

Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: D32: Art & Design: History, Practice and Theory
Section 1: Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy CONTEXT <p>Manchester School of Art Research Centre (MSARC) encompasses research in architecture, art, design, fashion and media, including research themes of craft, performance and visual culture. As one of 14 University Centres for Research and Knowledge Exchange (UCRKEs), its key focus is to deliver impactful arts-based research through applied creativity, and a critical aspect of its ethos is the embedded nature of practice as a foundation for collaboration and innovation. As one of the largest arts-based research centres in the UK, MSARC provides the intellectual home for 133 <u>staff</u> (116FTE, 49% female, 51% male) and 136 doctoral researchers (56% female, 44% male). Through a strategic development plan, key successes during this assessment period include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than doubled Centre membership to 133 staff (116.2FTE) in REF2021 from 64 staff (54.6FTE) in REF2014 • Increased external research income by 800% to £5,529,825 in REF2021 compared to £694,792 in REF2014 • More than doubled the number of PhD conferments from 43 in REF2014 to 89 in REF2021 with a corresponding growth in doctoral researchers from 75 to 136 in the assessment period • More than trebled our professoriate through internal promotions and strategic appointments from 5.5 in REF2014 to 17 in REF2021 <p>MSARC's uniqueness resides in its combination of scale and diversity of disciplinary expertise that enables us to co-create social, cultural and economic benefit through interdisciplinarity and applied creativity in response to major cultural and societal challenges of global significance. The work of our researchers and professional practitioners is embedded in national and international creative and cultural landscapes where they challenge norms, set agendas and shape future research narratives towards real-world impact.</p> <p>Emerging from the Manchester Institute for Research and Innovation in Art and Design (MIRIAD), MSARC was established in 2016 as part of the formation of the new Faculty of Arts and Humanities, and the concomitant realignment of the School of Art's research portfolio. The establishment of Manchester Fashion Institute (MFI) in 2016 led to the incorporation of its applied and industry-focused research into MSARC. In 2019, following the withdrawal from Manchester Met's Cheshire campus, MSARC also integrated the work of the Performance and Contemporary Art Research group, bringing live performance and embodied practice research into closer dialogue with specialisms in art and visual culture.</p> <p>Staffing and strategy reflect the contribution of constituent disciplines to the School of Art's core activities and strategic priorities. Led by Professor Martyn <u>Evans</u> as the founding Research Centre Head (RCH), the establishment of MSARC has led to 14 professorial appointments and promotions in architecture (<u>Uduku</u>, <u>White</u>), art (<u>Brennan</u>, <u>Hunt</u>, <u>Ravetz</u>), design (<u>Evans</u>, <u>Niedderer</u>), fashion (<u>Barnes</u>, <u>Hackney</u>, <u>Tyler</u>) and media (<u>Drake</u>, <u>Heys</u>, <u>Koppel</u>, <u>Vis</u>) resulting in a professoriate of 17 staff.</p> <p>Professorial Research Leads (PRLs) provide discipline-specific intellectual leadership for each of our five Research Hubs. This structure enables devolved research management by ensuring more bespoke and direct engagement with a wider community of researchers through discipline-based away days, seminars, and workshops and, at the same time, putting into practice the comprehensive intellectual vision of the Centre. Centre-wide activities (communication days, research seminars, exhibitions, training workshops, symposia and lecture series) complement</p>

discipline-based activities to optimise cross-fertilisation of expertise and knowledge. Given the scale of MSARC, the creation of a vibrant research environment relies on management structures that: 1) provide coherence and a collective centre of gravity while 2) fostering the intellectual and scholarly evolution of its constitutive parts.

RESEARCH STRUCTURE

The Centre's five Research Hubs, led by discipline-specific PRLs, are:

- Architecture:** Led by Professor Ola Uduku, the Architecture Research Hub comprises 21 members of staff (20FTE) including two Professors, five Readers, 14 Senior Lecturers and 16 doctoral researchers. Research is focussed around three thematic areas: Heritage, Engaged Research and Urban Futures, through which staff deliver both individually initiated and collaborative research. It draws upon a diverse range of practices and pluralities of knowledge as well as a broad range of methodologies. As a constituent member of the Manchester School of Architecture (MSA) – a strategic partnership between Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan Universities – the combined strengths of the School's collective research income and citations situate MSA amongst the best institutions globally, as recognised by its QS world ranking. In 2020, the Architecture Hub contributed a major component of the faculty's successful £1.35M bid to establish the Leverhulme Unit for the Design of Cities of the Future (LUDeC). The Hub supports ICS1, ICS6, and ICS9.
- Art and Performance (encompassing Visual Culture):** Led by Professor Amanda Ravetz, the Art and Performance Research Hub comprises 45 members of staff (37.2FTE) including five Professors, nine Readers, 28 Senior Lecturers, two Lecturers and 42 doctoral researchers. Research expertise is rooted in the evolving fields of Contemporary Art Practice and Performance as well as Curating Contemporary Art and Visual Culture, including critical/historical writing. The Hub recognises the importance of both individual practice and collaborative, inter/trans-disciplinary work. It actively promotes the generation and development of art in digital and analogue idioms across real and virtual sites, platforms and realities, working at, and challenging, the boundaries of the live and/or liveness, the proximal and online. Staff embrace, interrogate and respond to contemporary issues from within a research environment clustered around rigorous intellectual research themes, which include archives, museums, cultural heritage and domestic histories; language, power, politics, protest, site and communities; arts and health; social practice; simulation, materiality, identity and fiction of the image; and composition, dramaturgy and laboratory training. The Hub supports ICS5.
- Design (encompassing Craft):** Led by Professor Kristina Niedderer, the Design Research Hub comprises 27 members of staff (23.55FTE) including four Professors, three Readers/Principal Lecturers, 18 Senior Lecturers, two Lecturers and 24 doctoral researchers. Our approach to design and craft research influences positive change in cultural, social, material, technological and innovation contexts. The Hub has focused on increasing research income through collaborative projects while also supporting high-profile and large-scale exhibitions of practice-based research. There is a particular strength in applied and practice-led research, which is purposefully focused on the thematic areas: 1) Community, Culture and Heritage; 2) Design for Health and Wellbeing; 3) Design Innovation and 4) Material and Making. It supports considerable specialist breadth and is characterised by approaches that are collaborative, interdisciplinary, socially-conscious and challenge-led. The Hub supports ICS2, ICS3 and ICS4.
- Fashion:** Led by Professor Fiona Hackney, the Fashion Research Hub comprises 14 members of staff (13.11FTE) including three Professors, four Readers, six Senior Lecturers, one Research Associate and 24 doctoral researchers. Its capability spans all aspects of the discipline including: design; textiles; manufacturing; sustainability; garment-making; cultural history; community engagement; artisanal crafts; heritage and business. Collaborative research engages with a range of private and third-sector organisations. Specialisms include: Fashion Business Management Research fostering intellectual dialogue between the fashion business and management fields through innovative, collaborative and

interdisciplinary research; Fashion Design Research employing a holistic interpretation of fashion design spanning social, economic and political perspectives across historical and contemporary dimensions; and Innovative Materials and Product Development contributing to design and development for functional apparel through state of-the-art facilities. The Hub supports ICS8.

- **Media:** Led by Professor Farida Vis, the Media Research Hub comprises 25 members of staff (22.4FTE) including four Professors, five Readers/Principal Lecturers, 12 Senior Lecturers, four Lecturers and 30 doctoral researchers. It supports five research themes: Expanded Documentary challenges our understanding of documentary through experimental forms of production, media and audience interaction; Research in Future Technology explores emergent audience-facing technologies and their uses in the fields of the arts, health, education and entertainment; User Experience investigates interweaving patterns in taste, hearing, smell and vision data to provide better insights into the multisensory nature of audience experience and interaction; Socially-Engaged Practice develops new and divergent techno- and creative cultures that better represent the pressing needs and rights of global publics as subjects, co-creators, participants and audiences; and The Visual Social Media Lab (led by Vis) specialises in interdisciplinary and cross-sector research on the role social media images play in society. Drawing on the subject disciplines from animation, film-making, music and photography the Hub will transition into the School of Digital Arts (SODA) in the autumn of 2021. The Hub supports ICS7.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

Our mission is to be the leading comprehensive arts-based research centre in the UK, operating across the entire range of the creative disciplines found in a 'full-service' art school. This has driven the development, deployment and ongoing monitoring of our research strategy towards impactful research through applied creativity.

Our ambition to foster a thriving, inclusive and sustainable research culture is guided by three interrelated principles:

- 1) to conduct inclusive and impactful research through applied creativity that engages with critical issues of our time in order to contribute positively to culture, society and the economy
- 2) to harness the potential of comprehensive arts-based research to promote interdisciplinarity, collaboration and innovation with the academy, industry and user communities
- 3) to set agendas in research through practice, achieving international recognition as an innovator in the field

As a strategic focus during the assessment period and over the next five years, these guiding principles informed the development of the following research objectives that support an integrated approach to the vitality and sustainability of our research environment:

- **Optimise research quality:** Increase the quality and quantity of research outputs underpinned by an inclusive and empathetic environment where staff and doctoral researchers at all stages of their development contribute to vitality and sustainability.
 - Through shared experiences (seminars, mentoring, case studies, etc.) increase understandings of what world-leading research is, and the strategies to produce such work (including awareness of quality indicators, such as output metrics, commissioning processes, publication strategies, etc.).
 - Given our depth of expertise in research through practice, provide tailored mentoring for Early-Career Researchers (ECRs) and Mid-Career Researchers (MCRs) to convey how to conduct high-quality practice-based research in a sustainable manner.
 - Develop an increased international outlook to provide opportunities to explore critical societal challenges of global significance (such as inclusivity, sustainability and resilience) and use this platform to attract international collaborators and visiting scholars.

- **Grow external income in a diversified yet sustainable manner:** Building on the significant grant capture performance in this assessment period, continue to increase and diversify external income to foster a thriving, viable and robust research infrastructure and environment in line with our research strengths.
 - Ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of targeted training and mentoring to raise grant capture ambition and ensure that the quality of research and knowledge exchange bids are maximised through an effective peer review process.
 - Mentoring from discipline-specific experienced and successful staff will be complemented by engagement with faculty- and university-level support to provide a tailored funding environment that shares best practice, and increases a research funding literacy.
 - Develop a deep understanding of research funding agendas and, through membership of funding bodies, shape and better anticipate the funding trends and opportunities while working with strategic partners to lead, or contribute to, research consortia.
- **Conduct externally-facing, engaged and impactful research:** Embed impact and the real-world relevance of our research by optimising supportive initiatives that enable effective pathways to impact with beneficiaries and user communities.
 - Building on the significant platform of impactful research, use Research Hubs to develop and implement a discipline-specific impactful strategy that places user communities at its core in order to co-produce research that addresses real-world needs.
 - Embed our Co-Production Research Network to explore theoretical and applied arts-based approaches in order to identify opportunities for collaboration with, or secondment to, private, public, and/or third-sector organisations, regionally, nationally or internationally.
 - Continue to capture and share our impactful research in creative ways that are accessible to non-academic audiences and strive to generate research impact that has cultural, societal and economic benefit.
- **Maintain a vibrant doctoral and postdoc community:** Building upon our existing scale and expertise, foster an attractive, viable and inclusive doctoral and postdoc community.
 - Work closely with the University's Graduate School (GS) and the faculty's Postgraduate Arts and Humanities Centre (PAHC) to align research strengths and capacity to increase the number of doctoral researchers from 136 to 225 by 2026.
 - Continue to work towards securing Research Council Studentships while also seeking to identify alternative funding opportunities (for example, through industry-sponsored studentships) and to provide an attractive and engaging postgraduate research environment that can attract fee-paying students.
 - Seek opportunities that increase our postdoc community in a sustainable manner (such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)) funded CREATE Fellows: The North West Creative Economy Engagement Fellowships to enhance the potential for our doctoral researchers to progress into postdoc positions.
- **Amplify opportunities for collaboration, inclusivity and interdisciplinarity:** Promote a culture of inclusivity and interdisciplinarity that drives sustainable, impactful and mutually beneficial collaboration with a range of user communities including private-, public, and/or third sector organisations.
 - As one of the largest arts-based research communities in the UK, we already have extensive networks, connections and collaborators that afford a wide range of research opportunities. Moving forward, we will seek synergies between existing expertise and interests and future activities that demonstrate innovation in what we do, how we do it and with whom we do it.
 - Continue to prioritise inclusivity and diversity in a manner that recognises the challenges faced by marginalised and underrepresented groups while also identifying future opportunities to employ creativity and arts-based research to explore issues of social

inequities and increasing societal atomisation.

- Understand and communicate better the value of interdisciplinary research and incorporate into funding applications, collaborative projects and doctoral studentships in order to foster a culture of innovation that places our arts-based disciplines at the centre of emerging debates, applied agendas and theoretical developments.

ENABLING IMPACT

As a fundamental characteristic of our approach to impact, we are driven to understand the difference our research makes, to whom it makes a difference, and to capture and share the evidence of this difference. We utilise a range of mechanisms (Sec.2 People) to provide an effective environment in which staff are supported and encouraged to generate research with significant, demonstrable impact. These mechanisms include a Research Leave Scheme (to provide dedicated time to conduct impactful research); a Research Development Fund (to provide funding to undertake field research, visit collaborators, create artwork for exhibitions); and Research Mentoring (to enable peer-learning and knowledge exchange from experienced research staff and impact professionals).

We have maximised the impact arising from our research in a number of ways:

- Much of our research is externally funded and provides best practice in how to amplify impact and increase its reach and significance with the widest range of user communities possible. For example, AHRC, British Council, and Arts Council England funding enabled Welsh (ICS8) and team to engage traditional craft communities in India and Thailand (directly engaging 511 creative participants and reaching global audiences of over 300,000), leading to an increase in social wellbeing and economic sustainability; while AHRC and EPSRC (The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council) funding enabled Brook (ICS1) and team to benefit the heritage sector through the statutory listing of post-war buildings, and protecting architectural assets by lodging them safely in archival collections.
- We engage with a wide range of user communities and beneficiaries to co-produce research and resultant impact. We do not see a separation between the originator and user (or end beneficiaries) of research, rather we see it as a mutually beneficial partnership. For example, Kettle (ICS3) empowered marginalised communities to engage with critical issues, such as refugee displacement, and interrogates textiles' role in shaping identity, politics and society; meanwhile Dixon and Magee (ICS2) re-shaped conventional memorial-making practices by engaging participants as co-researchers and co-producers of new multi-media commemorative artworks thereby transforming marginalised individuals, volunteers and community groups from a passive audience into active and emotionally-engaged participants.
- We challenge accepted norms of how arts-based research can address notions of hierarchy or stigmatised subjects, such as mental health; and foster activism and give new voice to marginalised groups. For example, Ravetz (ICS5) explored non-hierarchical infrastructures for artist development and contributed to the organisational security of her collaborator, Axisweb, shaping national policy in the process; meanwhile Parkinson (ICS4) and team employed innovative arts-led and publicly-engaged interdisciplinary methodologies to shape care provision for mental and physical health, as well as co-creating novel modes of campaigning and activism.

While impact characterises research, we continually adapt to ensure that impact is of value, and valued, by our user communities and end beneficiaries. We innovate the methodologies by which it is generated, communicated and shared, and engage in research that is at the cutting-edge of societal and organisational challenges with great potential for shaping policy agendas and identifying new and novel forms of arts-based research.

- We tackle cutting-edge societal issues that require a range of creative, participatory and innovative research methods that can 'question the norm' of how research should be undertaken. For example, Vis (ICS7) and team challenged existing understanding of how

visual media literacy can tackle the ever growing problem of misinformation and in doing so created a step-change in how teachers, children and young people in high school and primary school in Canada, Colombia and the UK interrogate misleading images; meanwhile [Sengupta](#) (ICS6) and team generated new systems approaches and computational models to explore disruptive technologies within urban transformation research to inform early stage policy development better.

- Our research generates significant traction with policy-makers as it creates novel forms of insights that are human-centred, empathetic and visually rich, and as a result, provide new perceptions that shape contemporary and future policy agendas. For example, [White](#) (ICS9) and team undertook significant funded work to establish the 'age-friendly neighbourhood approach' to engaged design-research with older people, improving quality of life for 19,854 citizens across six communities in Manchester, and have critically shaped relevant policy and practice through partnerships with local government. Given its impact on policy – both in the UK and internationally (including the World Health Organisation) – the potential beneficiaries of the research have increased exponentially.

While the above examples draw directly upon our nine ICSs, the approaches outlined are representative of our wider attitude to generating demonstrably impactful research. We: 1) foreground the potential of collaboration with our user communities and see their participation as a critical aspect of a co-production process leading to novel and highly innovative outcomes; 2) recognise the value of funding in amplifying the reach and scale of our research while also providing advocacy for the relevance and need for such activities; 3) welcome the opportunity to explore challenging and critical issues of our time that may not suit all forms of research methodologies, particularly those that cannot adapt to context, informed by user communities and shaped by experiential learning; and 4) engage purposefully with policy agendas towards shaping future contexts for the benefit of key stakeholders, end-users and the wider society.

SUPPORTING INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Much of our research is characterised by collaboration and engagement with other disciplines and a wide range of user communities. While this involves working with other arts-based disciplines, it increasingly involves direct engagement with the humanities; social science; education; computer science and engineering; and other disciplines within the University, with other national and international higher education institutions (HEIs); and the professions. This rich interdisciplinary culture results from inquiry-led research that addresses societal or organisational challenges without restricting creativity and innovation through disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinarity is fostered through a creative research culture that promotes: 1) blue-sky thinking by asking 'what if?' questions; 2) exposure to new and novel thinking within and beyond our 'home' disciplines; and 3) an environment that supports risk-taking, experimentation and (learning from) failure. Such a culture is supported and actively promoted to ensure that we are able to break out of conventional thinking and use applied creativity to question the norm.

Interdisciplinary teams may form as a result of responding to particular funding opportunities that seek to address issues of critical importance. For example, [Evans](#), in 2019, led a multi-institutional consortium to address the productivity and competitiveness of the UK regions' creative industries through the better use of productivity-enhancing digital technologies in an application to the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Strength in Places Fund programme. The successful Expression of Interest resulted in £50k of seedcorn funding to develop the £26.5M Creative City+ proposal, involving researchers and industry partners with expertise in audiences, behavioural economics, businesses and entrepreneurial support, creative industry policy, immersive analytics, user experience, service design, consumer behaviour and retailing, immersive content, people-centred innovation, data science and AI, digital transformation, digital trust and cyber security, and heritage and culture-led regeneration.

TOWARDS AN OPEN RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

MSARC is committed to promoting Open Access (OA) and Open Research ensuring compliance with the *Concordat on Open Research Data*. Our Library Research Support team offers one-to-one mentoring; workshops and guides on OA; Research Data Management and Bibliometrics. We work closely with Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) and the Library to ensure we understand and meet the needs of our arts-based researchers. Journal articles and conference proceedings with an ISSN are deposited within three months of acceptance in Symplectic Elements, the University's Research Information System, before being reviewed for eligibility and then hosted in our externally-facing e-space system for unrestricted open access. Regular training in the use of Symplectic Elements and e-space is provided and a review of OA compliance is included in annual research mentoring.

Colleagues publish in journals with Green or Gold OA, building publication costs into external grants or accessing University funding to pay Article Processing Charges (APCs), including a UKRI OA support alongside £660k of institutional investment in the assessment period to make outputs accessible via Gold OA.

Many colleagues contribute to an open data culture by sharing research data. Data, generated by research funded by UKRI or European grants, are shared in institutional, national and/or European repositories. Compliance with the *Concordat on Open Research Data* is monitored by the University's RKE team in collaboration with Library Services, who oversee the institutional repository. Contributions to open research through a culture of external-facing activities, including consultation, workshops, co-research, etc., and by freely sharing research outcomes with academics and non-academics, is frequent.

COMMITTED TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS IN ETHICAL RESEARCH

Given that much of our research is undertaken in collaboration with external stakeholders, we prioritise the understanding of the ethical implications of these activities. We are compliant with the *Concordat for Research Integrity* and ensure that staff and doctoral researchers are aware of ethical and legal responsibilities through annual briefing in the research mentoring process. Specialist support in research integrity and ethics across our disciplines is provided by our Professors and Readers, all of whom are members of the Faculty's Ethics Review Panel and all have received special training. Ethical and legal issues are addressed in mentoring discussions (and formalised in the Five-Year Plans) at the earliest stage of research project development, and researchers must engage with the University's ethical approval system before commencing new projects. Applications for ethical approval are submitted via EthOS, the University's online system for ethical review, and all research undertaken in the University must secure ethical approval. Staff are also given training in GDPR and secure data storage.

Section 2: People**STAFF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

We place great emphasis on the development of our staff. As a result of a Centre-wide consultation process in 2016, to understand the specific opportunities and challenges regarding research support needs, we instigated a series of sustainable strategies and support mechanisms to foster conditions conducive to high-quality impactful research. Guided by the principles of the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*, our approach to enhancing our research environment and, in turn, the performance of our members at all career stages as benchmarked against relevant indicators (quality and quantity of outputs, research income, markers of esteem, etc.), capitalises upon Faculty and University processes and procedures while also providing discipline-specific developmental approaches that recognise the breadth of our specialist expertise. Approaches include:

- **Research Mentoring:** All Centre members are allocated a research mentor with whom they meet at least once a term to review their Five-Year Research Plan (see below), including the development of a publication strategy, future bidding, internal support (such

as Research Leave, the University's Good-to-Great Scheme, the Faculty's International Research Partnership Scheme) and career progression.

- **Five-Year Research Plans:** A Centre-wide scheme requires all researchers to maintain a rolling Five-Year Research Plan reviewed regularly in dialogue with their mentor. Introduction of this process has enabled staff to plan research activities in a more proactive and strategic manner by prioritising activities and development needs. In turn, it assists longer-term allocation of resources, budget setting and performance monitoring. All plans are reviewed annually by the Centre leadership team who provide feedback.
- **Research Leave Scheme:** Introduction of a research leave scheme in 2015 provides opportunities for staff to apply for full sabbaticals (buy-out from teaching for one term); mini-sabbaticals (to undertake a specific research task where leave from teaching, typically for 3-4 weeks, is required); or support for bid-writing (buy-out to focus on the development of a research funding proposal). Allocated on a competitive basis to staff at all career stages, irrespective of their fractional status, research leave allows for intense periods dedicated to the development and production of outputs and/or funding proposals. Researchers are entitled to a one-term sabbatical every three years. Since the introduction of the scheme, staff have been awarded the equivalent of 68 full sabbaticals, 20 mini-sabbaticals and 10 bid-writing sabbaticals equating to total investment in the assessment period of £520,750.
- **Research Development Fund:** Six bi-monthly bidding points provide opportunity to apply for internal funding to support the completion of publications, conference attendance, support for exhibitions, travel and other expenses. Up to two applications can be made in any given year by individuals or groups. While there is no absolute maximum amount that can be applied for, bids normally do not exceed £5,000. This Fund is a critical factor in enabling our researchers to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse and global environment. In 2019/20 our Research Development Fund was £132k shared across the five Hubs.
- **Research Hubs:** The establishment of five Research Hubs provided structured mechanisms to support, deliver and monitor discipline-specific individual research programmes and ongoing staff development. The Hubs are also a critical device for fostering debate and intellectual exchange, providing a forum for peer learning, and acting as a safe and supportive space where researchers are recognised as key to our overall ambitions.
- **Research Training:** As part of its annual planning, MSARC draws upon members' Five-Year Plans, mentoring meetings, Research Hub events and leadership committee initiatives to develop a range of in-house training designed to complement centrally provided support. This training includes REF-literacy and bid-writing workshops, strategies for articulating research through practice, international networking, as well as impact and media training. Research training is reviewed annually and draws on best practice nationally and internationally through the invitation of keynotes, input from visiting researchers, and field trips to partner and competitor organisations.

The above provides a range of support that not only accommodates researchers at all career stages and draws upon the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* but moreover aims to accommodate everyone who is engaged in research, not just those employed on research contracts. For example, we have created an Associate Mentoring Scheme designed to support colleagues (without significant responsibility for research) towards the acquisition of core Centre membership within two years.

The Centre has ensured prioritisation of research activities within the annual almanac, with identified times and venues for meetings, workshops, seminars, etc. This ensures that the research agenda engages with the education and international portfolios in a timely and effective manner.

MSARC members also benefit from the Central RKE office's staff development schemes, i.e. including Good2Great (Heys); and Future RKE Leaders (Brook, Csepely-Knorr, Kelly, Na,

Jurack, Turner), as well as the Faculty International Research Partnership Fund (IRPF) (Vis & Heys). In addition, the University funds staff attendance at externally-funded schemes, including Advance HE's Aurora initiative (Tan).

Postdoctoral Researchers: As a result of the significant increase in external research funding, the Centre has grown a vibrant cohort of postdoctoral researchers. Postdoctoral researchers are automatically core members of the Centre and benefit from this membership through access to the Research Development Fund, the allocation of an experienced research mentor, and inclusion in Research Hub meetings and activities. One of our strategies has been to seek opportunities for postdoctoral researchers to secure, where appropriate, academic contracts where their expertise aligns with the research strengths of the Centre and the longer-term ambitions of the University. For example, in 2019, both Jackson and Na secured permanent lectureships and act as role models for personal and career development for postdoctoral researchers. The latter are also mentored by an experienced mentor who provides support and guidance towards the identification, development and submission of research funding applications, which aim to strengthen their research profile and grant-capture experience. This is seen as an important step towards becoming independent researchers (e.g. Sayem) and, while not all applications are successful, this enables personal development, increases resilience and enhances chances of securing research funding in the future.

STAFFING AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

A coherent staffing strategy (as outlined below) has resulted in our submission of 133 Centre members, equating to 116.26 FTE compared to 56.4 FTE in REF2014. Our staff profile is:

F1 (Professor)	I0 (Principal Lecturer, Reader)	JO (Senior Lecturer)	KO (Lecturer, Research Fellow)
16%	17%	57%	10%

The Centre supports the recruitment of academic staff across all careers stages and plays a critical role in the Faculty's appointment and promotion processes. The Research Centre Head (RCH) and/or Professorial Research Leads, in dialogue with the Faculty ProVC, Faculty Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange, and respective Heads of Department, feed into the University's annual strategic planning process through identification of the priority need for posts and their fit with Centre, Faculty and University's strategy. Once posts have been secured through the planning process and/or through replacement posts, in line with University policy, a senior representative of the Centre is involved in shortlisting and also sits on the appointment panel.

While the contribution of staff on short- and fixed-term contracts is highly valued, the Centre supports a move towards longer-term contracts wherever possible. We recognise the need to balance the nature of contracts to ensure that ECR are provided with employment opportunities that build their research experience and profiles with more secure and longer-term appointments.

In terms of the effectiveness of the recruitment strategy, there has been a significant increase in the professoriate (from 5.5 in REF2014 to 17 in REF2021), an uplift in members of the Centre resulting from new appointments (50 appointments) with a significant proportion of ECR.

In addition to feeding into the annual strategic planning process, the Centre supports and develops targeted applications to the University Strategic Opportunity Fund (SOF) that accelerates expansion in areas of particular strategic importance to the Centre. Three key SOF developments have been successful, led by Heys (aligned to SODA to extend expertise in immersive storytelling via SODA.I; £464k over three years); Evans (to enhance expertise in design-driven innovation via The Design Factory; £953k over three years); and Parkinson (Arts for Health: £25k over 18 months). These strategic developments ensure that the Centre: 1) can identify areas of national strategic importance aligned to research expertise (e.g. Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, and Global Challenges Research Fund); 2) can have the agility to leverage existing strengths and extend them rapidly against evolving agendas (such as

AI/AR/VR); and 3) is able to provide a step change in activities that recognise the evolving research context, both nationally and internationally.

Through the appointment and internal promotion of 14 Professors in the assessment period, the Centre has been able to identify PRLs for its five Research Hubs and their respective Leadership Teams. In doing so, the Hubs are able to provide targeted leadership that benefits members, thereby empowering them with a voice to input into the strategic direction of the Centre and ensure that there is effective communication between the University, Faculty, Centre and researchers. This two-way dialogue has sought to address legacy issues with regard to communication between the previous research Centre (MIRIAD) and researchers, an issue identified in consultation after the review of research structures and management in 2015.

The appointment of PRLs who, with the RCH, form the Centre Leadership Team, provides a forum for peer learning, strategy discussion and future planning alongside opportunities for shadowing and succession planning. We have mapped out and will monitor the tenure of members of the Centre Leadership Team to ensure a period of shadowing for staff coming into such roles. This aims to ensure the resilience and sustainability of Centre leadership and management although we recognise that this capacity-building is an ongoing process at all levels of the career stage. Ultimately, the Centre strategy has been established to empower members of the Centre at all levels appropriate to their career stage.

A number of Professors have been recruited as a mechanism to reposition the expertise of the Centre beyond legacy research traditions in fine art, visual culture and craft by strengthening the constituent areas of the Centre, i.e. architecture, design, fashion and media. Appointments have been completed by internal promotions – from ECR to Reader and Reader to Professor – achieved through targeted mentoring and support mechanisms. This has provided a balanced range of professoriate and senior researchers that is more representative of our current research strengths and future ambitions, and thus can empower staff at all stages of their career.

The Centre has developed strategies to recruit staff with expertise in grant capture to increase the ambitions and culture of applying for external research grants. By working beyond the pool of existing staff who have a funding track record, we have been able to develop and deliver initiatives including sandpits, intense bid-writing workshops and facilitated buy-outs for grant-writing. These strategies are led by staff who have already successfully secured external grants, including Evans, White, Heys, Niedderer, Uduku, Ravetz and Vis, and have fast-tracked successful grant-writing activities.

SUPPORT FOR ECRs and MCRs

The importance of ECRs to the sustainability and future vitality of our research environment is a priority and ECRs are embedded in many research support processes. The Centre adopts a broad definition of ECR status to ensure that such staff are effectively supported during this critical phase of their career. Experienced research staff are involved in the mentoring of ECRs via input into PDRs and provide targeted support via individual and group mentoring meetings. The Centre has an ECR group (established by ECRs) who co-create its agenda and draw in more experienced researchers on specific issues. This bottom-up approach is fully supported by the Centre with a dedicated member of its Leadership team providing a sounding board for the group. This group also provides a safe and rich environment for ERCs to discuss their personal and career development, and feed into annual training and development requirements.

Each research Hub has a dedicated ECR representative that connects to the Centre Leadership Team. 'ECR issues' is a standing agenda item on research Hub and Centre meetings. The Centre has implemented a rule that, wherever possible, all doctoral supervisory teams include an ECR to ensure the development of supervisory capabilities via mentoring from experienced supervisors.

We also recognise that for Mid-Career Researchers (MCRs) to extend and develop their experience, they need the opportunities and support to do so. We provide opportunities for such staff to take on responsibility for defined activities such as organising seminars and developing public engagement activities, etc., and encourage peer-learning across all research activities. For example, collaborative bids are encouraged with ECRs and MCRs in order for them to

experience the bidding process. All bids are scrutinised by more senior colleagues (many of whom are members of Peer Review Colleges) who provide feedback on the proposed grant and overall bidding process.

RESEARCH LEAVE

All Centre members are eligible to apply for research leave annually. Since its introduction in 2015, the Research Leave Scheme has provided an opportunity for staff to undertake full sabbaticals (£8,500: full buy-out from teaching for one term); mini-sabbaticals (£1,500: to undertake a specific research task where leave from teaching, typically for 3-4 weeks, is required); and support for bid-writing (£1,000: buy-out to focus on the development of a research funding proposal). Allocated on a competitive basis to staff at all career stages, irrespective of their contract status, research leave allows for intense periods dedicated to the development and production of research outputs and/or research funding proposals. MSARC researchers are entitled to receive a one-term sabbatical (or equivalent) every three years. As an alternative to full sabbaticals, a research assistant may be employed, in which case, the maximum funding amount available of £8,500 supports a 0.4FTE Grade 5 research assistant for nine months. In this assessment period, staff have been awarded the equivalent of 78 full sabbaticals, 24 mini-sabbaticals and 14 bid-writing sabbaticals equating to total investment in the assessment period of £520,750.

EXCHANGE BEYOND ACADEMIA

The Centre benefits from extensive relationships between the academy and external private, public and third sector organisations, and values the manner in which these relationships enhance the impact and relevance of its research, develop an understanding of the external environment and enable meaningful and mutually beneficial collaborations. We have experience of successful secondments (Hammond embedded in Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Ravetz with Alma Park Primary School); Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (Ravetz working with Axisweb); membership of advisory boards (e.g. Evans was appointed to the AHRC Advisory Board in 2019 for three years); and acting as policy advisors (Vis advising government organisations in the UK and Canada, and through working with the World Economic Forum); Brook to the Modernist Society; and Evans to Design Council). As the anchor institution to the region's cultural and creative industries, researchers are embedded in, and foster exchanges with, in myriad ways in key organisations, such as HOME, Manchester Jazz Festival (e.g. Fairclough); and Manchester International Festival (Heys, Mitha, etc.).

We have utilised our Research Leave Scheme and Research Development Fund to provide targeted time and seedcorn funding to stimulate exchanges between the academic and private-, public- and/or third sectors, which often leads to collaborative funding applications. For example, Evans collaborated with the Crafts Council to successfully develop the AHRC-funded Located Making project (AH/S00341X/1) with partners in China, including cultural development support agencies, to develop a practical framework for unlocking the potential of heritage-based making practices in China through the application of design expertise.

We also employ Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDAs) to stimulate exchanges between academic and external partners, particularly in areas where we have significant research expertise. For example, Brook and Csepely-Knorr have developed successful funded CDAs with the Landscape Institute Scotland, Historic England and BT Archives.

SUPPORTING IMPACT

We utilise a range of approaches to recognise and reward staff for carrying out research and for achieving impact. The annual Five-Year Plan process provides a structured opportunity for staff to capture and communicate their research and impact activities; this is used to inform research categorisation and, in turn, workloads to support research. Where particular impact activities are identified, staff may be provided with specific support and advice from the Faculty Impact Team to capture and maximise the reach of the impact. Each Research Hub has a dedicated budget that, at their own discretion, can be used to recognise and amplify research and impact

activities. We recognise that by the nature of impact activities, there is a need to be flexible and agile in how and when support is provided as these opportunities can be time-bound.

Key to the recognition and support of research and impact activities is the need to: 1) tailor the nature of support to the career stage of the member of staff; 2) be able to provide support in an agile and targeted manner to ensure opportunities are maximised; and 3) provide mentoring and guidance to ensure whatever may be needed to translate potential impact into a demonstrable and tangible form. As this often involves engagement with external partners, we are mindful to respect the needs and constraints of collaborators, and aim to work towards mutually beneficial outcomes that recognise the strengths or weaknesses of all parties. For example, Ravetz worked with Portraits of Recovery, directly supporting their successful bid to ACE's Elevate programme, securing funding for strategic business planning for long-term organisational sustainability.

DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

MSARC hosts and supports a substantial cohort of doctoral researchers **increasing from 75 in REF2014 to around 140 in REF2021**. PhD conferments **have more than doubled from 43 to 89** in the same period. In the 2019 Advance HE Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, for Creative Arts and Design we were ranked 2nd for Overall Experience, 3rd for Research Culture and 8th for Professional Development in the UK.

We greatly value our doctoral research community and provide a range of strategies to integrate them fully into our research culture through participation in research seminars; exhibitions and conferences; high-quality and tailored training and research management; collaboration between researchers and doctoral researchers, often leading to co-authored research outputs; access to bi-monthly research funding; and involvement in funded research projects.

MIRIAD was as an exemplar of practice-based doctoral research training with strong connections to staff research specialisms, and MSARC has worked to ensure that discipline-specific strengths enhance broader arts and humanities training. By carefully integrating arts-based training and development expertise into this wider arts and humanities context, opportunities for interdisciplinary research have been fostered and add significant value to the students' learning experience. This ensures that, as a major provider of doctoral research, our training and development expertise, pioneered by MIRIAD for over 20 years, was critical to the establishment of the Postgraduate Arts and Humanities Centre (PAHC) in 2016.

Our successful recruitment of doctoral researchers is prioritised and supported via:

- 1) alignment between postgraduate taught (PGT) provision and research specialisms to maximise progression to doctoral study
- 2) active engagement with the AHRC North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership (NWCDTP) and commitment to collaborative doctoral awards
- 3) development of a coherent, externally-facing narrative regarding the breadth and depth of doctoral training expertise and capacity
- 4) targeted international promotion of doctoral expertise through involvement in invited talks, seminars and symposia

We continue to work closely with PAHC and the GS to provide a supportive research environment, achieve increased registrations where PhD supervisory capacity exists and fully engage with funding opportunities to support doctoral research. For example, the architecture and design research Hubs were centrally involved in the successful £1.35M Leverhulme Unit for the Design of Cities of the Future (LUDeC) which will fund 15 doctoral researchers over four years.

In line with our commitment to equality and diversity, we recognise the importance of an inclusive recruitment strategy that attracts candidates with protected characteristics. We: 1) promote the AHRC NWCDTP ring-fenced studentships to all potential candidates; 2) are developing an application to the Office for Students' (OfS) call to increase access for black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) PGRs (Vis); and 3) are heading the establishment and

leadership (Vis) of the Research Centre for the Study of Race and Racism, which will have a strong arts-based ethos and will be an important further mechanism to attract BAME students.

Alongside University-funded Scholarships, we have been successful in securing 16 fully-funded Research Council studentships, including CDAs, in an increasingly competitive climate from the AHRC-funded NWCDTP. Research Council-funded studentships include two in 2014/15, five in 2015/16, one in 2016/17, four in 2017/18, three in 2018/19, one in 19/20 and two in 20/21. Importantly this has required an increase in marketing activities, targeted support for staff - including staff undertaking University-funded doctoral research leading to more supervisory capacity, and a more effective and coherent online communication strategy.

Hackney acts as Doctoral Research Champion for the Centre and each Hub has a Research Degree Co-ordinator who provides support for potential doctoral candidates in a coordinated and integrated manner in liaison with the relevant supervisors and, given our focus on interdisciplinary research, from the wider University as appropriate.

We also recognise the value of securing external funding to support doctoral researchers' cohorts. For example, Evans was invited in 2017 by Manchester University (by the lead of the NWCDTP) to co-author the funding proposal to the National Productivity Investment Fund (total award £906k). The successful proposal led to the 'Transformation NW' cohort of 12 doctoral students across the consortium with three fully-funded students studying within Manchester Met.

SUPPORTING OUR DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

The administration of doctoral research is overseen by the GS via the SkillsForge online system, which provides a central set of tools to support and guide students. Administration is provided in close collaboration with PAHC and Hub-level Research Degree Co-ordinators. Doctoral researchers have a supervisory team comprising of a Principal Supervisor, First Supervisor and Second Supervisor, the last of whom is usually an ECR (to develop expertise and supervisory capacity), who provide regular advice on research, and personal and professional development. One hundred hours of supervision per year is normally divided 60:20:20 between the supervisory team. Detailed records are kept of supervisions via SkillsForge, which provides a structure of support able to adapt to the developmental need of individual students. SkillsForge supports student progress and development (see REF5a) by recording official milestones, training and actions from supervisory meetings. An Application for Registration takes place after three months and a Progression Review/Transfer of Registration after 12 months (full-time) where independent reviewers scrutinise applications and support the development of the research. The latter includes an informal viva voce designed to prepare the student for their post-submission viva.

Doctoral researchers participate in the annual PAHC Symposium at which they present their research and are given extensive feedback, prior to the event, on abstract design, and afterwards, on presentation and impact. PAHC is committed to the notion of doctoral research as a professional development that extends beyond a student's delivery of their project. The systems we have in place are thus designed to nurture a broader professional portfolio, so that students are able to record and reflect on the benefits of research training, and workshop and conference attendance, their co-production of events, and more specific bespoke needs. These are addressed through an Annual Progress Review in which the student discusses such needs with independent scrutineers from the Centre in order to assess what can be done to support their progress most effectively.

PAHC delivers an annual Research Training Programme developed in accordance with the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, consisting of over 50 sessions, including dedicated provision around practice-based methods; provocative theorising; digital research; collegiality; equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); and employment after graduation. PAHC operates as a community of practice – a multidisciplinary research community dedicated to the development of our doctoral researchers. MSARC staff are actively engaged in bespoke arts-based training, and support and contribute to weekly sessions. The combination of interdisciplinary research training, well-being support, events and online discussion fora, as well as a meeting space for

ca.380 students from across arts, humanities and social sciences, fosters an engaged and interdisciplinary research community.

Collectively MSARC and PAHC provide funding for doctoral researchers to devise their own training initiatives (e.g. reading and writing groups or specialist practice groups) with the aim of nurturing independent-minded arts-based researchers. Employability training is provided through workshops offering students hands-on advice for job applications and interviews, and via the University's Postgraduate Passport scheme.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Equality and Diversity matters are reported institutionally through the University's Equality and Diversity Annual Report. The Diversity and Equal Opportunities Committee (DEOC) oversees the delivery of the University's Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy; the four Staff Equality fora (disability, gender, LGBT+ and race); the Women's Network; and the Working Parents and Carers Network, ensuring consultation and involvement in equality-proofing university policies.

University level data indicates a higher proportion of female promoted staff compared to the proportion of female staff overall (57.2% of 54.8% staff in post), and a higher proportion of promoted staff who self-define as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other, compared to the proportion of heterosexual staff.

Comparing MSARC with this and other university- and sector-wide data, reveals successes in some areas, and the need for further work in others. Looking at gender parity across roles and seniority, more Readers are female than male (52% vs 48%). The figures are reversed for Senior Lecturers (48% vs 52%). The lowest proportion of female staff is at Lecturer level (38% vs 63%), closely followed by Professors, of whom 39% are female and 61% male.

Data available for 120 Centre members show that 5% declared a disability, most (38%) being at Lecturer level and none at Professorial level, a lower percentage of disabled staff than that of the sector or amongst all university academics (7% and 6% respectively).

Data on MSARC members' racial diversity is held for 115 staff (87%); of these 8% identify as BAME, and 92% as White. In terms of nationality, 6% of UK members declared BAME identity, and 17% of Non-UK members; compared to 7% and 19% of sector-wide, and 9.5% and 37% at the University level respectively. The largest proportion of BAME staff are at Lecturer level (14% BAME vs 86% White), followed by Professorial level (12% BAME vs 88% White).

The data held for 85 staff show the proportion of LGBTQ members in MSARC to be 11.8%, more than twice the 5% proportion of all university academics, reflecting Manchester Met's 2019 success in being ranked second in the English education sector on Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index (WEI), 22nd in the WEI Top 100 (2019) and one of only 14 Stonewall Top Trans inclusive employers.

The restructuring of the research centre into Hubs in 2016 created five leadership roles for PRLs with all those appointed identifying as women, and two also as BAME: this compares with a professorial leadership team over the last REF cycle and up to 2015 that was 100% male and White. By extending leadership roles to female and female BAME staff qualified to carry these out, the expectation is that the next RCH will be a women/BAME woman.

Looking at promotions to senior research roles during the REF period, 19 members of staff were promoted to Reader and Professor; and out of five new professors, two were women (40%); out of 14 promotions to Reader, seven were women (50%).

Following a Code of Practice centrally developed by the RKE team in consultation with HR and input of the University and College Union, and through consultation with all staff and other university stakeholders, all staff in the unit have access to support, mentoring, funding, sabbaticals and career development opportunities. All staff benefit from university-wide arrangements for supporting flexible and/or remote working, which are offered via Heads of Department and HR, as well as from the University promotions scheme, which ensures that colleagues are not penalised for taking career breaks. Expectations of research productivity (measured by number of outputs) are reduced to enable staff with protected characteristics (e.g. disabilities) and for staff and research students returning from periods of leave (including

parental leave) or ill health, managing long-term illness, or with caring responsibilities, and with fractional contracts, to fully benefit from Centre membership status. Progression workshops are run annually for female colleagues, currently being expanded for BAME and other under-represented colleagues. We actively encourage and support applications for the Aurora HE development programme.

Equality and diversity considerations are taken into account with regard to access to internal research funds, including conference attendance, sabbaticals and training. Centre members receive mentoring within their Hubs, with access to research support, activities, and internal funding. Recruitment processes are reviewed to ensure they are inclusive and that equality and diversity govern the make-up of recruitment and assessment panels. The Centre is developing a pilot scheme for staff and research students with caring responsibilities, ill health, etc., to apply for conference attendance and other necessary travel to support research, with applications evaluated against a transparent and systematic set of criteria.

A number of mid-career researchers have benefited from the 'Future RKE Leaders' funding, with the awards being equally distributed between female and male colleagues, and two of the recipients (Brook and Jurack) have been promoted to Reader during this assessment period. ECRs have similarly benefitted from Research Accelerator Grants up to a total of £29,157. Of the six awards, four were given to female staff members.

Csepely-Knorr was one of the female recipients of the award (in 2016), and was mentored by Brook, recipient of mid-career funding. They jointly received funding through Manchester Met's International Visitor and Network Funding (£2,970), which then led to their joint successful funding applications to the Paul Mellon Centre and the AHRC (total income £147,688). Montague received the award in 2017, and successfully built on this to secure external funding from UKRI and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, with a total amount of £44,881.

Kelly and Uduku both benefitted from the Global Challenges Research Funding, extending their international networks to West Africa and the Philippines, with Uduku researching West African modernism and two writing workshops, through the British Council, for writing workshops in Africa.

MSARC members have developed peer-to-peer initiatives with an explicit EDI agenda, such as an ad hoc weekly 'Power Hour' run by, and for, BAME researchers, and The Common Room, set up by Centre member Tan, and ECR, and associate member Singleton, with a remit to decolonise teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange. Staff have also been central to the development of a roadmap for change in the Faculty, and to adopt an actively anti-racist approach. It highlights ten ways in which it could do so. This roadmap and accompanying letter were signed by over 30% of the Faculty, with significant proportion coming from MSARC. The proposal set out in this roadmap was officially endorsed by DEOC, with a key focus on improving how the University collects and presents its diversity data, as well as committing to exploring the development of a Research Centre for the Study of Race and Racism (led by Vis).

Following the processes set out in Manchester Met's Code of Practice, equality and diversity issues have underpinned the selection of all outputs. All colleagues with significant responsibility for research, and who are working as independent researchers, have been included in the MSARC submission. To ensure the delivery of an inclusive submission, a fair, transparent and robust process was set up to allow colleagues to declare individual circumstances confidentially and to request a reduction in output expectation. All staff were made aware of the processes and were encouraged to apply. An independent appeals panel was in operation throughout the preparation for REF2021, with colleagues invited to appeal decisions about researcher status or REF inclusion in July and August 2020, so that the outcome of these appeals would be incorporated into our submission.

Discussions about outputs and workloads have formed part of annual review and mentoring sessions. We have opted not to seek any reduction in the overall volume of outputs required by our submission, judging that there is sufficient scope within the rules for us to manage the impact of individual circumstances through our existing processes.

Outputs have been selected on the basis of quality, using metrics in line with the UK forum for Responsible Research metrics. We have engaged in an internal, double-blind peer-review exercise to recognise examples of good practice in our work and to identify the best quality outputs. Internally, assessment of outputs has been undertaken initially by colleagues, then by members of the Centre Leadership Team. We also ran a statistical analysis of the average scores by individual internal reviewers to ensure consistency across the reviewing cohort, and made any necessary adjustments. After ranking our outputs by quality, we have attributed outputs to their authors, based on the maximum and minimum quotient per staff member.

We have paid particular attention to ensuring that equality and diversity are embedded into the development of the submission, taking account of equality and diversity issues data on the distribution of outputs across staff, by taking positive steps to maximise equality and diversity in the attribution of outputs where possible. Further improving equality and diversity is a core goal of the Centre.

Section 3: Income, infrastructure and facilities

RESEARCH INCOME

As a key strategic focus, the research Centre has significantly improved its grant capture, leading to an extraordinary **eight hundred percent (800%) increase in research income to £5,529,825** in REF 2021 (as reported in grant income reported in REF4b and officially recorded via the University's research management system, Worktribe) as compared to £694,792 in REF 2014. Diversity of income profile is as follows:

BEIS Research Councils	UK Charities, Open Competition & Other	UK Govt. Industry & Other UK Sources	EU	Non-EU Other
41%	3%	41%	12%	3%

This has been achieved through a range of integrated strategies to sustain and increase external grant capture including:

- Intensive one-to-one grant writing with mentoring and feedback from experienced award holders to enable the development of high-quality finding proposals;
- Implementing a mentoring scheme that supports ECR and less experienced staff through the development of research bids;
- Horizon scanning of potential research funding calls (with expert input from the School's BDM) to maximise the time available to develop research bids and form partnerships;
- Engagement with external expertise to increase the awareness of, and competence in, external grant capture (e.g. participation in the Manchester Met-funded Grant Academy; and hosting of the AHRC Next Generation Design Researchers Workshop (with contribution from the AHRC);
- Encouraging and supporting collaboration with successful investigators and HEIs (sometimes through seed-funding to establish and strengthen networks and partnerships);
- Development of a resource of exemplars of successful research applications made available to staff, and summarised in briefings that support the development of funding literacy.

We have seen a demonstrable increase in external research income and, moving forward, we see successful grant capture support increasingly being led through the five Research Hubs towards interdisciplinary research funding applications. To support Research Hubs, we established a Strategic Research Bidding Group which highlight key funding opportunities and coordinate bidding activities across the Centre, University and externally with collaborators to ensure we are able to support ongoing grant capture.

Selected awards (over £100k) include:

- **Ambition for Ageing:** Heritage Lottery/GMCVO £10.2m (£444,000 to Manchester Metropolitan), 2017, White (Architecture).
- **Audience with a Hero: Transforming the production of immersive encounters:** Innovate UK, £696,855 (£223,990 to Manchester Metropolitan), 2019, Heys (Media).
- **AXISWEB:** Innovate UK (KTP), £140,242, 2017, Ravetz (Art & Performance).
- **City Verve:** Innovate UK, £10m (£337,000 to Manchester Metropolitan), 2016, Sengupta (Architecture).
- **Dementia and imagination: connecting communities and developing well-being through socially-engaged visual arts practice:** AHRC, £1.2m (£263,000 to Manchester Metropolitan), July 2013–August 2017, Parkinson (Design).
- **Designing the I-Do access platform: Facilitating Inclusion and Empowerment of People Living with Dementia through Access to Cultural and Creative Activities:** H2020-Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships, £163,795, 2020, Niedderer (Design).
- **Developing an Action Plan for the Strategic Use of Design in the UK:** AHRC, £557,935 (£468,096 to Manchester Metropolitan), 2017, Evans (Design).
- **JENKIP:** Innovate UK (KTP), £145,250, 2017, Wood (Fashion).
- **Living Design: The effective use of design for sustainability in maker enterprises:** AHRC, £464,639 (£189,329 to Manchester Metropolitan), 2016, Evans (Design).
- **RESYNTEX:** Horizon 2020 (£378,000 to Manchester Metropolitan), 2015, Tyler (Fashion).
- **RightPlace: Exploring future housing aspirations through neighbourhood housing strategies,** Centre for Ageing Better, £122,702, 2019, White (Architecture).
- **SynchroniCity: Delivering an IoT-enabled Digital Single Market for Europe and Beyond:** Horizon2020, £271,010 to Manchester Metropolitan, 2016, Sengupta (Architecture).
- **Visual Media Literacy for Combatting Disinformation: Analysing How Teachers Used the Questioning Images Resource During the 2019 Canadian Federal Elections:** Department of Canadian Heritage, £114,426, 2020 Vis (Media).

We see potential for grant capture through collaborative projects with colleagues in health, science and engineering, and humanities, etc. as well as significant relations with third sector and community organisations. Sources of income connected to the range of research themes contained within Centre include AHRC; EPSRC; ESRC; Leverhulme Trust; Innovate UK; British Academy; RIBA Research Trust Awards; British Council; Arts Council England; Wellcome; etc. Each Hub develops an annual grant capture plan, and monitors, promotes and targets specific calls as they emerge, with support from RKE.

While we have achieved an impressive 800% increase in research income (as reported in REF4b), the nature of our arts-based research means that we have also secured significant 'off-book' funding that was not administered through the University's Worktribe system due to the specific nature of this funding. For example, this may include commissions; Arts Council Grants for the Arts (secured by individuals not institutions); funding directly from industry; international funding, residencies, support for performances, exhibitions and installations, etc. This includes:

- 1) Financial support through commissioned work: Regional (£747,724), National (£1,057,386) and International (£299,421). Combined Total: **£2,104,531**
- 2) Off-book research funding: **£2,303,368**

Funding source	Regional	National	International	Off-book	Total
Arts Council England/ Wales	£183,000	£250,609	£48,706	£422,437	£904,752
British Film Institute	£30,000	£270,000	-	£100,000	£400,000

Creative England/Scotland	£40,000	-	-	£7,500	£47,500
Galleries/Museums/Art & Creative Industry Orgs	£183,257	£209,150	£122,822	£612,299	£1,127,528
Councils/Local Authorities	£33,000	-	-	-	£33,000
British Council	£75,000	-	-	-	£75,000
BBC	-	£191,000	-	-	£191,000
Sky Arts	-	£50,000	-	-	£50,000
Foreign Government Bodies	-	-	-	£124,122	£124,122
Universal Studios	-	-	-	£800,000	£800,000
Other	£203,467	£86,627	£127,893	£237,010	£654,997
TOTAL	£747,724	£1,057,386	£299,421	£2,303,368	£4,407,899

Total off-book funding equates to **£4,407,899** during the assessment period. Data was collected via a staff survey. A total of 102 surveys were completed, representing ca. 80% of staff, which means the figures presented here are conservative.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Researchers benefit from significant levels of support from an expanded RKE Directorate, which includes full service support incorporating a GS to RKE Systems and support for IP, Commercialisation and Contracts as well as pre- and post-awards teams. The RKE Directorate includes a dedicated Research Development Manager, an International Research Development Manager and a Project Delivery Team including post-award specialists and legal professionals who support procurement, logistics and financial management (including engagement with funders). We have a Research Impact and Engagement Manager who manages a team of impact and public engagement professionals, a Research Ethics and Governance Manager who offers guidance, training and support. Engagement with business and industry is supported by a Business Development Manager, a Partnership Manager and an award-winning KTP team.

We also benefit from support of a team who oversee RKE Systems including Symplectic which Centre members use to maintain records of their outputs, for open access compliance and web profiles; Worktribe which is used for the management of external funding applications; EthOS which is used for research ethics and governance and SkillsForge which administers manage doctoral research. RKE Systems also provide management reports and data that we feed into our annual review processes. Administrators and specialists in the GS work closely with our Research Degrees Lead and PAHC. We also have access to a dedicated press officer, a HR business partner, ISDS support and colleagues in Finance and Legal Services.

The Centre's research and impact activity is supported by a wide range of Professional Services staff working at the Faculty. This includes a 4FTE Faculty-based RKE team that provides post-award project support (procurement, logistics, travel, contracting, engaging workers and management of finances) as well as supporting ethics, governance and the administrative functions of the Research Centre. MSARC also has dedicated resources via two Digital Archivists (1.6FTE) and a Research Associate supporting the capture and articulation of practice-based research (1FTE).

At a Centre level, the following organisational infrastructure supports research, knowledge exchange and impact:

- The MSARC Leadership Team meets six times a year (twice each term) and oversees the strategic and operational planning of the Centre, including generation of high-impact research outputs; research income strategy; research support budget; development of Early-, Mid-Career and Senior staff; and development, implementation and monitoring of ongoing research support mechanisms.
- Financial management is overseen by the MSARC Head with administrative support provided by the Faculty RKE Administrative team. In 2019/20 the total Centre budget

was £422K – Research Leave Scheme (£150K); Research Development Fund (£132K); Architecture Research Hub (£20K); Art & Performance Research Hub (£30K); Design Research Hub (£28K); Fashion Research Hub (£10K); Media Research Hub (£22K); MSARC (£10K); plus institutional support for the Centre (£20k).

- **Research Leave Scheme** supports full-sabbaticals (buy-out from teaching for one term); mini-sabbaticals (to undertake a specific research task through teaching leave, typically for 3-4 weeks) and support for bid-writing (buy-out to focus on the development of a research proposal). Annual budget of ca. £150k; total investment in assessment period: £520,750.
- **Research Development Fund** via six bi-monthly bidding points provides the opportunity to apply for funding to support research activities, such as development of outputs; completion of publications; conference attendance; support for exhibitions; research-related travel, etc. Annual budget of ca. £132k; total investment in assessment period: £412,000.
- **Research Environment Funding** is allocated across each Research Hub to enable them to provide discipline-specific support including events, visiting speakers, seminar series, PhD training, etc. In 2019/20 the total budget was £110k (Architecture, £20k; Art & Performance Research, £30k; Design, £28k; Fashion, £10k; Media, £22k). Total investment in the Research Environment Development Fund across the Research Hubs in the assessment period was £205,000.

Evidence of areas where there has been significant investment includes:

- Institutional and **GMCA investment in the School of Digital Arts (SODA)** (£35M in total) to drive ideas and innovation across all forms of creative content in a school of future storytelling.
- Institutional investment via **Strategic Opportunity Funding (SOF)** for: 1) SODA.I: Immersive Storytelling, £446,154 over three years ([Heys](#)), 2) The Design Factory: Design-Driven Innovation, £951,930 over three years ([Evans](#)), and 3) Arts for Health, £25,000 over 18 months ([Parkinson](#)). Total funding £1,441,084 across three awards.
- **International Research Partnership Fund** to collaborate with New York University and Columbia University around: 1) Critical AI and Online Visual Cultures, and 2) Digital Storytelling led by [Vis](#) and [Heys](#) over two years. Total Funding £80,000 across two strands of one award.
- **Research Accelerator Grants** are funded by the University for applications of up to £5,000 leading to a full submission to an external funding stream where applications from ECRs pursuing New Investigator awards or similar are particularly encouraged. Total funding £29,157 across six awards.
- **Research Development Fellowships** for applications up to £5,000 to support researchers to gain experience of undertaking research at an organisation from another sector or in another country. Total funding £16,612 across five awards.

The university has been strategic in its investment in MSARC to ensure it is able to support a vibrant and sustainable research environment. **Total investment in the assessment period exceeds £2,704,603** (includes Research Leave Scheme; Research Development Fund; Research Environment Funding; Strategic Opportunity Funding; International Research Partnership Fund; Research Accelerator Grants; Research Development Fellowships).

INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

The University Library provides 24/7 opening across the academic year, alongside extensive access to online resources. Subject librarians from the Arts & Humanities Library Team work with academic colleagues to offer support and a vital link between library and researcher, often advocating and lobbying for extra resources on their behalf. In addition, librarians contribute to workshops on the Postgraduate Arts & Humanities Centre Research Training Programme. Library Research Support staff provide workshop content on the GS Doctoral Researcher

training programme. The Library's open InfoSkills workshops are also available to all staff, students and researchers. Requests from researchers for monograph additions to the collection are encouraged. Journal titles and online resources are reviewed annually. Inter-Library Loan requests are free to all users and can be submitted online. Researchers are able to utilise the SCONUL Access network to facilitate access to other university libraries, and eduroam allows easy network connections.

The Art and Design section of the Library holds an extensive range of material across all art and design disciplines. Strengths of the collections lie in both their historical and contemporary coverage, including a large collection of exhibition catalogues, and research material, which supports the unique Special Collections. Current and retrospective journal holdings are comprehensive, both in print and online form. In addition to the huge range of multi-disciplinary online services, the Library subscribes to many specialist art and design resources.

Researchers within MSARC are fully supported with world-leading facilities and resources. A mixture of specialist, bespoke and general spaces, with research specific equipment ready to be made available to all researches, is one way the Centre is able to achieve its aim 'to harness the potential of comprehensive arts-based research to promote interdisciplinarity, collaboration and innovation in the academy and with industry'. Research staff, spaces and resources in each of the research Hubs are fully supported by a technical support team.

Section 4: Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

SUPPORT FOR COLLABORATIONS, NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

MSARC benefits from a number of distinctive factors including our location (the key arts-based provider in the city, and arguably the region, affords us unparalleled collaborative opportunities); strong connections to key creative and cultural stakeholders (organisations, partners and collaborators in the city and more broadly regionally, nationally and internationally); the scale and breadth of our research base (as a full-service arts-based research Centre); and our underlying research focus (arts-based research through applied creativity).

In this assessment period, we have developed a wide range of partnerships and collaborative activities that supports a flourishing collaborative research environment. Internal collaborations among Centre members and within the University enable research interests and strengths to coalesce to give staff the resources and foundation from which to work. With this basis, Centre members have been able to establish a significant number and range of external collaborations with academic, public and business partners. Foremost among them range collaborations with:

- African Cities Research Consortium (with the Global Development Institute Manchester, London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, the IIED and Universities across Africa ([Uduku](#)))
- Art and Design, Health & Social Change: researchers work with the following partners to develop solutions for health and wellbeing: healthcare and policy partners in Manchester; Nottingham; London; Germany; Luxemburg; Netherlands and Spain, including Alzheimer Europe; Alzheimer Society; Alzheimer Gesellschaft; Dementia UK; Alexianer St Hedwig Hospital; INTRAS; Zorggroep Sint Maarten and others ([Parkinson](#), [Niedderer](#))
- Engaged research in arts and crafts: researchers work with underrepresented marginalised communities (immigrants, women, children, etc.) in countries worldwide (e.g. UK, Philippines, China) to help them find a voice or develop the skills and confidence to make a living ([Dixon](#), [Kettle](#), [Ravetz](#), [Welsh](#))
- Engaged research in Design and Architecture: researchers work with the public in Manchester to enable a shift in the power relationship to facilitate public involvement in planning and policy-making ([White](#), [Threlfall](#), [Hackney](#))
- Environmental engagement in fashion design and technology to reduce material waste and pollution, and combat climate change ([Tyler](#), [Sayem](#))
- Visual media literacy for combatting misinformation: Consultation with the Canadian, Colombian and UK governments ([Vis](#), [Faulkner](#))

- Policy and business innovation through design: Design Council; Crafts Council; Heritage Crafts Association; Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences ([Evans](#), [Na](#))
- Performance: Working with major Manchester theatres (such as the Royal Exchange and HOME) to develop future models of theatre-making and performer training ([Pinchbeck](#))

RELATIONSHIPS WITH RESEARCH USERS, BENEFICIARIES, AUDIENCES AND COMMUNITIES

Our research interacts with a wide range of user communities, and our networks provide a number of ways of developing relationships with key users, audiences and wider beneficiaries. Our practice-based researchers exhibit regularly ([Biswas](#), [Kettle](#), [Dixon](#), etc.), while other staff present their research through performance and engaged practice ([Brennan](#), [Pinchbeck](#), etc.). These publicly-facing activities enable our research to reach significant audiences and raise the profile of arts-based research at the University with non-academic audiences. Presentation of research through conferences, keynote addresses and workshops provides non-practice-based researchers with a range of fora to garner feedback on their research.

Some of our researchers engage with key stakeholders as experts who provide input into the research process itself. For example, [Evans](#) and [Na](#) conducted five regional workshop (Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow, London and Manchester) with over 100 participants, regarding the drivers and barriers to the strategic use of design as part of the research, which informed the development of the AHRC-funded Design Action Plan. This approach is typical in inquiry-led collaborative research projects conducted by staff.

Members actively participate in RAH! (Research in Arts and Humanities), an award-winning public engagement programme organised by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. RAH! is supported by £50k per year and a full-time Public Engagement Assistant. The RAH! programme directly supported impact activities, through bespoke public engagement, facilitation of evaluation, impact capture and the extension of our reach through extensive networks and social media presence. RAH! aims to bring people into the University who would not usually attend an academic event, so it offers so much more than public lectures: it consists of fashion shows; exhibitions fairs; film screenings; readings and even pub quizzes. Building relationships is at the heart of the RAH! programme, which encourages collaboration within the University across disciplines and also across region's community groups, sub-cultures and cultural venues.

To ensure that we are able to engage with communities and the public through our research, we pay close attention to engaging with a diverse set of hard-to-reach and marginalised communities while also providing the opportunity to engage with groups that are more likely to engage with arts-based research. We employ two main strategies: 1) engaging diverse groups in the community directly in our research, and 2) drawing in different audiences through high-profile, innovative public-facing research events. For example, [Kettle](#) employed innovative research approaches to engage with, and empower, displacement refugees through textiles, generating 678,783 visitors to date in her Thread Bearing Witness project.

During lockdown we have been able to provide wide access to our online events and have been mindful to make events available to those who were unable to attend via online repositories. For example, our Bunker Talks series, led by [Pinchbeck](#), has involved over 60 online research discussions with practitioners and researchers from the institution and beyond. We have also used the shift to online events to our advantage by extending the reach and scale of our events, as exemplified by the Provocations series led by [Lucas](#), which facilitate thematic debates on contemporary issues in architecture with innovative engagement between speakers and audiences.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Based on extensive collaborative networks and activities, the Centre has developed a range of thematically-led research strengths, including Art and design, health and social change; arts-based engaged research and policy to combat misinformation; and climate change; as well as for design-based innovation and business development. A number of Centre members are

concerned with societal and environmental welfare aiming to contribute to a more equitable, healthy and peaceful world. Highlights in this work include the following:

- **Art and design, health and social change:** Parkinson leads our Arts for Health initiative bringing together arts-based, and health and wellbeing research, since its establishment in the University the 1970s; through the MinD project Niedderer designs for people with dementia, mindful self-empowerment and social engagement; while White is co-researching with residents how age-friendly their neighbourhood is, and how to make it better via the Ambition for Aging project.
- **Engaged research for social welfare:** Kettle empowers marginalised groups, including immigrants through socially-engaged textiles research; a wide range of researchers (Dixon, Evans, Hackney, Kettle, Kelly, Mitchison, Welsh) engage craft communities internationally, including weavers, potters and artists, to support good work and social equity; while White and Threlfall work with the public in Manchester to enable a shift in the power relationship to facilitate public involvement in planning and policy-making.
- **Policy through applied creativity:** Vis is combatting the visual basis of misinformation via consultation with UK and Canadian policy makers; Evans is informing national design policy through the development of an action plan for the strategic use of design in the UK in collaboration with the Design Council; while Tyler is fostering environmental engagement through fashion design and technology to reduce material waste and pollution, and combat climate change.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE DISCIPLINE AND INDICATORS OF WIDER INFLUENCE

Researchers engage in activities that influence and shape the discipline locally, nationally and internationally, through ground-breaking research, but also by participation on grants committees and research councils; presenting and exhibiting, nationally and internationally; and, through significant service to academic boards and review panels, influencing policy development and membership of sector organisations, making substantial contributions to the vitality and sustainability of arts-based disciplines. Key activities include:

Awards and Prizes: Our research reputation has been recognized through a range of national and international awards and prizes. In this assessment period prizes members have won include: 2016 AHRC Research in Film Award, Utopia category, for *Wonderland* (Ravetz); 2018 National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement Images Contest Award for *Culture Change* (Tan); 2016 Winner of the International Leslie Scalapino Award for Innovative Women Performance Writers (McLeer); 2018 RIBA Ethel Day Award (Aston); 2020 Textile Society Critical Writing Award (Settington); 2014 Government Sponsored Heritage Heroes (Stone); 2017 Hungarian Landscape Architect of the Year (Csepely-Knorr); 2016 Nature Visual Science Award at Imagine Science film festival with *Loop* (Moore); 2019 Best British Film at the London International Animation festival with *Bloomers* (Moore); National Retrofit Prize from Architect's Journal (McCusker); and Best Producer at Underwire (BAFTA recognised film festival) (Dunn).

Residencies: During this assessment period, researchers have engaged in a number of residencies and visiting fellowships (23 in total), including at The University of Cologne (Pinchbeck); Sanskriti Foundation, New Delhi, India (Jurack); NTU Centre for Contemporary Arts, Singapore (Tan); 'Orheiul Vechi' International Painting Residency, Moldova (Copsey); Odessa International Art Residency, Ukraine (Copsey); Academic Lead British Council Creative Residency, Thailand (Welsh); Residency at Ontario College of Art and Design Toronto (Kelly); The Swedish Embroidery Forum, Sätergläntan College, Sweden (Kettle); Artist In Residence, Hanshan Art Museum, China (Kettle); Nakanojo Biennale Japan (Mitha); Designer in Residence at the Modernist Society (Hitchen); Artistic Residency with Theatre Group Studio 7, Schwerte, Germany (Campbell); The Tetley Leeds and Extreme View Artist in Residence - Art Gene (Adkins); University of New South Wales, 2017 (Parkinson); Visiting Professorships: Middle Tennessee State University (Fairclough); Bournemouth University (Evans), University of Wolverhampton (Vis).

Grant Reviewing: Nationally, at least seven members have been part of the AHRC peer review college (Evans, Niedderer, Ravetz, Blain, Turner, Hackney, Tan), with Evans serving as an

AHRC Strategic Reviewer (2017-2020). Hackney has been involved in a wide range of UKRI and AHRC calls as an invited peer reviewer. Grant reviewing, awards panels and mentoring activities include: NERC (Niedderer); selection panel Contemporary Applied Arts (Kettle); selection panel Radical Craft Pallant House Gallery and Craftspace (Kettle); Hothouse Mentor, Crafts Council (Kettle); Hand and Lock Prize Mentor (Kettle); Northern Artist Film Award and Judge for DBACE Award (Daniels); Wellcome Trust Arts Awards (Moore); Lush Film Fund (Dunn); British Council Film (Dunn); BFI (Dunn); Wellcome Trust Strategic Awards Committee (Parkinson); ESRC (Sengupta, Vis); EPSRC (Evans, Vis); and Innovate UK (Sengupta).

International Grant Reviewing: Staff have reviewed for EU Horizon 2020 (Evans, Niedderer); The Academy of Finland (Ravetz); Annual Artist in Residence at the Museum of Art and Design, New York (Biswas); The Global Board of Contemporary Art, Brussels (Bal); and Irish Research Council Laureate Awards (Drake).

Editorial Positions and Reviewing: Several staff are involved in academic journals as Editors, including as Founding Editors (e.g. Niedderer, *The Journal of Craft Research*). Other Editorships include: *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (Ormrod); *Journal of Design Research* (Evans); *Performance, Religion and Spirituality* (Edelman); *Animation Practice, Process & Production* (Moore); *Open Screens* (Suarez); *Journal of Dress Historians* (Wild); and *Journal of Fashion Marketing & Management* (Barnes). MSARC members are involved in over 30 journals as part of Editorial and Advisory Boards, and review 120 different academic journals across a wide range of disciplines, as well as for high-profile presses.

Examination of Doctorates: Centre members have examined over 100 doctorates in 70 institutions across six continents, including in the UK and Australia, Brazil, Italy, India, Portugal, Spain, South Africa and United States.

Keynotes and plenaries: Staff have given over 80 invited keynote and plenary addresses nationally and internationally.

Boards and Committees: Staff serve and have served on numerous national and international boards and committees, including the British Fashion Council (Jenkinson); The Textile Society (Slater); Chair of Manchester Jazz Festival (Fairclough); UK Adult ADHD Network (Tan); Textile Institute Council (Tyler); Elected Deputy Chair and representative for Europe on Executive Committee of International Foundation of Fashion Institutes (Barnes); Royal Musical Association (Blain); Manchester Crafts and Design Centre (Mitha); Craft Scotland (Mann); World Economic Forum, Global Agenda Council for Social Media (Vis); World Economic Forum, Global Futures Council on Information and Entertainment (Vis); Director Open Data Manchester (Vis)

Professional advice and Select Committees: MSARC researchers are regularly called on for their professional advice. Examples include: Government's parliamentary KE unit on disability (Tan); Ellen MacArthur Foundation (Tyler); GMCA Authority Textile Alliance Project (Barnes); House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee: Fixing Fashion: Clothing, Consumption (Hackney); All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health & Wellbeing Research Methodology Inquiry (Parkinson); Advisor to the Design Council (Evans); House of Lords Select Committee Political Polling and Digital Media (Vis).

In conclusion, the University has invested strategically and with great confidence in MSARC enabling it to deliver impactful research through applied creativity. We have developed a vibrant and sustainable research environment that in the assessment period has: 1) more than doubled membership to 133 staff (116.2FTE) from 64 staff (54.6FTE); 2) increased external research income by 800% to £5,529,825 compared to £694,792; 3) more than doubled the number of PhD conferments to 89 from 43; 4) more than trebled our professoriate to 17 from 5.5; and 5) secured £4,407,899 of off-book funding. These achievements characterise an increasingly dynamic, ambitious and inclusive research environment that fosters world-leading impactful research that makes a real difference to the academy, industry and society. Our commitment moving forward is to ensure we further embrace equality and diversity in all that we do.