

<b>Institution: University of Sussex</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 20 - Social Work and Social Policy</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Introduction</b></p> <p>1.1.1 This submission represents the <a href="#">Department of Social Work and Social Care (SWSC)</a>, within the School of Education and Social Work (ESW). An outward-looking unit, comprised of 30 (22.14 fte) staff, including 15 (full-time) CAT A, we are internationally regarded as trusted experts, pioneers and influencers in our interdisciplinary research, policy and practice fields.</p> <p>1.1.2 <b>Our core research areas are (i) Professional practice, innovation and effectiveness; (ii) Wellbeing; (iii) Childhood and Youth.</b> Our research (formative and commissioned), is highly policy and practice relevant. It engages with grand challenges faced by local and global communities – among them child and adult safeguarding, social and health inequalities (including Covid-related), migration, ‘datafication’ and social innovation. Our research focus is strategically aligned with priorities for European Social Challenges and Global Sustainability and with the UKRI emphasis on interdisciplinary, and challenge-led research to produce knowledge for social good.</p> <p>1.1.3 We have systematically developed a high functioning, responsive and collaborative research environment, distinctively fostering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Critical conceptual development:</b> spanning vital areas including governance, resistance and everyday life; care; wellbeing; generation; risk; inequality and innovation.</li> <li>• <b>Methodological inventiveness:</b> from pioneering qualitative and mixed longitudinal methods, to multi-method evaluations, psychosocial, participatory, archival and digital approaches.</li> <li>• <b>Creative influence:</b> scaffolding and animating connections with interdisciplinary and practice fields, shaping new research agendas and informing policy and practice development.</li> </ul> <p>We ensure that our research and teaching cross-fertilise, underpinning our reputation for developing resourceful researchers, research-minded professionals, and future leaders.</p> <p><b>1.2 Unit context and structure</b></p> <p>1.2.1 A <b>School-wide Research Strategy</b> provides coherence to the operational and resource environment, encouraging porous boundaries between Departments and disciplines. The SWSC Research Lead works closely with the School Research Director, Doctoral Studies, Impact and Research Centre Leads, and Research Ethics Officers. They report to the School Leadership Team, Research and Doctoral Committees, onwards to University research management and governance.</p> <p>1.2.2 Three <b>interdisciplinary research centres</b> provide supportive intellectual communities, public interfaces and extensive local, national and international reach for our core research areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth</a> (CIRCY; Director Lefevre): one of ten University Research Centres, co-hosted with the Department of Education, its membership spans social sciences, humanities and Brighton &amp; Sussex Medical School (BSMS);</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Centre for Innovation and Research in Wellbeing</a> (CIRW, Director Watters pioneers research into wellbeing, migration, social and health inequalities; includes members in psychology, migration, development and global studies and BSMS;</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Centre for Social Work Research</a> (C-SWIR, Director Ruch): focuses on innovation and</li> </ul>

evaluation in policy and professional practice, with strong engagement from practice partners.

All research-active staff and postgraduate researchers (PGRs) belong to at least one centre, with co-membership encouraged.

1.2.3 SWSC is also a **founding partner in two University strategic research investments** (3.2.1):

- [The Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice](#) (now Rudd Partnership with University of Cambridge);
- [The Sussex Humanities Lab](#) (see Institutional-level Environment Template)

### 1.3 Research objectives

1.3.1 Our **aim set at REF 2014** was:

*‘to conduct research of the highest international quality that enables theory development and policy/practice innovation, reduces threats to personal well-being and social participation across the life course, and facilitates change locally, nationally and internationally’.*

1.3.2 **REF 2014 objectives have been elaborated** through two successive Department/School-wide Research Strategy consultations, and align with the University’s [2025 Research with Impact Strategy](#), aiming to:

- Enhance interdisciplinary research excellence, making internationally leading, innovative contributions to core areas of: Professional practice, innovation and effectiveness; Wellbeing; and Childhood and youth.
- Extend local, national and global research impact, influencing social work and related policy and practice, benefiting vulnerable or disadvantaged people and promoting wellbeing in everyday life.
- Promote highest standards of research conduct, integrity, and openness.
- Grow research capacity, vitality and sustainability within an inclusive research culture.
- Increase and diversify research income, to secure resilience and sustainability.
- Extend national and international research collaborations to enhance research excellence and impact.

### 1.4 Summary of achievement of strategic objectives

**Our approach to and achievement of these objectives is discussed throughout this document.**

**To summarise:** Our interdisciplinary research excellence (A) is much strengthened, underpinned by strong leadership, strategic appointments and the success of research centres as interdisciplinary hubs. The policy, practice and public impact of our research (B) has been extended through resource investment, prioritizing impact in planning and workloads, and nurturing ‘impact ownership’. High standards of research integrity, governance and open research (C) are extended above and beyond compliance. Research capacity and inclusivity (D) have been strengthened with increased attention to: researcher development at all, especially early, career stages; enhanced mentoring, supervision and internal peer review; monitoring and review of PGR progression; and promoting equality, diversity and inclusivity through transparent research management. With an average a 44% bidding success rate, our research income has quadrupled, including large strategic awards within a wider funding portfolio (E). These achievements are enabled by expanded local, national and international collaborations with academic and research user partners (F).

Note: All supporting data cited refer to the current REF period, unless otherwise stated.

### 1.5 Enhancing interdisciplinary excellence (Objective A)

1.5.1. **Excellence in interdisciplinarity** has become the norm in our research culture, resulting in research awards and top tier journal outputs in social work, social policy and multiple related fields. Noteworthy are our:

- **Capacity to build teams with complementary skills and perspectives within and beyond Sussex:** exemplified by Lefevre's collaboration with academic (sociologists, psychologists, economists) and stakeholder partners (University of Bedfordshire; Innovation Unit; Become) on the ESRC [Innovate Project](#) exploring social care innovations to safeguard young people at complex risk. Also: work with education, psychology, sociology, economics and with stakeholders (e.g. Research in Practice) on five *DfE Children's Social Care Innovation* evaluations and on the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care (WWCCSC) *Evaluator Panel*; and with development, urban and migration studies, history and education on *Displacement, placemaking and wellbeing in the city among migrants and refugees in Europe and India* (Watters, ESRC EQUIP).
- **Addressing contemporary challenges transcending disciplinary boundaries,** including: health and social care (e.g. Bécares' *Inequalities in relation to Covid-19*; Maglajlic's *Madness after war*; Orr and Watters' contributions to *Global mental health*); social care interfaces with technology (e.g. Chen's *Connected and intelligent care homes*; Berriman's '*Datafication*' of children's social care); and spiritual care (Marrable on *End of life*; Whiting on *Breath in social work*).
- **Forging methods that connect disciplinary and practice fields** including: Thomson and Hickie's collaborations with artists and performers articulating service users' voices on: [Reanimating data](#); [Sounds of sexology](#); [Art of attachment](#); *Imagining Resistance*); and Sharland's work with public health and social statisticians on *Assembling life history narratives from quantitative longitudinal data on children and families using social work*.

1.5.2. Interdisciplinary strength is underpinned by our:

- **Staffing strategy (2.1), securing a rich mix of disciplinary and professional backgrounds** (social work, social policy, sociology, anthropology, psychology, psychotherapy, social epidemiology).
- **Research centres (1.2.2), fostering interdisciplinary dialogue, networking, methodological development and creation of strategic bidding platforms.** CIRCY illustrates this well: collaborative studies established the interdisciplinary concept of 'childhood publics', generating awards including Thomson & Berriman's (UKRI) *Everyday Childhoods* project, book and [multi-media archive](#); Nolas's *Connectors international study of children's everyday practices of participation in social action* (ERC); and the multi-disciplinary *E-nurture network* (UKRI, led by Rudd) promoting children's mental health in the digital world.

1.5.3 SWSC makes significant contributions to **interdisciplinary training of next generation researchers** within the South East Network for Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership (SeNSS) (2.5.1), and more widely through the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) and postgraduate networks, relating to research ethics, qualitative longitudinal research, psychosocial methods, digital and archival research practices. SWSC staff have co-supervised 22 PGRs registered in other Sussex Departments, on topics including school counselling (education), kinship care for dementia (anthropology) and road culture among urban youth (sociology).

### 1.6 Enabling impact achievement (Objective B)

1.6.1 We foster an **inclusive, sustainable culture of 'impact ownership'**, delivering our REF 2014 goals by:

- **Establishing an enduring infrastructure to support research impact:** investing in dedicated resources and people, and prioritizing impact in staff development, workloads, recognition and rewards (2.3; 2.4; 2.5.5; 3.2.2iii).
- **Nurturing trusted and new stakeholder collaborations:** fostering participatory knowledge production and exchange (4.1.5-4.1.7; 4.2) with local, national and international stakeholders, to forge and sustain instrumental and conceptual impact pathways.
- **Mainstreaming impact facilitation:** embedding costed impact into projects; providing consultancy, face-to-face and online training and materials; contributions to impact showcasing events and community festivals; and effective use of digital and social media (2.3; 2.5.5; 3.2.2iii).

1.6.2 Our two impact **case studies exemplify the effectiveness of this approach**, enabling us to build on and extend stakeholder partnerships, scaling up and sustaining impact. Both received infrastructure support including: sponsorship from the University's ESRC Impact Acceleration Account and Higher Education Innovation Fund, dedicated impact consultant input, administrative support, and workload relief. The *Talking and listening to children* project began developing impact collaboratively with trusted and new local and regional agency partners, facilitating impact through bespoke digital and play resources and practice development workshops. This extended to national and international engagement through the [project website](#), and proactive partnership and social media campaigning with the British Association of Social Work (BASW). The *Self neglect and adult safeguarding* project demonstrates impact across improved frontline practice and practice standards, local and national policies and statutory guidance. This was achieved through developing practice tools, online guides and briefings, and amplified through engagement in consultations, presentations and workshops with professional and public stakeholders nationwide.

## 1.7 Openness and integrity (Objective C)

1.7.1 The **University has fully embraced open access** initiatives, introducing internal policies, training and resources (including Figshare and Box). Deposit within the institutional repository of all journal articles and conference proceedings with ISSN is mandatory since April 2016.

1.7.2 **SWSC is working proactively towards 100% compliance with the 2019 Concordat on Open Research Data.** We strongly encourage staff and PGRs to produce open access and creative commons resources, and sponsor these where appropriate.

1.7.3 **We go beyond compliance, modelling innovative practice** in co-producing open access data. Our role within the Sussex Humanities Lab significantly enhances our skills and capacity in this area, allowing SWSC to pioneer ethically robust approaches to creation, curation and re-use of open access data. Examples include the [Everyday Childhoods](#) collection within the Mass Observation Archive which invited children and families into the archive, co-producing good practice guidelines with researchers, participants and archivists. The [Reanimating data](#) project extends this learning, developing a new open access digital archive as a starting point for collaboration and new research, juxtaposing teenage sexual cultures over a thirty-year period.

1.7.4 Robust governance frameworks assure we adhere to **highest standards of research ethics and integrity**. All empirical research must be approved by the Social Sciences Cluster Research Ethics Committee (CREC), with support provided through mentoring and supervision. Staff and PGRs are inducted to the University's Code of Practice for Research, provided with regularly updated web-based ethics guidance and resources, and mandatory training in data privacy. Sharland helped design the Sussex research ethics and governance standards and procedures and Chairs the University's Research Ethics Integrity Committee. She is also Trustee with lead responsibility for research ethics for the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care. Orr (2019) led the underpinning research for development of the UK Collaborative

for International Development Research (UKCDR) guidance on safeguarding in research. Our commitment to integrity also embraces transparency and openness in research management, including REF preparation (2.6.5).

## 1.8 Future objectives

1.8.1 Looking forward, **our strategy** will be to sustain a distinctive research culture and enhance our position as a centre of interdisciplinary research excellence, making far-reaching contributions to knowledge and practice in our fields. Ambitious yet realistic plans ensure resilience in light of an uncertain environment that includes Covid 19 and wider (e.g. Brexit and climate-related) precarities for HE, research funding and social work education.

1.8.2 We will uphold all existing objectives (1.3.2) and make the following commitments, mapped to the pillars of the *Sussex 2025 Strategy*:

- **Capacity and profile:** To drive sector-wide recovery and sustainability, through our national and international leadership and collaborative relationships; shaping and engaging with UK and international challenge agendas, particularly in relation to heightened (post-Covid) precarities for children and adults' wellbeing, social inequalities and social care.
- **Culture:** To further evolve our environment, with enhanced attention to equalities and diversity, research staff support, technological sophistication and climate change resilience.
- **Challenges:** To nurture, hold and attract research talent in priority areas (for example evaluation research), strengthening our capacity for investigator-driven and policy/practice-driven/tendered research, through close alignment of research, teaching and staffing priorities in appointments and succession planning.
- **Excellence:** To enable high quality, strategic research trajectories, underpinned by excellent research mentoring, internal peer review and transparent research management.
- **Diversification:** To further diversify our funding portfolio, valuing a mix of national and international research councils, government, third and private sector funders, and nurturing strategic relationships with non-HEI collaborators.

## 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy

2.1.1 **Staffing profile:** CAT A staff have increased from 12.4 to 15 fte, currently comprising 1 ECR (Damman), 3 other lecturers, 5 senior lecturers and 6 professors, all on permanent full-time contracts. Six (2.5 fte; non-independent) research staff are on fixed term contracts.

2.1.2 Our **recruitment strategy has prioritized vitality and sustainability**, extending interdisciplinary expertise in core research and teaching areas, enabling strong research leadership and succession. Appointments have been: Bécares (senior lecturer) bringing advanced quantitative expertise in health and wellbeing inequalities; Hickie, Damman and Cane (lecturers) with diverse expertise in professional practice; and Berriman (lecturer) in digital childhoods. We have also welcomed Becker (appointed University Provost in 2017), a world-leading researcher on young carers. Associate researchers are inclusively engaged (2.3.5) affording additional capacity and agility to respond to research opportunities.

2.1.3 There have been 2 professorial retirements (Braye, Taylor), 1 early retirement on health grounds (Meleyal) and 1 ongoing phased retirement (Luckock, 0.1 fte). One colleague (Nolas) moved to an equivalent post nearer home; 2 others left for personal reasons (Lambley, Turner).



## 2.2 Progression and review

2.2.1 All new non-professorial staff are probationary; all **probationary reviews** have been successful. There have been 4 **promotions** from lecturer to senior lecturer (Hickle, Orr, Marrable, Whiting) and 1 to Chair (Lefevre). Berriman was appointed to a permanent (from a fixed term) lectureship. Research staff career progression includes: Whittington and Wheeler respectively to permanent lectureships at Manchester Metropolitan and Regents College Universities, and Jaynes and McGeeney to research officer roles at 5Rights and Brook charities.

2.2.2 Annual **appraisal** is conducted with all staff; appraisers are trained in an enabling approach, recognizing all aspects of performance, identifying development needs and support for colleagues to achieve their goals and career progression aspirations.

## 2.3 Staff development

Expansion and consolidation of staff development mechanisms has enriched our research, impact and environment. Noteworthy developments are:

2.3.1 **Individual research plans (IRPs) and mentoring:** All research active staff meet termly with a research mentor to discuss research plans, fostering a responsive and dynamic approach to support. As live documents, IRPs encompass bidding, outputs, impact, obstacles and enabling factors, development needs and career aspirations. Reviewed annually, they also inform strategic research planning for the Department and School.

2.3.2 A **refreshed study leave policy** has improved transparency and equity. Research active staff are encouraged to apply for study leave (normally 1 term per 3-year cycle), subject to a research plan assessed by committee against clear criteria. Short periods of 'exceptional study leave' may be awarded (e.g., enabling bidding, writing or impact activity to deadlines). To date, all eligible CAT A staff have received study leave within cycle, achieving tangible outcomes contributing to this submission. Four more recently appointed colleagues are due to apply within cycle.

2.3.3 **Enhanced support for bidding, writing and impact planning** is provided by mentors, senior research centre colleagues, School Directors of Research and impact specialists, with demonstrable success (e.g. 3.1.1) Internal peer review is mandatory for all bids, and (following positive experience in REF preparation, 2.6.5) is now standard for outputs too. All CAT A staff are entitled to 40% fte research time, within which 10% fte is ringfenced bidding and writing time.

2.3.4 Colleagues benefit from a **wide array of research training and development opportunities**, some mandatory (e.g. equalities and diversity; research supervision), many optional, including workshops (e.g., writing, bidding, mentoring), group and one-to-one peer support. External training is funded as appropriate. Up to £500 p.a. is available to all research-active staff for conference participation, with ECRs prioritized; additional funds can be accessed through research centres.

### 2.3.5 Staff development is comprehensive across career stages:

- **Research staff:** We work proactively to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The University Research Staff Office co-ordinates training and development and provides one-to-one coaching. ESW research staff have dedicated induction, webpage, handbook, and mentor support for writing and career development. They are represented on the School Research Committee, and, along with associate researchers, are encouraged to participate in research centre events, including a 'new researcher showcase' to promote visibility.
- **ECRs:** have protected teaching loads for 1 year and are encouraged to apply for internal pump-priming, network development and impact funds (3.2.1; 3.2.2iii). Mentoring and collaboration with experienced colleagues scaffolds progression from Co-I to PI,

supervision of doctoral research and uptake of leadership roles. For example: ECR Damman collaborates on Lefevre's ESRC *Innovate Project* and, as Co-I with Ruch, on evaluations of *Family Drug and Alcohol Court peer mentoring* (WWCSC) and *Parental conflict reduction* (Department of Work and Pensions). Training in research supervision is provided centrally and through 50/50% supervision split with experienced lead supervisors.

- **Mid-career staff:** are supported through centres, mentoring, peer review, study leave and internal funding to become established PIs, internationalise their work and take leadership roles. For example: Bécares, supported by CIRW and flexible working arrangements, has consolidated existing collaborations, progressed to PI with awards from the Nuffield and Health Foundations, and become Co-Director of CIRW. Maglajlic and Orr have likewise progressed into PI roles, whilst Cane, Chen and Marrable, all currently Co-Is, are being supported to lead grant applications, take leadership roles (Chen now Co-Directs CSWIR), and extend international networks.
- **Senior staff:** investment in training/coaching has supported staff moving into senior leadership roles (Lefevre, Ruch, Sharland). Experienced colleagues are also supported through centre networks, internal peer review, mentoring, seedcorn funding and study leave allocation, enabling substantial individual, collaborative and strategic grant capture and major publications.

**2.3.6 Illustrating the trajectories these supports can launch:** Hickie, whilst ECR, was Co-I on several DfE and OCC projects, and supported to become PI on 4 small projects. She has since been promoted to senior lecturer, appointed School Lead for Impact, and won a 3-year AHRC award to combine social work with arts-based enquiry in *Imagining Resistance through Participatory Photography*.

## 2.4 Recognising research and impact achievement

Research and impact achievement are criteria for promotion and discretionary pay awards. PIs are allocated 10% of research contribution income for flexible use to support research. Individual and collective research and impact achievements are highlighted in research centres' dissemination (e.g., annual reports), reported to Senate and the University, publicised and celebrated locally. Distinctive impact achievements are recognized through University Impact Awards, with Orr shortlisted in 2018.

## 2.5 Research students

We have sustained a vibrant, inclusive doctoral research community, consolidating our national and international profile for excellent postgraduate research and supervision in our core interdisciplinary areas.

**2.5.1 Our PhD programme, managed by the Sussex Doctoral School, is delivered through the SeNSS DTP** (established 2016), with interdisciplinary pathways in *Social Work and Social Policy* (led by Watters) including specialisms in *Wellbeing* and *Childhood and Youth*. One of 14 ESRC-recognised DTPs, SeNSS offers highest quality +3 and 1+3 PhD training (full- or part-time), for practising professionals as well as traditional students. Modules led by SWSC (e.g. *Researching childhood & youth*) reach across the University, providing state of the art training linked to our methodological innovations. Recruitment to our professional Doctor of Social Work (DSW) programme was suspended in 2015/16, in favour of the PhD - a decision guided by School-wide imperatives to consolidate quality with cost-effectiveness, rather than grow quantity.

**2.5.2 Overall PGR student registrations** have remained constant: 32 PGRs (23 PhD, 9 DSW) have newly registered in SWSC since REF 2014, compared with 33 (11 PhD, 22 DSW) previously. Almost half of new PhD registrations have been part-time – confirming continued accessibility to practising professionals. We have supervised a total 65 PGRs registered in

SWSC and co-supervised 22 in other Departments (1.5.3). Our strategic focus on internationalization and quality has borne fruit. Among PGRs registering since REF 2014: 5 are international and 4 overseas visitors; 11 have been awarded ESRC/SeNSS studentships, and 4 others collaborative (e.g. NHS Trust) or other prestigious awards (including 1 University Chancellor's Award).

2.5.3 **Completion rates** within maximum registration period have increased to 6/8 over the last 2 years.

Completions have been:

Award	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Total
PhD	4	1	1	3	2	4	1	16
DSW	1	1	2	3	5	4	1	17
Total	5	2	3	6	7	8	2	33

2.5.4 We are proud of our **PGR career progression**: 16 completing during this period have attained permanent posts in UK/EU universities (including: Rawles, Head of Social Work, Open University; Dugmore, Associate Dean, Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust), with 7 awarded research posts/fellowships in HEIs, independent research organisations or national government (e.g. Bennett, NatCen; Rana, Ministry of Defence). Others progressing to senior professional/leadership roles include: Hare (Head of referral and assessment, Lewisham Council); Evans (Team manager, Surrey targeted youth service; and Sims (CoramBAAF Development consultant).

2.5.5 Our **inclusive environment fosters PGRs' intellectual curiosity, skills, professional development and wellbeing**. In addition to provisions standard to a research-intensive environment (e.g. induction, handbooks, dedicated offices, online learning portal) we focus on:

- **Community**: Each student belongs to at least one research centre and is encouraged to participate fully in events and activities. PGRs also present at regular Research in Progress seminars. Remote participation facilities have sustained community during the pandemic. With School funding for peer-led initiatives, PGRs have established reading, writing and support groups and have won Doctoral School funding to run interdisciplinary awaydays.
- **Personal, professional and research development**, including regular Training Needs Analysis. Skills and professional training opportunities are provided through the SeNSS DTP and Doctoral School, and dedicated funding for external training (e.g. NCRM) and conference participation. PGRs are supported towards research impact through dedicated workshops and office hours. They are encouraged to undertake the HEA accredited Start to Teach (PGCertHE) and ensured fair access to opportunities for paid research and teaching.
- We support PGRs to **publish their research**, including (in 8 cases) through co-authorship with supervisors.

2.5.6 Significant improvements in processes and quality of **support for PGR supervision, monitoring and review** include:

- dedicated support for studentship applications – with demonstrated success (2.5.2);
- a questionnaire completed/agreed at supervision outset, then updated as necessary, to establish shared understandings of roles and responsibilities;
- minimum monthly recording of meetings and progress;
- robust annual progression and review processes, and monitoring of student experience;
- training and supervision for research supervisors (2 staff members are currently qualifying by second supervising to completion);
- regular supervisor meetings/workshops, to exchange best practice and agree collective actions.



2.5.7 **Wider support** includes dedicated Library space and Student Life Centre support for wellbeing, financial and learning needs. **Students' wellbeing** is of paramount importance, with University initiatives including *Understanding the mental health of doctoral researchers* (2018-20).

2.5.8 Our excellent results in the most recent (2019) **Postgraduate Research Experience Survey** span a range of indicators, including highest at Sussex for research culture.

## 2.6 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) (Objective D)

2.6.1 We are determined to ensure that SWSC attracts staff and students from diverse backgrounds and circumstances, and that all can flourish here. This reflects our **core social work values, aligning with the University's Inclusive Sussex Strategy 2025** (including initiatives to renew institutional Athena Swan bronze award, attain Race Equality Charter Bronze award, and Disability Confident Leader status, and inclusion among Stonewall Top 100 Employers).

2.6.2 Increasing **diversity among staff and PGRs**: We actively encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds and with protected characteristics. Among our 15 (full-time) CAT A staff, 7 are aged over and 8 under 50 years; the majority (11), including 4/6 professors, are women; 4 are non-UK citizens; 3 self-identify as LGBTQ+; 2 are from minoritized ethnic groups; 1 has a declared disability. Two-thirds (11) have significant caring responsibilities, with 5 periods of maternity/parental leave. The wider staff group (30, including non-CAT A) has a similar diversity profile, though 56% work part-time. Five out of 15 currently registered PGRs are international, 5 are from minoritized ethnic groups; 4 are part-time and 9 are 'non-traditional' students with professional practice experience.

2.6.3 We are enhancing **structures and embedding culture that ensure inclusive and equitable practice**. Since 2017 we have established:

- **School EDI Committee**, currently developing: a comprehensive EDI Strategy, including application for School-level Athena Swan bronze award; and projects on bullying and harassment and tackling the awarding gap for students of minoritized ethnicity. EDI Committee members sit on all key School committees and promotion panels, act as EDI, Dignity and Respect champions and contribute to University Working Groups.
- **School Wellbeing Advisory Group** engages widely to enable wellbeing, awareness and zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.

2.6.4 In addition to specific **EDI-oriented practices** relating to staff/PGR development at each career stage (2.3; 2.5), and making reasonable adjustments for all staff/PGRs with disabilities, the University and School:

- proactively support maternity/parental leave, including 'keeping in touch' days and return planning;
- offer phased return from sick leave, with calibrated workload and mentor support;
- encourage and support remote work (before/during/after Covid); flexible working for colleagues with caring responsibilities; and discourage out-of-hours emails;
- offer on-site childcare;
- provide bespoke staff training, both mandatory (EDI law; dignity at work) and encouraged (e.g. disability awareness, bullying and harassment, unconscious bias);
- encourage participation in staff networks (LGBT+; trans/non-binary; BAME; and disability networks) and women's action learning sets;
- attend to EDI in appraisals, IRPs, study leave and promotion applications, and explicitly addressed EDI issues in planning response to Covid impact;
- celebrate diversity in communications and dedicated events (e.g. One World Week, LGBTQ+/Black History Months).

2.6.5 Our attention to **ensuring all REF-related processes have been transparent, inclusive and equitable** exceeds DORA and Sussex REF Code of Practice requirements:

- All staff on standard teaching and research contracts are considered to hold significant responsibility for research; no research staff are independent researchers. Two contractual changes from CAT A eligible to non-eligible were mutually agreed, for phased retirement (Luckock) and personal career choice (Whiting).
- Mentoring, individual research planning and study leave have maximized each individual's contribution to our collective submission, taking a rounded, respectful approach to individual circumstances (formally declared by 1 colleague) and profiles.
- Everyone in REF decision-making roles has undergone EDI and unconscious bias training. Review/selection processes were fully explained to all staff; individual-level information was shared on a 'need to know' only basis.
- An internal output review group (IRG) comprised all professors/centre directors/mentors; rotating membership of all other CAT A colleagues encouraged shared understanding and ownership of REF processes and minimized unconscious bias. Output benchmarking and author self-rating were followed by 2 independent internal reviews, full IRG discussion and external review. Explanatory and formative feedback on each output was provided through mentors.
- Case studies were developed and selected through extensive consultation and formative feedback between lead authors, the University Research Quality and Impact (RQI) Team, external advisors and a School Impact Advisory Group.
- Final scrutiny of our submission by the IRG and EDI Lead confirmed equitable and inclusive representation, proportionate to distribution of protected characteristics and career stages among CAT A staff, whilst giving pointers for future EDI priorities.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 Enhancing and diversifying income (Objective E)

Growing and diversifying grant capture has been a strategic objective to ensure vitality and sustainability within a competitive funding environment.

##### 3.1.1 Our success has significantly exceeded expectations:

- **Total research income over the current REF period has quadrupled** to £2.9M (previously £723K), with **new awards (including projected income) totalling £5.18M to Sussex**.
- Our portfolio now includes **major international and national consortium awards**, alongside a diverse array of national and local funders.
- Our **success rate is exceptional**, currently highest in the University, with median 44% of bids awarded over the period.

##### 3.1.2 Specifically, we have:

- **Led or partnered in scaled-up, consortium bids/awards for challenge-led research:** Nationally Lefevre leads the multi-partner ESRC *Innovate project* (£1.9M); Ruch co-led the runner-up consortium bid for *WWCSC Research Partner* (£3.5M). Internationally, Watters leads UK strands of *Refugee Well Schools* (Horizon 2020) and *Displacement, placemaking and wellbeing in India, Finland, Norway and UK* (ESRC EqUIP); Becker is Co-I for the 6-country 'ME-WE' *Psychosocial support for adolescent carers* project (Horizon 2020).
- **Consolidated and extended established success with national funders:** This includes a total 6 DfE commissioned projects/evaluations and 2 for the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC). Thomson (*Reanimating data*) and Ruch (*Communicating with vulnerable children* and *Social work supervision*) brought further formative research funding success with the ESRC, as did Bécares (*Ethnic inequalities in later life*) and Sharland (*Outcomes for children and families using social work*) with the

Nuffield Foundation. Continued funding has also come from national third sector partners CoramBAAF and Brook.

- **Successfully bid to new international and national funders across sectors:** Successful internationalisation includes first-time awards from the European Research Council (Nolas, *Connectors*), Danish Council for Independent Research (Thomson, *Open-ended transitions*), and the Independent Social Research Foundation (Maglajlic, *Madness after war*). UK research council funders new to us are the AHRC (Thomson and Berriman, *Curating childhoods*; Hickie *Imagining resistance*) and NERC (Watters, *Thai coastal vulnerability and resilience*). Public/government research commissions now extend to DWP (Ruch), NIHR (Chen; Luckock), WWCS (Ruch), Child Exploitation and Online Protection (Thomson) and UKCDR (Orr). New charity funders include the Health Foundation (Bécares), Mankind UK and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (Hickie), and Jacobs Foundation (Nolas).
- **Extended our range of regional and local funders:** Reflecting our multi-disciplinary stakeholder collaborations, funders (in addition to local authorities) now include Sussex Police, London Authority, YMCA Downslink, Roberts Foundation and Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust.

### 3.2 Infrastructure supporting a vital and sustainable research environment (All Objectives)

**A robust, inclusive and enabling infrastructure** underpins achievement of our strategic objectives.

#### 3.2.1 Organisational infrastructure:

- SWSC has benefitted from a **£3M University strategic investment in the Sussex Humanities Lab** and a **£3M alumnus endowment for the Andrew and Virginia Rudd Centre for Adoption Research and Practice**. These have provided two SWSC posts, generated interdisciplinary collaborations in core research areas, led to prestigious awards (ESRC, AHRC, DfE) and co-authored outputs.
- **Sussex Research** administers the University's **Research Development Fund** (awards up to £30K) for pump priming activities leading to substantive external research proposals and the **Research Opportunities Fund** (awards up to £1.5K) to stimulate new collaborative interdisciplinary synergies. Successes include Chen's pilot (with BSMS) for a successful bid to NIHR on *Improving quality of care delivered by care home staff*, and Sharland & Ruch's pilot on *Children's data and voice* leading to a currently shortlisted consortium bid to the Nuffield Strategic Fund.
- The **SeNSS DTP** consortium supports excellence in PGR training (2.5.1).

#### 3.2.2 Operational and scholarly infrastructure:

Infrastructure to ensure **research integrity** (1.7.4), support **staff and PGR development and productivity** (2.3-2.5) and **embed EDI** (2.6) has been discussed. Further highlights are:

**i) Core funding for research centres (1.2.2)** a budget of £150 k per annum, provides vital supporting architecture for our interdisciplinary research environment. School funds sponsor centre directors' time (0.2fte), dedicated research assistance, events and widely disseminated annual reports. Across their many functions, centres help spark ideas, enliven community, and forge academic and stakeholder connections. Activities range from CIRW's annual symposia (themes include *Nature, Spirituality and Wellbeing; Migration and Wellbeing*) to CIRCY's and CSWIR's regular seminars, 'Researching professional practice' and 'Ideas in action' workshops (recent topics include *Children 'making a noise'*, *Virtual psychosocial research methodologies*, and *Using Mass Observation archives*), 'work-in-progress' and 'coffee and collaboration' sessions, and *Practice Research Hub* (4.1.7). We are committed to environmental sustainability, with remote/online complementing (and, under Covid, replacing) in-person participation.

ii) **Mainstream operational and scholarly infrastructure** includes:

- ESW's **Research Support Team**, led by the **Research and Enterprise Co-ordinator**, providing professional support for all aspects of research and impact activity and project management.
- **Central pre- and post-award support** led by University Research & Enterprise Services, providing: targeted funding alerts (including Research Professional); support and costings for bids; training (e.g., on costing); and cross-disciplinary events for strategic funding opportunities.
- **University website and external communications service, complemented by School Communications Officer**, including dedicated **research communications strands**.
- The **Research Dashboard** provides up-to-date research management information on bids and awards, doctoral research, and links to the **Sussex Elements institutional repository for outputs** (hosted by the Library).
- The **Library** offers 24-hour opening, comprehensive online resources and dedicated bibliographic assistance. Its Research Hive offers regular training events, PGR space and a Research Data Management Librarian who supports planning, digital archiving and data sharing.
- **IT support and training** are provided through ESW, the Doctoral School and University IT Services. An extensive range of research software is available.

iii) **Infrastructure supporting research impact** is now much enhanced:

- Central University support, led by the **University RQI team** and **Research Impact Officer**, includes online Research Impact Toolkit/resources, training, one-to-one guidance, and an annual Impact Day. This resource is utilised in drafting impact pathways, embedding and tracking impact throughout and beyond projects lifetimes.
- **ESRC Impact Acceleration Account awards** have benefitted case studies and 5 other initiatives, including: development of e-learning materials on *Safeguarding children at risk of sexual exploitation* (Hickle) and *Sexual consent and pleasure education* (Thomson); and Chen's (with BSMS, Business School and Informatics) pioneering work with technology/industry partners and health/social/residential care providers to *Co-create connected, intelligent care homes for people with dementia*.
- The **School Academic Lead for Impact**, assisted by an **Impact Officer**, leads on developing and implementing our **Impact Strategy**, with an **Impact Advisory Committee** comprised of academic and research user members. ESW hosts an impact webpage with links to proprietary resources, bespoke training (in stakeholder mapping, infographics, social media), weekly media relations surgeries, monthly impact newsletter. Periodic impact workshops/conferences provide opportunities for presenting, gaining feedback and sharing good practice.
- **Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) funds** have targeted impact consultancy, case studies and competitively awarded initiatives including: research-based stakeholder training events (e.g. Cane, *HIV awareness*; Damman, *Parents' peer support* (4.3.2)); media resources (e.g. Maglajlic's web-video: *Organisation of social services during and after disasters*); and other resources (e.g. Ruch using *Kitbags to promote children's mental health in context of Covid*). HEIF funds also align impact activity with the Knowledge Exchange Framework.

**4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society****4.1 Collaboration with academic and non-academic partners (Objectives A, F)**

4.1.1 Nurturing existing and new relationships with academic and non-academic partners is core to SWSC ethos and success, and to *Sussex 2025 Research with Impact* and *Engage for Change Strategies*. Scaffolding research connections across institutions, disciplines and professional fields affords critical mass and capacity, giving rise to interdisciplinary synergies,



access to research opportunities and participants, credibility and voice in fields we seek to influence.

#### 4.1.2 Demonstrating this:

- We have **collaborated with Sussex colleagues in other disciplines** on 21 (42%) of our funded projects and co-authored with them 78 (31%) of all staff/PGR research outputs.
- 38 (76%) of our research awards are **collaborative with other HEIs**, 9 (18%) are international; 144 (57%) of our outputs have been co-authored with external academics, including 72 (33%) international.
- 26 (52%) of our externally funded projects involve **stakeholder co-investigators/collaborators**, in 4 cases international; we have co-authored 13 outputs with research users.

#### 4.1.3. This collaborative approach is **enabled by**:

- **Outward-facing research centres** with authoritative public profiles communicating our values and expertise to collaborators and research users.
- **Internal pump-priming funds** providing opportunities for networking towards collaborative bid development (3.2.1)
- **University Research and Enterprise networking initiatives to stimulate multi-partner bids in response to strategic initiatives**, e.g. successful UKRI multi-disciplinary *E-nurture network* led by Rudd; Watters' ESRC Equip award on *Displacement, placemaking and wellbeing*; and a shortlisted Leverhulme Centre bid on *Future of the archive* (SHL initiative, in partnership with British Library, National Archives and 3 Universities).
- **Nurturing collaborative synergies between Education and Social Work within shared School research environment**, e.g. with Boddy on *Children's social care innovations* (DfE); and with Gazeley and Boddy on *School exclusion* (OCC) and *WWCSC Evaluator Panel*.
- **Visiting opportunities from and to other institutions** enrich our environment, stimulate and consolidate collaborations. Among 29 international and 2 UK Visitors to SWSC, examples include: Jette Kofoed (Aarhus) led workshops on *Ethical hesitation* and *Psychosocial methods: visual matrix*, contributed to 2 joint publications, a PhD student exchange and a shortlisted EC Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (EC-MSCA) bid. Visits from Julie McLeod (Melbourne), Ilse Julkunen (Helsinki) and Kristin Yarris (Oregon) all resulted in joint publications. International **visiting appointments of 5 SWSC colleagues** have also borne fruit (e.g. Thomson, at VIVE Copenhagen, funded collaboration on *Young people's transitions* (Danish Council for Independent Research) and a journal Special Issue; Sharland, at University of Newcastle, Australia, 2 publications and a shortlisted Australian Research Council bid).

#### 4.1.4 Collaborations **with HEIs leading in their fields include 12 Russell Group and 40+ overseas universities**. Illustrations are:

- Hickie and Lefevre with University of Bedfordshire's *International Centre on Researching Child Exploitation, Violence and Trafficking*;
- Ruch with Universities of Edinburgh, Cardiff and Queen's Belfast on *Talking and listening to children*;
- Bécares with University College London and Universities of Manchester, Michigan, Otago, Auckland and Massey University on *Social determinants of health and wellbeing inequalities*, including a new UKRI award on *Social, cultural and economic impacts of the pandemic on BAME groups in Britain*;
- Becker and Watters (both Horizon 2020) respectively with 6 European HEIs, (led by Linnaeus University) examining *Young carers' wellbeing*, and with 5 European HEIs (led by University of Ghent) on *Refugees well schools*.



4.1.5 We work closely with **non-academic partners**, in particular Research in Practice, OpCit and NatCen (with whom Sussex has a strategic partnership) to ensure our research has **meaning and value for evidence-informed practice** and to deliver **the constellation of skills and specialist experience** necessary for complex evaluations and trials.

4.1.6 One-third (18) of our funded research projects have been **commissioned by government, policy makers or service providers** (3.1.2); trusted relationships ensure our research responds to and shapes their priorities.

4.1.7 **Extensive professional networks ensure close collaboration with beneficiaries to generate new knowledge:**

- Collaborations with longstanding **local partners** (e.g. ESCC *Safer relationships perpetrator programme*) are complemented by newer ones with South East Police (*Child sexual exploitation/ trafficking*), and NHS Foundation Trusts (e.g. Tavistock & Portman, *Family Nurse Partnership*).
- The **South Coast Regional Centre Teaching Partnership Practice Research Hub** (hosted by CSWIR, in partnership with University of Brighton, ESCC and B&HCC) has driven collaborative working on practitioner research projects (e.g. on *Impact of specialist family service assessments*), directly informing local professional practice and policy.
- We enjoy strong locally embedded, national and international links with **community, service user and charity organisations**, on: youth work (Allsorts; The Proud Trust; Brighton & Newhaven Youth Clubs); sexual and emotional health (Brook; Rise); vulnerable/at risk children (Safer London; National Children's Bureau; Become; YMCA; USA Birth Parent Network; Eurocarers); children's datafication (Mumsnet; NSPCC); mental health, wellbeing and inequalities (Sussex Community Development Association; Brighton Oasis; Vincent Dance, Runnymede Trust; Fenix (Bosnia & Herzegovina); Myanmar Migration Network). We also work with activist organisations (Queer in Brighton; Brighton Unemployed Centre, Brighton Women's Centre; Feminist Webs) and industry partners on care technologies (British Telecom, Huawei, Vodafone, SwiftCare).

These relationships enrich our research and our environment, including through practitioner/stakeholder participation in our research centres, CPD and doctoral programmes (2.5.2).

## 4.2 Engagement with key research users/beneficiaries (Objective F)

4.2.1 **Further engagement with research users and beneficiaries makes it possible to scale and extend the significance and reach of our work**, through:

- **Delivering research-based training, workshops, masterclasses and webinars** to social work and other (police, health, education, arts) practitioners and managers locally, regionally and nationally (e.g. on communication with children; relationship-based practice; trauma-informed practice; HIV awareness; child sexual exploitation);
- **Producing and disseminating training materials and resources**, including: practice guidance on *Access to social care for adults with autism* (Marrable, SCIE); training video and e-learning materials on *Child sexual exploitation* (Hickle, OCC);
- **Shaping public narratives** through: 27 **keynotes and multiple invited presentations** at regional, national and international stakeholder conferences/symposia, including: BASW; Carers' Trust; Cumberland Lodge; Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Abuse; International Association of Social Workers; and **public engagement** such as Berriman's participatory design events with coders, archivists and communities for *Curating childhoods*; contributions from Thomson and Bécares to *Sick! Festival* (2015 & 2019), Lewis to Young Carers Festival, Hampshire (2019); and CIRW's *Singing for Wellbeing* event (2019);
- **Hosting national symposia** e.g. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (May 2017);
- Providing written and in-person **policy briefings**, for example to: local authorities; OCC; DfE; Ofsted; European Parliament;
- **Maintaining active digital and social media profiles**, through regular contributions to

centre, project and network websites, blogs, podcasts, @Twitter and Facebook.

4.2.2 We act as **consultants/advisers to stakeholder organisations** in our areas of expertise. Locally/regionally to: B&HCC (on digital 'Futures' (Berriman) and 'Practice innovation' (Luckock)); Sussex Local Nature Partnership (Watters); Sussex Family Justice Circle (Lefevre); Child Sexual Exploitation Regional Threat Group (Hickle). National advisory group memberships/contributions include to: DfE on 'Rethinking Social Work' and CoramBAAF (Luckock); BASW 80-20 Campaign (Ruch) and BASW Children and Families Policy and Practice Group (Lefevre); NHS Race and Health Observatory (Bécares); and Overseas Development Institute Independent Advisory Group for the 10 year project 'Gender, Adolescence and Global Evidence' (Thomson).

### 4.3 Wider contributions to society (Objective B)

4.3.1 Beyond impacts discussed in case studies, we have a **strong track record of making a difference to society**. Our **instrumental and conceptual impacts** span micro-level professional practice to defining new legal and policy territory with national and international governments. The following exemplify pathways, significance and reach:

4.3.2 ECR Damman, with voluntary organisation Recovery Partners, hosted a HEIF-funded event (June 2018) drawing on her doctoral research on innovative USA Parent-Partner Programs, involving birth parents with previous child protection service experience as peer mentors to parents currently involved with the system. Event participants included birth parents, public and voluntary sector managers and practitioners, UK and USA researchers. This catalysed development and implementation of a peer mentoring/parent advocacy service in B&HCC and ESCC, and establishment of links between USA and UK birth parent representatives for information exchange and learning.

4.3.3 Thomson's collaboration with Brook on sexuality education includes the production of online open access modules, based on 2 collaboratively funded PhD projects exploring young people's understandings of sexual pleasure and consent (McGeeney; Whittington). Aimed at educators and hosted online via BrookLearn, uptake has been strong, with 4121 unique users to date and 93% rating the content good or excellent.

4.3.4 Luckock's Wave 1 DfE Children's Social Care Evaluation of CoramBAAF's Permanence Improvement project generated new insights concerning the timing of decision-making in planning placements. It led to significant DfE investment in further project roll-out and Wave 2 Innovation Programme evaluation.

4.3.5 Lefevre's (2005-6) work for SCIE provided novel conceptualization of key capabilities for *Teaching, learning and assessment of communication skills with children*. The resulting e-learning resource for practitioners (SCIE 2008) remains in use. The Chief Social Worker for Children and Families in England confirmed (2015) '*Michelle's work has had a significant impact on the social work education reform agenda and has helped inform my thinking in my role*'. Lefevre's contribution to social work education was recognised with a National Teaching Fellowship (2015).

4.3.6 Becker's research on young carers has underpinned a global campaign to recognise the rights and respond to needs of this neglected group, including development of dedicated services, school and university-based schemes. Progress has been achieved through collaborations with UK and international researchers, governments, policy makers (including European Parliament), practitioners, carers' networks and media. Appointed UK Carers Trust Ambassador in 2020, Becker was named by Universities UK (2019) as one of the '*Nation's Lifesavers*', and by Access HE (2020) as a '*role model*' whose pioneering research has '*put young carers at the heart of many Universities' widening participation plans*'.

**4.4 Contribution to sustainability of the discipline and interdisciplinary field (Objective A)**

4.4.1 We continue to be an internationally recognised centre of excellence in social work research. Our **contribution to the discipline** was recognised in 2020 by the inclusion of papers by Lefevre et.al. and by Ruch among the 50 most influential ever published in the British Journal of Social Work. Lefevre was also awarded the BJSW Kay McDougall Prize (2017), and Sims (PhD) the Claire Winnicott National Essay Prize (2018).

4.4.2 Sharland's prominent leadership in **strengthening the social work research community and capacity nationally and internationally** includes serving as Co-Chair of the Joint Universities Social Work Education Research Committee (2011-15). She Co-founded (2014) and Chaired (2017-19) the European Social Work Research Association, which has grown to 700+ members from 40+ countries, establishing a collective home for the European social work research community.

**4.5 Wider (inter)disciplinary influence and contributions (Objective A)**

4.5.1 In **recognition of their outstanding contributions to their disciplines**, Becker, Sharland and Thomson have been elected Fellows of the Academy of Social Sciences; Becker is also Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Sharland is Honorary Professor, Hong Kong University, and Watters was awarded the Global Oregon Collaboration Scholarship for '*top scholars from the world's most prestigious institutions*'.

4.5.2 We make significant contributions to **national and international grant awarding bodies**. As Trustee of WWCCSC (2019-), Sharland influences the Centre's evaluation and funding priorities, following its transition from DfE auspices to independent charity. Bécares, Becker, Ruch, Sharland and Thomson are ESRC Peer Review College members. Committee memberships for specific Research Council funding calls/streams have included: Newton Fund International Researcher Links, Institutional Links, and Postgraduate Scholarships (Bécares, Orr); GCRF Culture and Mental Health, and ESRC UK-Colombia Mental Health (Orr); and MRC/ESRC Secondary Data Analysis (Thomson). International awarding committee memberships have included: EC-MSCA (Maglajlic); Swedish and Norwegian Research Councils, and Canada Council for the Arts (Watters); Irish Research Council (Orr); Academy of Finland (Sharland); Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology and Austrian Science Fund (Thomson).

4.5.3 We act in **key roles for leading peer review journals** across several fields. Editors/Co-editors have been: Watters, *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care* (2005-); (Thomson (2012-17) then Berriman (2020-) *Children and Society*; Ruch, *Journal of Social Work Practice* (2013-20); Lefevre, *Child and Family Social Work* (2014-18); Maglajlic, *British Journal of Social Work* (2020-); Bécares, *Frontiers in Sociology: Race and Ethnicity* (2020) and Assistant Editor *Ethnicity and Health* (2010-2016). Thomson co-edited two Special Issues of *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (2015; 2020). Nine staff have been Editorial Board members, including for the *European Journal of Social Work*, *Journal of Youth Studies*, and *Time and Society*.

4.5.4 We are sought-after **advisory board members for national and international research institutes/networks**, including: NIHR School for Social Care Research (Sharland); Cathie Marsh Institute (Bécares); University of Newcastle Social Science Research Institute (Thomson); and Nordic Research Network on Refugee Children (Watters). In addition to other Visiting roles (4.1.3) Sharland and Ruch hold advisory appointments respectively with Hong Kong University and VID Specialised University, Norway; Thomson is consultant mentor to the Danish National Centre for Social Research. We also act as expert advisors for specific research projects/programmes, funded, for example, by the Nuffield Foundation, Wellcome Trust, Australian Research Council and World Health Organisation.

4.5.5 We take **prominent leadership roles in national and international research associations**. Ruch is Co-Chair (2019-) of the Association of Professors of Social Work; Lefevre and Ruch co-convene ESWRA's Special Interest Group on *Child and family social work across Europe* (2016-); Berriman co-convenes the British Sociological Association's *Childhood study group* (2016-); Whiting advises to the Social History Network; and Bécares is newsletter editor for the Society for Social Medicine.

4.5.6 We are regularly invited to **showcase our work on prestigious national and international academic platforms**. We have delivered 19 national and 14 international academic keynotes, 62 national and 33 international invited presentations, at fora ranging from the International Social Work and Society Academy to the Royal Statistical Society and Academia de Letras de Brasília.