

Institution: University of Roehampton
Unit of Assessment: 34 - Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Overview</p> <p>Media, Culture and Society (MCS) comprises the work of 21 researchers in the School of Arts. MCS has grown since 2014, from 14 FTE to 19.9 FTE as a result of strategic investment and the integration of colleagues researching video games, audiovisual translation and software theory. We have extended our long-standing research focus on <i>media history and theory</i> (Abbott, Bainbridge, Brown, Cross, Darke, Esser, Witt) and <i>politics and gender</i> (Appignanesi, Batziou, Biressi, Chevalier, Colusso, Gupta, Jermyn, Levasseur, Merrill, Tunney), while developing new capacities in <i>digital media and mediations</i> (Bernal-Merino, Frabetti, Kapsaskis, Massidda). Our distinctive new research focus on digital media and mediations has investigated the interdisciplinary affinities between media studies, translation studies and software studies as a means of charting new territory, opening a fresh line of research on media localisation and accessibility, and developing our collaborations with industry partners.</p> <p>At the time of REF2014, our strategic aims were to consolidate our positions as public intellectuals, expand our practice-as-research activities, cultivate international research collaborations, and build on our senior researchers' mature expertise in developing long-term projects. We have kept these goals firmly in our sights. In addition to our interventions in the non-academic media, we curated events at venues such as the Whitechapel Gallery, BFI Southbank and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid. We increased our investment in practice-led research, including through new appointments (e.g. Appignanesi) and our supervision of practice-based PGRs, and demonstrated our commitment to developing international collaborations by hosting over 30 international Visiting Scholars. We published numerous large-scale, field-leading projects, including 12 monographs and five feature-length films (a total of 139 outputs since 2014), and we invested, in terms of staff time, research effort and financial support, in the study of transnational media flows and transmedial translation projects, which grew out of AHRC network grants ('Media Across Borders', led by Esser in collaboration with Bernal-Merino and Iain Smith [left 2016 for KCL] http://mediaacrossborders.com; 'Translating Music', led by Desblache [retired 2020] with the universities of Macerata [Italy] and Kingston http://translatingmusic.com).</p> <p>Strategy for research and impact</p> <p>We achieved our goals through the implementation of five strategic priorities: increased bidding, external engagement, the opening of new areas of research, the application of robust support mechanisms for research and researcher development, and the growth of our community of PGRs working on innovative projects. Our success in delivering on these priorities can be seen in our increased grant capture and our use of these funds to drive research in areas such as film literacy in schools, live subtitling and transnational television; our development of collaborative ventures with the Freud Museum, Institute of Psychoanalysis and Royal Opera House, and partnerships with third sector organisations and industry, including two with Netflix; our cultivation of new lines of research in radio, photography, digital media, political journalism, media localisation and subtitling, and our support for researchers through research mentoring and their incorporation into a rich culture of seminars and symposia. We also invested in the sustainability of our field through the recruitment of a significantly larger cohort of high-quality research students, whom we integrated fully into our research environment and supported to timely completion (our number of completed PGRs doubled compared to REF2014), with many pursuing industry-facing projects designed to facilitate the transfer of high-level research skills to industry.</p> <p>We sustained our high-profile research in <i>media history and theory</i> through numerous long-form outputs, including monographs by Abbott on contemporary representations of vampires and zombies (2016), Brown on digital world filmmaking (2018) and cephalopods and cinema (co-authored with David Fleming [Stirling], 2020), Rixon [left UK HE 2020] on the history of radio criticism (2018), and Darke on <i>La Jetée</i> (2016). Bainbridge consolidated the field of psycho-</p>

cultural studies that emerged from the AHRC-funded 'Media and Inner World Network' project that she led at the time of our REF2014 submission, publishing extensively on the psychodynamics of contemporary entanglements between identity, screen media objects and popular culture. **Esser** published a series of articles analysing the wave of post-2000 transnational mergers and acquisitions in the television production sector. **Cross** opened a photographic line of research on the found snapshot. **Witt** edited an expanded edition of *The French Cinema Book* (2018) with Michael Temple (Birkbeck) and published a series of articles re-evaluating Jean-Luc Godard.

We invested in our *politics and gender* cluster through four appointments: **Batziou** (2017), **Merrill** (2017), **Appignanesi** (2018) and **Gupta** (2018). **Appignanesi** released feature documentaries on parenthood (2016, co-directed by Devorah Baum [Southampton]) and on gender, female identity and creativity (2018). Our strength in practice-as-research on gender attracted outstanding PGR students, including AHRC TECHNE student Tulli, whose doctoral film *Normal* premiered at the 2019 Berlin International Film Festival before screening extensively internationally. ECR **Gupta** has published a monograph on the representation of the suffragette movement (2016), and co-edited *The Emergence of Trans: Cultures, Politics and Everyday Lives* (2019). **Colusso** published a series of self-reflective articles theorising first-person documentary through reference to her own practice. **Jermyn** focused on gender, feminism, identity and the representation of ageing femininities, including in her 2017 monograph on Nancy Meyers. **Biressi** pursued her examination of gender alongside issues of representation, ideology and power. **Chanan's** (retired 2020) contribution to the field of political documentary was celebrated in a 2014 retrospective of his work in Mexico City. He subsequently devoted films to the financial crisis (2016) and politics of climate change (the AHRC-funded *Cuba: Living Between Hurricanes*, 2019). We incorporated research in journalism and political bias into our portfolio, resulting in **Batziou's** work on the ideological framing of images of immigrants in the Greek press, **Tunney's** examination of the op-ed coverage of decentralised governmental power, and **Merrill's** 2019 monograph on the political content of economic journalism. In a Francophone context, **Chevalier** analysed the cinematic representation of violence, while **Levasseur** explored France's crisis of national identity as refracted through representations of the *banlieue*.

We expanded our new research strand in *digital media and mediations* through two strategic appointments (**Frabetti**, 2016; **Massidda**, 2017). **Frabetti** drew on software studies, cultural studies and media philosophy to develop a novel analytical framework for understanding new media in her 2014 monograph on software theory. In her 2015 monograph on audiovisual translation, **Massidda** examined the impact of new technologies on translation practices and products in relation to localisation workflows, subtitling, Video on Demand, and fansubbing. **Kapsaskis** explored the representation of lingua-cultural difference in film subtitling, developing the concept of 'translational analysis'. **Bernal-Merino** opened a fresh space of inquiry in his 2015 book on localisation and translation practices in the gaming industry and, in her multidisciplinary 2019 book on music as an interpersonal, intercultural instrument of translation, **Desblache** advanced a new framework for thinking about music and translation in relation to one another.

Since 2014, our strategy to maximise the impact of our research has consisted of: (i) embedding industry collaborations and partnerships with non-HE institutions into our projects, including those of our PGRs, from their inception: for example, the work of AHRC TECHNE National Productivity Investment Fund PGR Artigiani (2017 start), who is researching the role of machine translation and multilingual subtitling with industry partner Deluxe Media. This is also evident in our curatorial collaborations with leading cultural institutions, including **Darke** with the Whitechapel Gallery, **Witt** and **Chanan** with BFI Southbank, **Chanan** with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, and in our impact case study on making film, television and theatre accessible through live subtitling, extensive collaborations between **Romero-Fresco** (left UK HE 2016; honorary professor 2016-), industry (Netflix), regulatory bodies (Ofcom) and charities (Stagetext); (ii) fulfilling consultancy and advisory roles with industry: for example, **Bernal-Merino's** work on the adaptation of multimedia interactive entertainment software products for local markets was designed from the outset to combine scholarly rigour with real world impact and has been at the forefront of international research on video game localisation. **Bernal-Merino** has been centrally involved in the coordination of the field's key international fora and is the only academic member

of the Advisory Board of the annual Game Global Summit (<https://gameglobal.events>), which brings together the world's leading video games companies to study localisation issues, as well as a mediator between the Academy and industry through his lead role in LocWorld (<https://locworld.com>), the world's foremost conference on translation, localisation and website management; (iii) public engagement and broadcast media: our research has been transmitted through regular contributions to the media, including *Sight and Sound* (**Chanan, Witt**), *Non-Binary Lives* (**Gupta**), a blog for *L'Express* (**Chevalier** <https://blogs.lexpress.fr/london-by-art/about>), *The Indian Express* (**Abbott**), *The Guardian* (**Bainbridge, Appignanesi**), and *The Sunday Times Style Magazine* (**Abbott**). **Jermyn** and **Brown** wrote 11 times for *The Conversation*, while five colleagues contributed as interviewees to the national and international media, including *The Hollywood Reporter*, BBC, Sky, Bloomberg, CJAD (Canada), HRT (Croatia), and the pan-South American TeleSUR.

Open research

Our commitment to open access is exemplified by our OA compliance rate of 92% across all journal articles published by MCS since 2014. We also established innovative solutions to open research, for example through our provision of annual financial support to the OA journal founded by **Desblache**, *JoSTrans*, *The Journal of Specialised Translation* (<https://www.jostrans.org>), for the duration of her editorship (2004-18). The journal brings together scholarship and industry through the publication of interviews with professional translators alongside cutting-edge articles and dialogues between researchers and industry practitioners (30 video dialogues published 2014-19). We have also advanced OA standards through our practice-led work, for example in 2016 the *History Workshop Online* made **Colusso's** film *Home Sweet Home* and its digital extensions available openly (<http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/heygate-estates-stories-home-sweet-home-ghost-town>), and **Chanan's** documentaries are free to view (<http://www.mchanan.com/money-puzzles>; <https://www.livingbetweenhurricanes.org>).

Research integrity

The School of Arts has a dedicated Ethics Lead, supported by a Unit-level ethics and research integrity representative (**Chevalier**), advising on ethical practices and protocols, who mentors applicants and conducts initial evaluations of ethics applications. All MCS members receive mandatory training on the University's Code of Good Research Practice, and those conducting funded or collaborative research projects meet the terms of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity prior to a project's commencement. Issues regarding the ethical and professional conduct and standards of Unit members' research are reviewed annually by the School Research Advisory Group.

Future strategic aims

MCS's research and impact goals for the next five years, driven by the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy, are:

- to consolidate our interdisciplinary work at the interface of translation and media studies, whilst cultivating new synergies with researchers in computing, drama, and dance in the School of Arts;
- to continue to invest – aligned to mentoring and the targeted use of internal research seed-funds – in the development of a diverse community of outstanding researchers, and the production of ambitious long-form, large-scale outputs, including practice-led research;
- to build on our track record of strong research relationships with non-HE institutions by enabling and supporting new collaborations with local, national and international industrial, cultural and third sector partners to ensure the maximum benefit of our research to society;
- to grow and diversify our research and knowledge exchange (KE) income, through collaboration and non-academic partnerships, including Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with industry;
- to build on excellent supervisory support and a rich environment for our PGR community, and – through publications and other contributions to scholarly activity such as conference participation – to increase our recruitment of a diverse pool of outstanding PGRs working on innovative projects in our areas of core strength.

The Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy was launched prior to the effects of the global pandemic. However, we remain committed to its delivery, and will take advantage of the opportunities afforded by new developments, such as virtual seminars, to further our research.

2. People

Staffing strategy and staff development

Since 2014, we have focused on developing the careers of existing colleagues and building capacity through the recruitment of six new researchers, including four ECRs, to ensure MCS's long-term vitality and sustainability in areas that consolidate, complement and diversify our core research strands. We aligned these appointments with our objectives across outputs, income generation, external collaborations and public engagement, based on candidates' previous experience and future plans. ECRs have been supported with ring-fenced workload allowances in their first year to help them establish their research trajectory. Evidence of our support for, and intensive mentoring of, our ECRs can be seen in the major publications produced since their appointment by **Appignanesi, Gupta** and **Merrill**. We also ensured that appointments were made to maintain core areas of research strength (e.g. **Massidda** to extend the research/impact work of **Romero-Fresco**) and consolidated our expansion elsewhere by increasing the permanent FTE fractions of **Kapsaskis** and **Levasseur**.

Evidence of the success of MCS in developing research leaders can be seen in the volume of internal promotions to senior research posts. Our *media history and theory* strand saw three promotions to Professor (**Bainbridge, Witt**, 2014; **Esser**, 2017) and three to Reader (**Rixon**, 2017; **Colusso**, 2018; **Brown**, 2019). These promoted colleagues joined one existing Professor (**Chanan**) and two Readers (**Abbott, Jermyn**) in this cluster. As **Colusso's** promotion to Reader, and **Levasseur's** progression to Senior Lecturer demonstrate, the career progression for staff on fractional contracts has been actively supported. **Bainbridge** and **Esser** joined **Chanan** to provide clear succession planning in research leadership in media history/theory. **Desblache** was promoted to Professor in 2014, leading expansion of our activity in *digital media and mediations*, while **Biressi** was appointed to a Chair in 2015, leading our research in *politics and gender*.

All staff returned to this unit are on permanent contracts. MCS members are supported by a generous research workload allocation and a one term in three-years sabbatical. We have invested in 39 sabbaticals for research staff since 2014, which has underpinned the production of long-form outputs by **Abbott, Bernal-Merino, Brown, Chanan, Darke, Desblache, Jermyn** and **Rixon**. We have actively supported blended careers in academia and industry (e.g. **Colusso**) through fractional posts. Research Mentoring has been key in supporting and developing research and impact as well as ensuring robust succession planning for colleagues who retired. All colleagues were mentored to support them in developing bids and partnerships, and to ensure that they capitalised on impact/KE opportunities through the forging of links with bodies outside HE. A senior mentor (Professor or Reader) was appointed for all new staff, and all staff, including ECRs, were assisted by their mentor in identifying and delivering on research objectives including publications, impact/KE, collaborations, bidding, PGR supervision, and research leadership in a five-year plan which they discussed and shared with their mentor and refreshed annually. Mentors also supported mentees by reviewing draft manuscripts and funding applications. Each mentor had two to three mentees; when a mentor was on sabbatical, a replacement was appointed. All Professors (**Bainbridge, Biressi, Esser, Witt**), former Professors (**Chanan, Desblache, Ros Coward** [left 2016], Heather Nunn [retired 2016]), Readers (**Abbott, Brown, Colusso, Jermyn**), and former Readers (**Rixon, Romero-Fresco**) mentored junior colleagues; all Readers were mentored by Professors; and Professors were paired with a peer at their level.

Research mentoring complemented the annual appraisal cycle, with line managers and mentors working together to identify training needs and facilitate research activity, and further support provided by the Head of School and Research and Knowledge Exchange Lead. Since 2014, we have strengthened our strategy for researcher development in response to staff feedback and through central support. Research funds (£45,000 average p.a. for MCS) have been awarded in

response to staff need, and colleagues were able to bid for money to support projects from pump-priming to completion. Priority was given to activities leading to high-quality outputs and impact, and included support for site/archive visits, translation, data transcription, and conference participation. Reward for research performance was primarily delivered through promotion, which was benchmarked against clear expectations for academic roles, pro-rata for fractional and part-time staff. All new staff were supported through a probationary period with clear objectives in relation to research, regular meetings with mentors and line managers and additional workload allocations to support their integration into the unit.

We systematically brought MCS members together around shared activities and events with a view to strengthening our research culture while supporting the personal and professional wellbeing of staff and PGRs. We introduced initiatives, including an annual writing retreat, from 2017, over five days at Ashburnham Estate (Surrey), providing colleagues and PGRs with quality time for writing and the development of collaborative bids/projects. All MCS members contributed to a programme of work-in-progress sessions and seminars. These afforded colleagues the opportunity to hone and critically discuss their research in advance of public dissemination. We ran a programme of symposia, providing staff with a further opportunity to test their ideas, hosted external speakers, and involved our ECRs and PGRs. Examples include 'Women and the TV Vampire' (2015) and 'Fashioning Identities: Lifestyle, Emotions and Celebrity Culture' (2019). These symposia, and the publications they often fed into, afforded our PGRs the opportunity to gain valuable conference experience and publication opportunities. The book *Love Across the Atlantic: US-UK Romance in Popular Culture* (co-ed. **Jermyn**, 2019), resulted from a collaborative 2017 symposium with the University of Alabama hosted by MCS, and includes chapters by three colleagues alongside others, and by PGRs Bamber and Weidhase.

PGR students

Our resilience and sustainability depend on our thriving community of PGRs, whom we view as colleagues and continue to treat as a priority. We supervised 18 PGRs to completion and have 30 continuing students. Four of those who completed (Abbasian, Dawson, Tulli, McIver) were funded through TECHNE AHRC scholarships, while four (Weidhase, Rifesser, Chimbuto, Daniluk) were supported by competitive VC Studentships. We also benefited from the Roehampton University Sacred Heart competition (Chimbuto) and worked closely with self-funding students to facilitate successful applications for funding support (successes include Dawson). Internal PGR funding (fee waivers, bursaries, scholarships) won by our students totalled £300,600, while our TECHNE AHRC scholarships came to over £546,700. These funds played a central role in enabling us to sustain and enrich the vitality of our PGR culture. PGR recruitment was facilitated through open competition for all funded opportunities. PGRs were able to approach the Graduate School to identify appropriate supervisory teams and all PGR applications were supported by the Research Degrees Convenor and the Head of Department. PGRs were accepted only where there was appropriate staff expertise, on projects relating to our areas of core strength and when recruiting PGRs, we implemented policies relating to discrimination, equality and diversity, working closely where necessary with Disability Services to ensure that students were fully supported. PGRs were directed by teams of at least two supervisors, including a Director of Studies (DoS) responsible for overseeing and documenting supervisions, progression, and the completion of key milestones. We successfully grew our supervisory capacity: there were 16 DoSs in MCS since 2014, including five newly qualified in the role, while a further three (**Bernal-Merino, Gupta, Massidda**) are co-supervising their first PGR.

Numerous MCS members participated in the TECHNE peer review college, with **Brown** assuming the Chair of the TECHNE Training Group in 2019. Our TECHNE students enjoyed an enviable range of training and networking opportunities across the consortium's nine member universities, including seminars, workshops and the possibility of collaborating with 15 non-HE partners. Complementing Graduate School training provision, we provided specialist research methods and impact training. Our TECHNE PGRs maintained a Learning and Development Log, successful completion of which led to the award of a Researcher Development Certificate. The latter also had access to £2,000 additional provision and potential scholarship extensions of 6-12 months.

Our PGRs were fully involved in the annual Roehampton PGR Conference (students Rifesser and Azariane co-organised the event in 2016 and 2020 respectively). They also contributed to the organisation of, and delivered papers at, symposia organised by MCS members. Student McIver co-organised the 2017 TECHNE Conference, while student Rifesser organised a symposium on Irigaray at the ICA (2017). International PGRs regularly visited us, benefitting from and contributing to our research culture. All our PGRs participated in the PGR Forum, an MCS-based student-run initiative designed to build confidence and community and provide a regular opportunity for sharing and discussing research-in-progress. The MCS PGR Lead, **Jermyn**, met regularly with Forum representatives to talk through any issues arising from within our PGR community, and to brainstorm ways in which these might be addressed.

Our PGRs enjoyed robust support for their personal development in terms of scholarship and employability. They were encouraged to participate in PGR Networks (Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association [MeCCSA], British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies [BAFTSS]), and to deliver conference papers. They were also supported to take on appropriate levels of teaching, while ensuring that their research time was protected, and to undertake various intern-type activities (e.g. assistance with journal work, on film productions, in conference planning). We encouraged our PGRs to enrol on the SEDA-accredited *Introduction to Learning and Teaching* course offered free by the University, which provides opportunities for paid academic mentoring to UGs and leads to Associate Fellowship in the Higher Education Academy, and mentored them closely before and after completion in navigating the job market. Many of those who completed and wished to pursue careers in academia were successful in securing lecturing or post-doc positions (e.g., Weidhase [Bournemouth], Chen [Shanghai Maritime University], Thomadaki [Roehampton], Rifesser [Goldsmiths], Dawson [Surrey]). Since March 2020, we have added further levels of support for all PGRs to help them through the pandemic. This has included funded extensions, extra academic and pastoral support when required, and the revision of research topics where necessary.

Equality and diversity

MCS implements relevant University policies and legislation relating to equality, diversity and anti-discrimination, including flexible working arrangements (e.g., temporary reductions in contract, scheduling of activities to accommodate travel restrictions). The attention accorded trans, non-binary and intersex equality in the University's 2018 policy was particularly welcomed by MCS colleagues, who are currently working with HR to develop appropriate anti-racism interventions and support an institution-wide roll out of unconscious bias training. Management, including Research and KE Leads and Research Mentors, are all trained in EDI and work to ensure that promotion, sabbatical and funding decisions are made equitably. MCS members can also seek the support of HR and Working Relationship Advisors (colleagues across the University trained to support staff in cases of discrimination, bullying or difficult working situations).

The Research and KE Lead and PGR Lead work with senior management to identify and address the needs of colleagues and PGRs to ensure they are supported by University services (HR, Graduate School, Staff Wellbeing, Student Wellbeing), as well as providing bespoke support, for example, the allocation of duties, timing of work, relieving pressures of internal deadlines and ensuring that workspaces are appropriate. We employ Occupational Health Assessments to inform areas such as work times, workload, office spaces and equipment, and home working set ups, including when colleagues are returning from sick leave. All incoming staff undertake mandatory Diversity in the Workplace training as part of their induction, and existing staff are encouraged to take the training, with completion rates closely monitored. Periods of parental leave, caring duties, illness or other personal circumstances are carefully considered when determining staff research workload and assessing applications for internal research funds. Where feasible in these situations, teaching duties are shifted or some teaching/administrative duties relieved, to ensure more substantial blocks of research time. For those returning from significant periods of parental leave, a sabbatical immediately before or in the year of return is provided to sustain research progression. We are also careful to timetable research seminars and symposia whenever possible to enable staff with family or other caring commitments to participate. Staff wellbeing is delivered through our college system. All staff are affiliated to one of our four colleges,

who provide research events, community building opportunities, and dedicated Wellbeing Officers for staff. All staff and PGRs have been offered mental health first aid training in 2020, whilst dedicated research staff and PGR wellbeing sessions have been delivered on mental health.

Research staff who identify as female were strongly represented in MCS (57%). This was particularly true in leadership roles. Five were promoted internally to Professor in the cycle, with female-identifying researchers comprising 71% (5/7) of the Unit's professoriate in 2020, a figure that we will seek to maintain in the coming years through training and mentoring. The number of individuals from diverse backgrounds employed as researchers nationally, including in the areas covered by UoA34 generally, and MCS in particular, is insufficiently representative of our UG cohort or our city. 19% of Unit members identify as LGBTQI+, and while six different nationalities were represented, only 5% declared as BAME. We sought to promote inclusivity and improve our EDI profile through our recruitment strategy and were successful in recruiting excellent applicants from the emerging generation of scholars who self-identify as BAME, who now represent 33% of Lecturers in MCS. We are committed to increasing the representativeness of our staff base further, and to developing diverse talent among our PGRs and ECRs through mentoring our current pool of BAME-identifying PGRs and Lecturers to ensure that they advance swiftly in their careers. The percentage of outputs selected for submission from our BAME-identifying staff was 5% higher than the percentage represented by that group within MCS.

Our process for the selection of outputs for REF2021 was conducted alongside robust equality and diversity analyses to ensure decisions had no adverse effect on staff with protected characteristics. The gender representation across our 50 submitted outputs are almost identical, with 48% outputs attributed to female and 52% to male staff, while 12% of outputs are authored by LGBTQ+ staff and 4% by BAME colleagues. We have striven for an inclusive submission by authors of all career levels, with 6% of the outputs authored by Lecturers, 28% Senior Lecturers, 28% Readers and 34% by Professors.

We used our recruitment strategy to expand our expertise in the field of 'otherness' (**Batziou**), and to bolster our strength in feminist, queer and trans media/cultural studies (**Frabetti, Gupta**). Besides bringing fresh expertise in queer and trans studies, **Gupta** brought valuable experience of delivering training on transgender awareness. Prior to joining us, they trained LGBTQ+ network switchboard volunteers, worked with various bodies on trans employee policy, with the Race Equality Foundation on the experiences of BAME trans people, and with Stonewall on trans inclusion. Since joining, they have shared this expertise via the Mentor Match Up scheme for BAME trans and non-binary young people, developed a trans awareness workshop for employees, and co-authored an article on de-biasing universities (<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/RSR-10-2019-0075/full/html>).

All colleagues involved in recruitment received unconscious bias and EDI training. Staff and students also engaged with EDI issues through MCS's research specialisms, and at School level, UG/PGT programme design was systematically informed by a research-led drive to decolonise the curriculum, which was underpinned by the postcolonial approaches of researchers such as **Brown, Kapsaskis, Levasseur** and **Chevalier**. Our attentiveness to gender disparities was evident in the work of **Bainbridge, Jermyn** and **Biressi**.

We are committed to further addressing the sector-wide structural issues around research career paths for underrepresented groups and are currently exploring mechanisms whereby we can support our PGRs who identify as BAME, who comprise 43% of our continuing PGR cohort, to make the transition to ECR. Our future advertising and hiring strategies will continue to strongly encourage applications from a culturally diverse constituency of applicants, and to highlight research specialisms pertaining to those issues (e.g. postcolonial, feminist, and neurodiverse perspectives on the field).

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Bid development is supported through workshops and close mentoring within MCS. Eight MCS members were supported through the allocation of internal pump-priming funds to develop projects designed to realise our strategic aim of extending our international research networks in our three research strands. **Jermyn**, for example, was awarded three such grants to support her work in feminist media studies, which enabled her to facilitate the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) Women's mentorship programme at the 2014 SCMS conference and bring together an international community of researchers at Roehampton in 2017 at the 'Love Across the Atlantic' conference. She was also awarded a MeCCSA Women's Media Studies Network grant to support the organisation of an international conference on *Sex and the City* at Roehampton in 2014. These initiatives served to forge enduring international links, and to make a significant contribution to our 'politics and gender' strand through the publication by **Jermyn** of articles, edited volumes and a monograph. **Brown** was awarded two pump-priming grants to support his research on 'non-cinema' and the relationship between media and cephalopods, which he expanded through international collaboration in his capacity as Co-I on a three-year (2017-20) grant of CA\$200,000+ from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Development scheme in Canada. The PI on this project was Prof. Christine Daigle (Brock University, Canada), who used the funding to set up the Posthumanism Research Institute, now a major international centre for posthumanist thinking (<https://brocku.ca/pri>). **Brown's** work in this field fed into extensive public engagement activities and numerous articles and book chapters, culminating in his two substantial monographs (2018, 2020) in our 'media history and theory' strand.

Other senior MCS researchers drew on external funding to pursue international collaborations. **Esser**, for example, used a £34,955 Guest Researcher grant from Aarhus University to collaborate on a DKK and AU Ideas project titled 'What Makes Danish TV Drama Series Travel?' (2014-18), which fed into her numerous publications in our *media history and theory* strand on transnational television. Similarly, in our *digital media and mediations* strand, **Romero-Fresco** won £12,655 from the European Commission Creative Europe (2014-20) Programme for the 'FRED at school' project, through which he sought to increase film literacy in secondary schools across Europe by supporting the inclusion of European films in their curricula and organising debates around them. He was also awarded £13,599 from the Nesta foundation and Stagertext, a charity established in 2002 with which he collaborated closely in the development of captioning and live subtitling services for theatres and other arts venues. These grants were instrumental in enabling him to develop and test his highly influential NER subtitling quality assessment model (see Impact Case Study). Following his study of visual memory in Chile, supported by a British Academy Small Grant, **Chanan** took our *politics and gender* strand in an environmental direction through his contribution as Co-I on a £35,860 AHRC Research Networking grant (PI Prof. Jean Stubbs, School of Advanced Study), a collaboration with the Commodities of Empire British Academy project at the SAS and Fundación Núñez Jiménez de la Naturaleza y el Hombre in Cuba, which resulted in his 2019 documentary film *Cuba: Living Between Hurricanes* on ecological issues in a Cuban fishing port devastated by Hurricane Irma in 2017. This line of practice-led environmental research is currently being pursued by **Appignanesi**, who won a £15,000 Arts Council England grant in 2020 to develop a new feature documentary on climate change. Our commitment to continuing to support the production of long-form outputs arising from individual research interests is evidenced in **Witt's** Leverhulme Research Fellowship, which he will take up in 2021.

The most significant investment in MCS is evident in two key areas: staffing, and the construction of the 2000m² Sir David Bell digital media centre (opened 2019), which was extended and entirely refurbished at a cost of over £13m (<https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/media-culture-and-language/media-centre>). The facilities were designed as step-free and fully accessible, including the 95-seat cinema. MCS has benefitted significantly from this investment in physical infrastructure, and now occupies the majority of the new centre. The building provides an outstanding venue for research events and encounters, and is equipped with industry-level equipment in all areas covered by MCS, including digital media, film/TV, photography, AV translation and journalism. Besides the cinema, the facilities include extensive exhibition and conference/event spaces, six studios (including a new sound stage and film studio), two audio recording studios, two newsrooms, nine computer labs (Mac and PC), a video game localisation

laboratory, 13 cutting rooms, and wide-ranging specialist IT provision (e.g. AV editing, Adobe CC, and cloud-based subtitling software for researchers in AV translation). Dedicated space for PGRs is also included. Although Covid-19 interrupted our plans, over the coming years we will make the most of these new facilities – especially the cinema and exhibition/conference spaces – as a means of disseminating the practice-based work of MCS, and forging links with and exhibiting the visual and audiovisual research of guest researchers and industry practitioners. We will also use the cutting-edge nature of the spaces and equipment to attract high quality PGRs working on innovative practice-based projects, to explore new avenues for funding and collaborations with the commercial AV sector, to increase grant capture by developing creative bids that incorporate use of the production and exhibition capacity of the new spaces and technology, and to maximise the impact of our research by using the cinema and exhibition spaces as conduits for connecting with a broad non-academic public.

Researchers and PGRs in MCS have already benefitted since 2014 from an array of cutting-edge hardware, software (e.g. Adobe CC) and technical support services. They can order in BUFVC material and use the extensive electronic resources, databases and archives housed in the University's new Library. Facilities available to practice-led researchers, and used extensively by our documentary filmmakers, include cameras (Sony FS7, Sony FS5 MKII, Panasonic DVX 200, Sony A7SII, Panasonic GH4), lights, sound kits, film studios, a dedicated sound studio, and cutting rooms equipped with the latest Macs running Final Cut Pro X and DaVinci Resolve Studio with Blackmagic design grading panels and Eizo 4K grading monitors. Recent additions to our lighting kits include lightweight Dedo lamps and LED panels (both specialist units designed for documentary work), together with portable Rotolights that can be used on-camera. We also have a range of Tripods, Monopods, Jibs and sliders. Full training and support by specialist technicians are provided on all equipment.

Our research also gave rise to a range of benefits-in-kind. For example, **Massidda's** collaboration with the subtitling company OOONA (<https://oonatools.tv>) on the development of educational cloud-based platforms led to agreements that provided us with 12 free OOONA licences in both 2018 and 2020, with a total value of £68,612. In addition, the industry partnerships she developed in 2018 with video captioning and translating firms Dotsub (<https://dotsub.com>) and CaptionHub (<https://www.captionhub.com>) included similar licence agreements worth approximately a further £68K. **Bernal-Merino's** research on video game localisation led to a steady stream of guest speakers from the gaming industry (e.g. Disney Interactive, Square Enix, PlayStation), who gave their time freely, as well as the donation of games (value £2,500), which are available for research purposes in the dedicated gaming localisation laboratory in our new media centre.

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

Networks

We have helped shape the development and future of our field globally through leadership roles in international networks. As noted, **Brown** was involved in establishing Brock University's Posthumanism Research Institute, delivering a keynote at its founding symposium. Since 2019, **Bainbridge** – Scholar-in-Residence that year at the American Psychoanalytic Association Annual Meeting, NYC – has led a group of eight psychoanalysts and academics in Mexico City, California and the UK on a project titled 'Mediated Minds: The Psychic Life of Screen Culture'. Meanwhile, **Esser** and **Desblache** provided leadership in television studies (**Esser's** directorship of the AHRC 'Media Across Borders [MAB] Network') and translation studies (**Desblache's** directorship of the AHRC Translating Music Network). The work of MAB flourished throughout the cycle, generating numerous initiatives and outcomes, including a 2-day conference (2015) and a collection (**Media Across Borders: Localizing TV, Film and Video Games**, 2016, edited by **Esser**, **Bernal-Merino**, and Iain Smith [KCL]). MAB attracted a stream of visiting PGRs and scholars (e.g. Prof. Edward Larkey, Maryland; Prof. Enrique Uribe-Jongbloed, Colombia), and **Esser's** work led to invitations to share her research with industry bodies and their audiences. At home, **Esser** presented to Ofcom and industry executives on the changing screen ecology, while abroad she gave talks to industry/policy bodies such as the Danish creative industries association Creative Mornings (2015), Germany's media regulator Landeszentrale für Medien und Kommunikation

Rheinland-Pfalz (2016), the Brussels International TV Series Festival (2017), and the German Chamber of Commerce (2017). She was also consultant on projects funded by the Danish Research Council (2013-18), KOCCA (South Korea, 2015-16), ESRC (Glasgow, 2017-20), and Horizon 2020 (Bologna, 2018-21).

International collaborations

MCS members made substantial contributions to international debate, consolidating international relationships through nine stays as Visiting Scholars at institutions in Australia, China, France, Greece, New Zealand, and the USA. **Brown** spent three periods abroad: VS at the University of California Los Angeles (2014); RKE VS at the University of Nottingham Ningbo, China (2015); and **Brown** Foundation Fellow at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, for a residency at the Dora Maar House, Ménerbes (2015). We hosted over 30 international VSs, including prominent figures such as Prof. Cezar Migliorin, President of the Brazilian Society of Cinema and Audiovisual Studies, who spent a year with us.

Our work has been recognised through invitations to join international research centres. This facilitated research visits by staff in both directions. **Frabetti** is Senior Affiliate Researcher at the Humanities and Critical Code Studies Laboratory at the University of Southern California (<http://haccslab.com>); **Esser** is a member of Aarhus University's Centre for Transnational Media Research; **Abbott** is an Advisory Board Member of the Popular Culture Research Centre at Auckland University of Technology; and **Chevalier** is Associate Member of Université d'Avignon's postcolonial Identité Culturelle Textes et Théâtralité centre.

Conference organisation

We brought together colleagues and audiences around the globe, and advanced thinking in our core research areas, through the organisation of conferences in Turkey (2015), Argentina (2017), Italy (2017), and Denmark (2018). We also hosted the 2014 'Journal of Media Practice conference', and organised four international conferences at Roehampton on transnational cinema, genre and gender, *Sex in the City*, and postcolonial culture. The latter was one of a series of annual symposia on postcolonial studies organised by **Chevalier** since 2013 with colleagues at the universities of Lyon III, Saint-Étienne and Westminster. We also staged a further five conferences elsewhere in the UK, including three organised by **Bainbridge** on psychoanalytic approaches to media in association with the Freud Museum (2014), International Association of Forensic Psychotherapy (2015), and the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (2018).

Leadership of professional associations

We contribute extensively to the research base through our work with professional associations. For example, **Jermyn** has been a member of the Board of Console-ing Passions (the International Conference on Television, Video, Audio, New Media and Feminism) since 2015, a Committee member of the MeCCSA Women's Media Studies Network since 2015 (Deputy Chair 2017-18), a Committee member of the Women's Film and Television History Network since 2015, and a mentor for the Women's Caucus, SCMS. Our contribution to our field has been recognised too through our election to lead roles in professional bodies. **Abbott** was President of the Whedon Studies Association (2014-16), while **Biressi** was MeCCSA Vice-Chair (2017-18) and then Chair (2018-ongoing). In this role, she has the important task of leading the national body responsible for raising public understanding of our field, fostering research within it, and advising funding councils and other national and international bodies. She was also a commissioner of and contributor to the LSE gender inequality report (>4,900 downloads: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/66802/>).

PhD examining

We contribute to the vitality and sustainability of our field through extensive PhD examining work: 13 of us have examined 67 PhDs, including 17 abroad in nine different countries, since 2014.

Editorial activities

We are instrumental in shaping the direction of current and future work through our editorial activities. MCS members occupy four book series editorships (I.B. Tauris, Karnac

Books/Routledge, Edinburgh University Press, Peter Lang), and four advisory series editorial board memberships. Two Unit members edited journals: as noted, **Desblache** edited *JoSTrans*, *The Journal of Specialised Translation* (2004-18), while **Bainbridge** edited *Free Associations* (2010-17). We have fulfilled editorial and advisory board roles on over 30 further journals, including *Critical Studies in Television* (**Abbott**), *Journal of Gender Studies* (**Biressi**), *Revista Belas Infiéis* (**Bernal-Merino**), *Film-Philosophy* (**Brown**), *Journal of Media & Education* (**Colusso**), *Journal of Data Mining and Digital Humanities* (**Frabetti**), and *French Screen Studies* (**Witt**). We have also edited special issues of journals such as *Horror Studies* (**Abbott**), *Celebrity Studies* (**Jermyn**), *JoSTrans* (**Kapsaskis**), and *VIEW: Journal of European Television History and Culture* (**Esser**).

Peer review

Evidence of our contribution to shaping our field is visible in our wide-ranging peer review work for journals, publishers, funding bodies and other universities. MCS members have reviewed submissions to over 130 scholarly journals, together with book proposals and manuscripts for over 20 book publishers, including Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press, Columbia University Press, and MIT Press. Three Unit members are AHRC Peer Review College members (**Bainbridge**, **Biressi**, **Esser**), while others have reviewed grant applications to bodies such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (**Desblache**), South African National Research Foundation (**Kapsaskis**), and Israel Science Foundation (**Rixon**). Lastly, we have assessed eight tenure and other senior appointment/promotion applications for other universities.

Keynotes

The significance of our research is demonstrated by the regularity with which we are invited to deliver conference keynotes, many on an international stage. Between us we have given 46 keynotes in Europe, Brazil, Canada, USA, New Zealand, Qatar, Mexico, Cyprus, and Algeria.

Contributions to the economy and society

The economic and social impact of our work is driven by a long-standing commitment to active collaboration with partners ranging from significant industry players to innovative start-ups, charities and civic organisations. **Romero-Fresco's** work on live subtitling has transformed the experience of audiovisual media and live arts events for millions of people globally as a result of the widespread adoption by government regulators and broadcasters of the NER subtitling quality assessment model that he developed, of the incorporation of his research into Stagertext's CaptionCue software, and of the influence of his work on the audio-description guidelines and filmmaking practices at Netflix.

The Act of Killing (2012), on which Michael Uwemedimo (left UK HE 2016) worked as producer, has continued since 2014 to influence documentary practice internationally and inform and influence international policy debates and societal changes in Indonesia and the USA. Institutions and individuals that have engaged with the film since 2014 include the Indonesian Government's National Human Rights Commission, the International People's Tribunal 1965, the Indonesian government, and US senator Tom Udall. In their 2014 *The Impact Field Guide & Toolkit*, the Doc Society selected *The Act of Killing* as the subject of an impact case study. This toolkit has been used by over 55,000 filmmakers and translated into Spanish, Arabic and Portuguese.

Appignanesi's films *The New Man* (2016) (<http://www.joshappignanesi.com/THE-NEW-MAN-1>) and *Female Human Animal* (2019) (<http://www.femalehumananimal.com/>) made strong interventions in discussions around parenthood and female identity and creativity. Funded by the Wellcome Trust, and in partnership with charities such as Best Beginnings, CALM, and Birds Eye View, *The New Man* was released theatrically in over 25 UK sites, achieving over 2,000,000 Twitter impressions per week in its first four weeks. *Female Human Animal*, supported by two Arts Council England grants, was released theatrically in 20 UK and two US cinemas and distributed online in over 200 territories via MUBI, Amazon and BFI Player. Both were extensively reviewed in the media, with **Appignanesi** making guest appearances on Newsnight, Radio 4 and BBC Radio London.

MCS continues to advance its social and economic mission, and the contribution of our research is also evident in our consultancy roles and collaborations with industry and the cultural sector. **Massidda** worked as a consultant for Netflix on their Hermes subtitling project, which tested subtitles in 25 languages prior to their hiring subtitlers and launching in 188 territories. Besides her industry partnerships with OOONA (she is an OOONA Official Academic Instructor), Dotsub, and CaptionHub (see above), she gave guest lectures on her research to industry bodies such as MESA Europe (Media and Entertainment Services Alliance), and for several years has delivered professional courses on Cloud Subtitling and Professional Skills for Subtitlers at the Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS) at UCL, where she is Honorary Research Associate.

Our collaborations with the cultural sector have helped preserve rare audiovisual materials, shaped the curatorial practices of leading cultural institutions, influenced the critical re-appraisal of and public discourse on significant bodies of work from film history, and engaged diverse non-academic audiences. **Darke** co-curated and co-edited the catalogue for the three-month Marker exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in 2014 (>70,000 visitors). This was the first UK Marker retrospective, and the first show globally to engage with the full range of his output. **Witt** co-curated with Michael Temple (Birkbeck) a three-month Godard retrospective for BFI Southbank in 2016, provided the BFI with copies of rare films from his (**Witt's**) personal collection that had not been screened previously in the UK, and shaped the understanding of Godard's work on the part of the BFI's audience (>15,500 attendees). **Chanan** collaborated with the Cinemateca de Cuba and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía to curate the 'Por un cine imposible. Documental y vanguardia en Cuba (1959-72)' retrospective for the Reina Sofía, which toured to five further European venues, including DocLisboa (Lisbon), the Filmoteca de Catalunya and BFI Southbank. His exhumation of the films for this project led to a selection of them being broadcast on Cuban TV in 2016, thereby facilitating the rediscovery by a sizeable Cuban audience.

MCS members made a substantial cultural contribution via their work as jury members for film festivals and arts organisations. Four Unit members occupied seven such positions, including at the Havana International Film Festival (**Chanan**, 2016), Rome International MedFilm Festival (**Colusso**, 2015), London Kurdish Film Festival (**Brown**, 2020), and UK National Open Art competition (**Witt**, 2015). Furthermore, **Chanan** was President of the Documentary Jury at the 2018 London Kurdish Film Festival.

We are frequently invited to give guest lectures at cultural and industry venues, both nationally and internationally. Domestically, we have contributed to the vitality of the UK arts sector through the delivery of over 40 guest talks at venues such as the Almeida Theatre, Freud Museum, European Psychoanalytic Film Festival, BAFTA, British Library, Horse Hospital, National Media Museum, Tavistock Centre, Institut français, Tate Modern, Ritzy cinema, Whitechapel Gallery, Wilkinson Gallery, House of Vans, Cinema Museum, Being Human Festival of the Humanities, The Southbank Centre's 'Being a Man' Festival, Fertility Festival, and Women Over 50 Film Festival.

We enjoy a particularly close relationship with BFI Southbank. Beyond the film seasons we have curated there, we have collaborated closely with this crucial London institution on numerous other projects as a means of ensuring that its work is informed by the latest research. Six of us have contributed as regular guest speakers at public events at BFI Southbank, including **Brown**, who since 2015 has spoken at 12 BFI Philosophical Screens fora.

In an international context, 13 of us gave over 47 guest lectures in 24 countries, not including the many talks that MCS's filmmakers gave before and after international screenings of their films at festivals in Europe, America and Latin America. To give two examples: **Brown** delivered talks at film festivals in Lithuania (2014), Macedonia (2015), and Portugal (annually 2016-19), while **Witt** gave invited talks at the Toronto International Film Festival (2014), Film Mutations Festival, Croatia (2015), cultural centres across Brazil (2015), the Pompidou Centre (2016), and the Cinémathèque française (2020).

Looking forward, we will seek to build on our achievements by exploiting the intermedial research possibilities at the interface of still and moving image practices, digital media, exhibition and curation opened up by our new multimedia facilities. We will also seek to embed the use of this new infrastructure in future local, national and international research and KE partnerships and collaborations. In addition, we will capitalise on the research synergies in the School of Arts between MCS colleagues and researchers in the adjacent fields of drama, dance and computing, with a view to developing new interdisciplinary dialogues and projects, and with the ultimate goal of further extending and deepening our contribution to the betterment of society and enrichment of culture in London, the UK and internationally.