effectively support and develop all researchers to individually and collectively deliver the strategic objectives identified in §1.

The recruitment of two early-career researchers (ECRs) in contemporary religion onto permanent contracts (Singh, Starkey) was a response to strategic opportunities and challenges. Firstly, Singh (Leeds PhD 2012) was promoted to Associate Professor within five years as per the UAF plan (2015-19), enhancing existing strengths in impactful research on South Asian religions, ethnicity and diaspora. Secondly, members of the unit (notably Mellor, AHC Pro-Dean for Research) have held major, long-term leadership responsibilities at Faculty level. Securing continuity of research strength and leadership in Sociology of Religion at unit level has been a priority, with Starkey (Leeds PhD, 2015) appointed as Associate Professor (2018). Another key strategy has been supporting outstanding national postdoctoral fellowship applicants who add value to our existing research strengths. Applications are reviewed and developed through Research Committee, with the arrival of Kirby (Leeds PhD, 2017) as a fixed-term British Academy research fellow (2018-22), enhancing our long-established expertise in African religion while also affording interdisciplinary connections to urban studies.

University criteria allow a range of academic pathways to promotion at all grades (REF5a). ECRs appointed prior to REF2014 (Burley, Scrutton, Skrimshire) were all promoted to Associate Professor 2014-18. One-off “reward and recognition” payments can also be used to acknowledge significant contributions to research culture (e.g. bringing a major national conference to Leeds in 2017). In the same way that Wynn’s Leadership Chair appointment prior to REF2014 was designed to support the future exploitation of opportunities offered by these staffing changes in philosophy of religion, during this REF period five existing mid-career researchers in contemporary religion have been promoted to chairs including one who was an ECR at REF2014 (Tomalin, McLoughlin, Stiebert, Muers, van Klinken). Together, these promotions have recognised, and further enabled, the meeting of strategic needs and goals including leading, developing and supporting the next generation of mid-career researchers. Leadership of larger, complex interdisciplinary research projects, including working with a wide range of academic and non-academic partners to deliver outstanding impact, as well as research outputs, also played a significant role in at least three of these promotions.

Staff development for mid-career researchers at Leeds includes various University leadership courses (refreshed 2016, REF5a). PRHS nominates staff – with their agreement – based on

discussions in the annual Staff Review and Development Scheme - nearly 50% of TRS staff are trained as reviewers - and an Annual Academic Meeting of individual staff with the Head of School (HoS) and (in alternate years) the DoRI. Leadership courses are run annually by Organisational Development and Professional Learning (ODPL) and comprise workshops including action-learning case studies, as well as dedicated mentoring and 360° review. McLoughlin used evidence and feedback from 'Tomorrow's Leaders' (2015-16) to inform his Chair application and role as UOA Leader, as did van Klinken as incoming CRPL Director (2017-18).

Mentoring, probation and appraisal processes are overseen by the HoS/TRS DHoS and follow School and University policies (REF5a). New members of staff are assigned TRS mentors with responsibility *inter alia* for ensuring access to, and understanding of, the various forms of support for research. Mentoring has also been arranged during this REF period for staff facing specific challenges (e.g. beginning major research projects after a period dominated by teaching). Implementation of the UKRI Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is a responsibility shared by the HoS/DHoS with other stakeholders such as grant holders. PDRs, both those involved in larger research projects with a PI (i.e. Wynn's Templeton grant: Willows, 2017-18, now Senior Lecturer, Winchester University; and Boulding, 2018-19, now Research Fellow Samford University, US; Skrimshire's AHRC grant, O'Key, 2019-21) and those on academic fellowships (Singh, Starkey, Kirby), are allocated mentors who are not their line managers and who are responsible for advising on career development aligned to unit objectives including ambitious publication, grant capture and impact plans. Time spent mentoring PDRs is recognised in PRHS's workload model and exceeds the minimum expectations of organisations such as the British Academy.

PDRs are encouraged to attend and present at CRPL and CPR seminars, as well as being afforded a range of career development opportunities (including teaching, where this fits with their career aspirations) and given access to the full range of University staff development opportunities (REF5a). As a UAF, Singh was supported throughout by a dedicated training programme and, like Kirby, the time he contributed to student education was capped. School policy more generally is that ECRs for whom research is a contractual requirement (e.g. Starkey) are awarded extra research time in Years 1-2 (45-42.5% of workload rather than 33%). Mindful of the specific challenges for PDRs of integrating into a wider School and University community, PRHS instituted start-of-year (and occasional thereafter) meetings for all PDRs; these are particularly useful networking and support opportunities in TRS at Leeds where numbers of PDRs are small. PDRs across the AHC Faculty are also given opportunities for interdisciplinary networking via the Leeds Arts and Humanities Research Institute (LAHRI, REF5a).

All staff for whom research is a contractual requirement are entitled to a semester of sabbatical leave after every six semesters of normal duties. During this REF period about half the members of the unit have also secured highly competitive Faculty support for an additional semester of leave (14 researchers p.a., £130K investment 2019-20). This enabled the completion of monographs by Burley (UOA31-1817), Scrutton (UOA31-2657), van Klinken (UOA31-2816) and Wynn (UOA31-2791), as well as key underpinning research for McLoughlin's impact case study (UOA31-2).

All research-active staff (including fixed-term PDRs) are offered the same annual allowance (£750, reviewed annually) to support research dissemination at workshops and conferences. Additional discretionary funds (£750) are allocated by the DoRI on a strategic basis e.g. supporting unit members' active participation and leadership roles in the American Academy of

Religion (§4). The Faculty offers further support through an International Conference Fund; an International Research Mobility Award to van Klinken was instrumental in fostering the collaboration between CRPL and the Desmond Tutu Centre.

Research students

31 (27.45 FTE, 2019-20) PhD students are currently registered as new or continuing PGRs on TRS programmes. During this REF period 25 PGRs completed PhDs (5 co-supervised across different UOAs = 22.5 FTE). The overall 'per submitted staff FTE' of 1.78 represents a small increase on REF2014 (1.62). 75% of completed PhDs were supported by a scholarship (AHRC, 9; School/University, 4; plus 4 awards from governments and/or universities in Indonesia (2), Nigeria and Ghana). Overall, 40% of completed PhDs were international – 3 each from Africa and the US, 2 each from Asia and Europe.

TRS has a diverse group of PGRs both in terms of disciplinary approach and key protected characteristics (e.g. religious background, nationality, age). This diversity is partly explained by the diversity of staff specialisms; CRPL's focus on contemporary religion, including the priority given to research relevant to professional practice, public policy and communities, is also appealing to UK and international PGRs alike. However, our recruitment processes promote diversity in specific respects too; part-time and distance learning options make our programmes flexible for applicants with work or caring responsibilities. The availability of additional financial support from the Adrian Hastings Scholarship has attracted applications from Africa.

Leeds is part of the White Rose College of Arts and Humanities (WROCAH), a Doctoral Training Partnership and Centre for Doctoral Training of the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield and York. It is supported by AHRC block-funding (£19M 2014-19, renewed 2019-24) and attracts the very best candidates nationally, with scholarships in TRS often awarded to top applicants with research-relevant non-academic experience. For example, 2 well-qualified BAME community-based researcher-activists contributing to McLoughlin's AHRC projects were supported to apply successfully for part-time WROCAH scholarships. The 15 (current or completed) WROCAH awards held by TRS during the REF period represents a success rate more than commensurate with the unit's size. Separately, in CPR, Skrimshire was PI on an interdisciplinary White Rose network (2016-19) which supervised three linked studentships across the White Rose universities and fed into a prestigious Leeds-Munich-Stockholm Innovative Training Network in Environmental Humanities. Arrangements with Sheffield also enabled Stiebert to co-supervise a WROCAH awardee.

All PGRs at Leeds receive enhanced levels of support through Leeds Doctoral College as well as from the PRHS DoPS and a TRS PGR Tutor. Two PhD supervisors is now the norm which supports high quality supervision and timely completion as well as further opportunities to mentor ECRs. An online record system ('GRAD') ensures that the required number of formal supervisions are monitored (10 p.a. full-time, 6 part-time). Most TRS students receive more than the minimum number of supervisions. There are annual progress reports completed by student and supervisors, and a formal process of transfer onto the PhD programme before the end of the first year (or part-time equivalent). New research students complete a training needs analysis and plan, which is reviewed and updated as part of regular reporting. A suite of postgraduate-specific training is offered by ODPL and, where relevant, by 'in-house' TRS training (e.g. auditing research methods modules; bespoke language training). Recognising that our research students are at many different life and career stages, we offer academic career development opportunities, including gaining AFHEA (Associate Fellow, Higher Education Academy) recognition (e.g. Kirby) – supported through bespoke School-based training and University-level

provision (REF5a). Each WROCAH cohort completes dedicated training and TRS WROCAH Researcher Employability Projects have involved Leeds Museums, for example.

Nurturing the next generation of researchers is a central concern of the unit. PGRs participate actively in the vibrant life of CRPL and CPR, including research days, seminars, reading groups and annual general meetings. Two have served as CRPL interns with responsibility for event-organising and CRPL's social media presence. Building a greater sense of research community among postgraduates has been a priority during this REF period, addressed by instituting regular study days (two per year) and an annual study retreat, where work in progress can be presented in a highly supportive environment. PGRs benefit from £900 school funding for travel and other expenses over the duration of their studies including conferences and they have given papers nationally and internationally including at UK TRS scholarly associations. Several students secured competitive funding to spend time abroad e.g. University of Cape Town (World Universities Network, WUN – REF5a); Haverford College, US (WROCAH); Chinese University of Hong Kong (WUN); Study Abroad Studentship, Indonesia (Leverhulme). TRS has also hosted, and provided supervision for, visiting PhD students from South Africa, the Czech Republic and Italy.

Research students are actively supported in publishing too. Those who completed PhDs have published 3 monographs and more than 30 journal articles. A CPR postgraduate won the Tyndale 'Young Philosopher of Religion' Essay Prize (2014). Students also received competitive impact funding from PRHS (CRPL Impact Fellow) and Leeds Social Sciences Institute for innovative public engagement. Others co-edited reports commissioned from CRPL for the British Council and Leeds City Council. They wrote blogs for CRPL, Shiloh Project, William Temple Foundation and *The Conversation*. Events were co-organised with the Muslim Women's Council, Bradford and others.

52% of TRS PhD graduates (13/25) have secured - or returned to - a range of roles in universities: British Academy fellowship, Leeds (1); researchers on AHRC and English Heritage-funded projects, Leeds (2); lectureships (6) and teaching fellowships/instructorships in the UK and internationally (3). Other destinations include the civil service, charities, teaching and religious ministry.

Equality and diversity

Our continuing commitment to, and local expertise in, equality and diversity (E&D) issues is reflected in research that routinely engages with issues of diversity/difference. A member of the unit (Scrutton) has also acted as Faculty equality and inclusion officer for much of the REF period. PRHS-piloted approaches have now been taken up more widely in the University – e.g. introducing implicit bias training workshops, aimed at improving practice in recruitment and promotion/recognition, *inter alia*. Muers is co-chair of the Women at Leeds Network (2018-present – REF5a) with responsibility for organising University-wide staff events on gender equality and women's career progression. She is also a member of the institutional Athena Swan self-assessment team (2018-present; REF5a). Van Klinken has contributed to showcase events for LGBT History Month. Singh addressed a UKRI Equality, Inclusion and Diversity workshop.

PRHS has also endorsed – and TRS has adapted – the British Philosophical Association/Society for Women in Philosophy good practice scheme for gender equality, which has included ensuring (and monitoring) adequate representation of women speakers and chairs in CRPL and CRP seminar series and conferences.

The gender ratio of women to men among TRS REF-submitted staff is 5:8. Of 6 Professors, 3 are women and 3 are men. UOA-level assessment by the University Equality and Inclusion Team (REF5a) confirmed that the average number of outputs selected for female and male staff is similar i.e. it is proportionate. The last three DHoSs of TRS (covering all the REF period) have all been women. While the staff body identifies with different faith groups and none, as well as diverse 'white' ethnic and national backgrounds and other equality-protected characteristics, only one Associate Professor is of BAME heritage. PRHS has recognised the need to prioritise diversifying its staff body in post REF2021 appointments (§1).

The unit currently has two members of staff with significant responsibility for research who are on long-term part-time contracts to accommodate caring responsibilities. Non-research workloads have been reduced to ensure that the same amount of research time remains available *pro rata* as would be the case with full-time staff. Research leave entitlement is the same as for full-time members of staff. One of the promotions to a Chair in this REF period has been on a part-time contract for most of her academic career.

Internal promotion and recruitment processes are designed to allow factors affecting research "productivity", ability to travel for research purposes, etc, to be taken into account. Members of promotion and recruitment panels, undertake mandatory training with attention to E&D issues (this in addition to mandatory E&D training taken by all University staff). The consideration of staff circumstances for REF purposes was confidential, voluntary and separate from REF submission decision-making processes (REF5a).

Staff returning from periods of leave, including parental leave or ill-health, are supported through the ordinary management and mentoring structure with additional support from the occupational health team.

Work on staff wellbeing in PRHS within the REF period has included the development of a staff 'buddy' network with the explicit aim of providing informal peer support; and a major review of workload including attention to work-life balance and good practice in relation to working hours (e.g. a policy against out-of-hours email). Staff have access to the University's staff counselling and psychological support service, and to a wide range of wellbeing projects and programmes.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

The unit has aimed to maximise income to enable the achievement of its overall research objectives (§1). While income doubled from RAE2008 to REF2014, success at REF2021 is evidenced by an income of £1,178,442 generated from 33 awards. This represents a 40% increase on REF2014 (£702,956, "above average strength"). These figures do not include £184,000 in non-HESA income (e.g. 3 University-administered Research England/ESRC impact awards and a Humboldt Foundation award). Our income grand total is £1,362,442.

Bidding for external funding is embedded across CRPL and CPR, resulting in a balanced and sustainable research portfolio and enabling collaborations and wider interdisciplinary synergies both among unit staff and with other colleagues at Leeds and beyond (§4). More than one-quarter of submitted staff have held one or more major awards as PI/Co-I, each with a value of £100,000 or over. 9 researchers (two-thirds of staff) have held, as PI/Co-I, at least one of 16 awards with a value of £30,000 or over.

Research centres consciously encourage researchers to target diverse sources of funding. So, while a CRPL strategic review (2014-16) identified responding rapidly to research councils'

challenge-based (e.g. GCRF) and hypothecated calls on pressing contemporary, applied issues (REF5a), it has also targeted and attracted funding contracted or commissioned by EU and UK government bodies. Similarly, the development of CPR has increased capacity to compete for projects funded by non-EU based charities such as the Templeton Foundation.

In CRPL clusters working on religion, development and gender in Africa and Asia, the major research council award has been Kirby's British Academy Fellowship (£349,343, UOA31-2952) mentored by van Klinken, who leads a GCRF Sexuality and Religion network (PI, £54,688). Stiebert's AHRC international highlight network award (Gender-based Violence, PI, £31,047, UOA31-2330) and related AHRC Shiloh project (Co-I, £31,719, UOA31-2330) followed her Humboldt award (Euros 45,000). CRPL also hosted Tomalin's AHRC Religions and Sustainable Development network (PI, £41,002, UOA31-4693), which complemented her two GCRF awards: Hidden Peace-builders (PI with SOAS Co-I, £56,270, AHRC) and Pastoralist Women (Co-I with Leeds International Development PI, £55,051, British Academy). Delivering on CRPL's business plan, Tomalin won a research contract, too, from the Belgian government's Directorate-General for Development Co-operation and Aid (PI, £54,257).

In CRPL clusters researching minority religions, ethnicity and diaspora in the UK, major research council awards have been McLoughlin's British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship on Hajj and British Muslims (£102,171; UOA31-2), as well as his AHRC large grant, Bradford's National Museum, which builds on UOA31-4438 (Co-I with Leeds Museum Studies PI, £227,900). Singh returned two awards as PI (AHRC, British Asian Arts Engagement, £21,514, and ESRC Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats, Sikh Radicalisation, £49,477 with McLoughlin as Co-I/mentor; UOA31-2182/UOA31-1). PI Tomalin collaborated with and mentored Starkey (UOA31-2235) and Singh on English Heritage awards (£39,300 total). Tomalin was Co-I too on an ESRC-funded Anti-trafficking award (Co-I with Sheffield Sociology PI and Leeds Geography Co-I, £38,500).

In CPR the major research council award has been Skrimshire's AHRC large grant on Extinction (PI, £144,704) which builds on UOA31-2598 and a related AHRC network (PI with Birmingham Co-I, £16,461). The major Templeton award was Wynn's PI Theology and Science grant (£133,133). Alongside Skrimshire's large grant, this boosted CPR's PDR capacity. Wynn (PI) and Scrutton (Co-I) also collaborated on another Templeton-funded award on Wellbeing (£50,843) thematically related to Scrutton's Mind Association Fellowship (£21,304; UOA31-2657). Burley, too, was a Templeton PI (£20,588).

Supporting research and impact

Extensive support infrastructure has enabled TRS to increase its income, research quality and impact collaborations. Making grant applications and managing winning bids is supported on multiple fronts. The DoRI and Research Committee facilitate success by regularly reviewing researchers' external grant application and publication plans. The School offers flexible opportunities for short-term individual teaching/workload relief to those developing larger grants and employs an experienced postdoctoral Research Development Assistant to aid with applications. Research Committee has a robust process for internal peer review drawing on wide-ranging expertise and experience (§4) including on impact (§1). AHC Faculty Research Office provides extensive and bespoke pre- and post-award input on budgeting, university systems and project management.

Research income has been reinvested widely in PRHS's non-material infrastructure. As well as support for research and impact detailed above (§1,2), centre budgets have been enhanced, and PRHS invites bids for its own strategic funds too (annual budget £15K, awards usually up to £2K). A major award to Tomalin (£22,000) funded Starkey's CRPL Fellowship (2016-17) to produce a centre business plan and develop impact partnerships (§4). Unit members have also used such support to enhance research quality: Muers funded assistance with analysing data (co-funded, Hibbert Trust £1K; UOA31-2020) while Scrutton convened a symposium including non-academics to generate feedback on her monograph (UOA31-2657).

LAHRI (§2), together with the CI (§1), leads on 'Culture' as one of several strategic University interdisciplinary research themes (also including Climate, Cities, Food and Health). This infrastructure has enhanced multi/interdisciplinary networking and externally-funded collaborations e.g. on longer, larger AHRC grants with colleagues in Museum Studies and History (McLoughlin), and English and Environmental Humanities (Skrimshire). LAHRI facilitates a wide range of grant advice sessions and information-sharing opportunities, including hosting visits from research councils. LAHRI seed-corn funding for pilot research in Kenya kick-started work for van Klinken's monograph (UOA31-2816), while Tomalin ran an interdisciplinary Sadler seminar series, 'Religions and Public Health'.

The CI offers a gateway connecting external partners with researchers across the University and vice versa (REF5a). McLoughlin built on CI Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) Ignite awards held with a colleague in Museum Studies before partnering with Bradford's National Science and Media Museum. The Leeds Social Sciences Institute-administered ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (REF5a) funded a RA to support McLoughlin's consultations with UK Hajj industry stakeholders (£14,959 plus in-kind partner funding, UOA31-2) and van Klinken's documentary arising from UOA31-2816 (£15,000 plus in-kind partner funding). McLoughlin and Singh also secured £51,400 ('QR' Strategic Policy Fund, Research England) to develop UOA31-1/UOA31-2.

International research collaboration is supported *inter alia* by Leeds' participation in the WUN (§1) – which funded activities leading to successful GCRF/AHRC network applications (Stiebert, van Klinken).

Infrastructure and facilities

During this REF period £1.5M was invested by the University (REF5a) in the physical space of PRHS. TRS relocated from a marginal building that was not fit for purpose to attractive, refurbished buildings and single-occupancy offices at the centre of campus. There is space for informal discussion and a dedicated multi-purpose room for seminars, reading groups and research meetings. This is co-located with well-equipped PGR rooms and lockers. Closer proximity to researchers/PGRs in UOA30, and to wider faculty and library facilities, has enabled greater research intensity and coherence. Open-plan offices for academic visitors and PDRs are also maintained by PRHS and the Faculty.

Other significant research facilities include the outstanding resources of the Leeds University Library (REF5a), including access to e-journals, subject databases, data management/open access support and copyright advice. The Brotherton Library contains over 2.8M printed books, over 2M manuscripts and provides direct access to over 37,000 print and online journals and 500,000 electronic books. A designated TRS representative (currently Stiebert) co-ordinates the development of the collection in line with unit needs. Notably, Muers (UOA31-2020/UOA31-

2021) makes use of the Quaker Special Collection archive e.g. during her AHRC First World War engagement project (£14,512). Staff and PGRs also benefit from the proximity of Leeds to the British Library at Boston Spa.

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

Academic Collaborations

As detailed in §3, ambitious, externally-funded research projects have emerged from - and been delivered via – internal collaboration in/across TRS, as well as with arts, humanities and social sciences colleagues at Leeds and externally, including internationally. Our success in this regard relies upon a vibrant research culture from Faculty to Research Centre level. This is promoted through speculative lunches, themed research days and seminar series, pump-priming for long-term intra- and cross-institutional networking, hosting short-term visiting fellows and PGRs from overseas (e.g. Istanbul to Hong Kong) and external speakers (e.g. Utrecht to Notre Dame, US), as well as institutionally-supported international research visits (e.g. University of Cape Town, funded by WUN).

In CRPL, cross-institutional collaborations nationally include Mellor's co-authored corpus in religion and social theory with Shilling at Kent (UOA31-229/UOA31-231/UOA31-230; the last of these outputs was nominated by *Sociology* journal editors for the 2016 SAGE Prize as one of the 'most innovative and/or exceptional' articles published during 2015). White Rose supported Stiebert's co-operation with Edwards (Sheffield) across biblical/literary studies. White Rose and WUN-funded research groups also forged two AHRC-funded collaborations, one an international network partnering with the University of Botswana, the other involving an Auckland Co-I. Stiebert's work promoting the publication of African women's research was recognised too with the Circle for Concerned African Women Theologians' Partnership Award in 2019. Other international collaborations enabled by AHRC-funded networks were led from CRPL by Tomalin (PI, SOAS Co-I, networking UK Indian and Ethiopian scholars), and van Klinken (PI, Edinburgh and Kenyan Co-Is). The latter produced an internationally co-edited special issue of *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (2018). Elsewhere, Kirby has successfully applied with German, UK and Ghanaian peers to Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft to organise events in Frankfurt.

As one of the largest groups of philosophers of religion in a single UK university, CPR supports the field nationally through sustained cross-institutional collaborations e.g. the 'Northumbria Triangle' connecting Leeds, York and Durham (2014-17) and White Rose Group in Philosophy of Religion (2019-). A philosophy of religions special issue of *Religious Studies* (2020) co-edited by Burley with Nagasawa (Birmingham) followed an international conference (Leeds) supported by Cambridge University Press and Spalding Trust. Skrimshire's AHRC large grant on Extinction as Cultural Heritage plugged the UK into a Horizon 2020 international interdisciplinary collaboration with Polish and Norwegian scholars. As Templeton PIs/Co-Is, Wynn, Scrutton and Burley were all involved in the Foundation's international, multi-disciplinary networks and capstone conferences in California and Saint Louis.

Impact Partnerships and Societal Contributions

§1 and §3 demonstrate that sustaining long-term relationships with research users and non-academic partners is embedded in both the strategy and day-to-day operation of CRPL. This also provides opportunities for CPR members (e.g. Scrutton on health and wellbeing as an area of cross-centre engagement). Research days several times a year bring together academic and non-academic stakeholders; student placements (e.g. on Anti-trafficking) keep research

conversations open; and our ongoing relationship-building enables us to develop innovative larger-scale projects with research users and beneficiaries as integral partners. Tomalin, for instance, is PI on an AHRC award with 5 international faith-based organisations from Finland, Sri Lanka, the UK and US. Opportunities for consultancy work with (in particular) public and third-sector organisations have also been sought (see below).

Leeds' longstanding research on minority religions in the UK presents specific challenges for demonstrating societal impact. The institutional frameworks for dissemination, consultation and representation vis-a-vis the relevant beneficiary groups are often less visible and less securely developed than for established faith groups and other societal institutions. We have met this challenge by sustained engagement and relationship-building over several years – supported by School and University funding as well as external grants (§1,3). Both case studies (UOA31-1/UOA31-2) demonstrate the value of contributing to community development through the research process itself. Singh's and McLoughlin's research also reflects the unit's overall commitment to engaging with diverse publics and contributing to wider goals of social inclusion. See, for example, Singh's AHRC blog 'Why engage?'; Singh featured too in 'How to engage policy makers' (Institute for Government, 2020).

A majority of unit researchers have been vigorously involved in public engagement – with charities and third-sector bodies, in education and training, and with the media and private sector, locally, nationally and internationally, all of whose behaviours, practices, rights and duties have been influenced by the ongoing impact of our research.

Public Health: (drafted as a case study) With matched funding from Leeds City Council (LCC), Faith Action and Ignite, Tomalin and team were commissioned to pilot research on places of worship as BAME public health settings. Subsequently, LCC has developed a new commitment to - and confidence about - working in partnership with faith actors. Tomalin sits on its Faith and Belief Hub steering group and CRPL convenes the Leeds Public Health and Faith Network. Tomalin is also a board member of the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities and co-chair of its Anti-Human Trafficking Hub. Elsewhere, Scrutton presented on religion and mental health at Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust (100 psychiatrists) and at a related training day for Baptist Free Churches. Kirby coordinated a public health intervention to minimise Covid-19 transmission with a Tanzanian NGO.

National Heritage, Minority Faith Buildings: (drafted as a case study) Tomalin and Starkey's scoping study of Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, Zoroastrian and Baha'i buildings in England – the first national surveys of their kind - allowed Historic England to address its 'under-represented communities' agenda (2010 Equality Act). Various listings were updated including the *National Heritage List for England*. A report on *Modern Places of Worship* was also co-authored with the Warsi Foundation.

Local/National Museums, Arts and Minorities: McLoughlin built on previous AHRC-funded research (UOA31-4438) in a major, AHRC-supported, National Science and Media Museum exhibition "Above the Noise: 15 Stories from Bradford" which he co-produced as part of its curatorial group, working with Bradford Grand Mosque, Fast FM and local Muslim women. As an example of action-research, the exhibition has been the central means of the museum re-assessing its collaborations with Bradford's communities. Elsewhere, Singh partnered with South Asian Arts UK and was a 'Voices of Asia' (Leeds City Museum) Advisory Board member.

Public Policy, Law and Training: Tomalin's AHRC-funded report on 'Faith and the Sustainable Development Goals' was launched at the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society. Researchers delivered training for NGOs in Sudan (Tomalin), Botswana (Stiebert) and opinions

for UK asylum cases (Singh, van Klinken, Muers), as well as advice/guidelines for social care practitioners (Starkey with Dinham, Goldsmiths). Muers was expert advisor to the DfES/NATRE/RE Council on RS A-level. Doncaster City Council endorsed recommendations emerging from Skrimshire's AHRC network concerning the greater involvement of faith groups in climate emergency planning.

Consultancy: Muers had a leading role in drafting materials on moral discernment in churches as a member of the All World Council of Churches 'Faith and Order' Commission (2015-). Invitations to inter/national consultations also included: CAFOD (Muers), German Catholic Bishops Conference (van Klinken), Church of England (Muers) and Archbishop of York (McFadyen). Starkey (with Davie, Exeter) reported for the Anglican College of Bishops on the 500 'Lincoln Letters'.

Public Lectures: The 2019 Mangoletsi endowed public lectures in Philosophy at Leeds were given in CPR by Van Dyke (Calvin College). More than 50 other public lectures/talks were given to non-academic audiences e.g. at Hyde Park Picture House, Leeds, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Devon Yoga Festival and the Desmond Tutu Foundation.

Media: Muers and Singh appeared on BBC One's *Big Questions*. Contributions to BBC Radio 4 include: *Sunday* (Singh); *Beyond Belief* (Burley, Singh) and to documentaries (van Klinken, Starkey). Kirby advised on a documentary on Dar-es-Salaam. van Klinken's documentary, co-produced with AiAi Studios, was launched in Nairobi (400 attendees plus 100 online). Singh provided reports for UK media regulators.

Online: 15 articles written by 5 unit staff for *The Conversation* accumulated 400,000 readers (14.10.20). The Shiloh Project, to which several unit researchers and PGRs have contributed, won the Digital Humanities Award (2019) for 'Best DH Blog Post or Series of Posts'. Burley contributed educational resources for teachers and students of A-Level Religious Studies.

Contributions to the research base

Individual unit researchers have been recognised for reshaping the forefront of their disciplines in various ways. Investment in their work at Leeds also benefits the future sustainability of TRS and other fields nationally and internationally. Unit members have offered exemplary leadership in collaborative, interdisciplinary investigations of local to global priority issues where they intersect with lived religions and traditions in diverse settings (§1,3; REF5a). Unit members' work as citizens also includes support for several sub-disciplines locally, nationally and internationally.

Fellowships: Half of unit researchers have been recognised by competitive and prestigious individual fellowships, often held internationally, which have enhanced our research quality and influence on diverse fields: Kirby (British Academy, UOA31-2952); McLoughlin (British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship, UOA31-2); Scrutton (Mind Association - Notre Dame, US; Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, UOA31-2657); Skrimshire (Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, Berlin, UOA31-2598); Starkey (AHRC Cultural Engagement Fellowship); Stiebert (Humboldt Foundation Award, Bamberg, UOA31-2330); and van Klinken (Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies, South Africa, UOA31-2816).

Keynotes/Plenaries: Wynn gave the prestigious Wilde Lectures (Oxford, 2015, UOA2791) and the British Society for Philosophy of Religion Presidential Lecture (2017). Stiebert delivered the Annual Humboldt Lecture (Bamberg, 2018). 24 other keynotes/plenaries were delivered from Denver to Salzburg to Macau. More than 100 invited and at least partly-funded papers were

presented across Europe, North America, Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia and Australasia.

Peer Reviewing: Unit researchers have reviewed for the European Research Council and for research councils in Austria, Germany, Finland, Flanders, the Netherlands and South Africa. Mellor was an Academy of Finland panel member and van Klinken for the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study. McLoughlin was an AHRC Strategic Reviewer and - like Muers - sat on award panels including an Indian Council for Historical Research joint panel. McLoughlin, Muers, Singh and van Klinken all served as AHRC peer review college members and reviewed for the ESRC and/or major cross-council schemes. Stiebert is a Spalding Trust trustee. Researchers reviewed more than 160 articles and/or book proposals for prestigious journals and publishers across TRS and the humanities/social sciences.

Editorships: *Religious Studies*, the world's leading journal in philosophy of religion (Cambridge University Press) was edited at Leeds for most of the REF period, initially by Le Poidevin (UOA30) and then by Wynn to 2018. The *Religious Studies at 50* conference (2014) was hosted at Leeds. Skrimshire is associate editor of the interdisciplinary open-access journal, *Environmental Humanities* (Duke University Press) while van Klinken was managing/executive editor of *Religion and Gender* when it was open-access (until 2018, now Brill). He is section editor for *Religion Compass* and co-editor of *Routledge Critical Studies in Religion, Gender and Sexuality*. Other Routledge book series international co-editorships include *Rape Culture*, *Religion and the Bible* (Stiebert) and *Research in Religion and Development* (Tomalin). Unit members have also served as editorial board members for 22 further major journals – 4 of these are open-access - and book series across the full range of TRS and related interdisciplinary fields.

Associations: Leeds researchers have provided international subject leadership through the American Academy of Religion as unit (co)chairs/panel convenors for 'International Development and Religion' (Tomalin) and 'African Religions' (van Klinken). Members of AAR committees included Starkey ('Buddhism in the West') and Muers ('Christian Systematic Theology'; 'Analytical-Descriptive' book jury). Elsewhere, Singh was Program Chair for the 2015 International Society for the Sociology of Religion conference, Brussels. van Klinken (co)convened panels/streams for African Studies associations across the UK, Europe and Africa. Until Covid-19, Leeds was due to host the 2020 European Society for Philosophy of Religion conference.

Muers is a founding committee member of TRS-UK, a national forum for strategy concerning TRS. The unit has also provided office-holders for several UK learned societies including presidents of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion (Wynn) and the Society for the Study of Theology (Muers), secretaries of the British Association for Islamic Studies (McLoughlin) and British Society for the Philosophy of Religion (Scrutton), as well as treasurer of the UK Association of Buddhist Studies and membership officer of the British Sociological Association 'SocRel' Study Group (Starkey). All have played a role in organising annual conferences and other events. Leeds hosted the annual conferences of SocRel (2017, Starkey et al) and the British Wittgenstein Society (2016, Burley).