

Institution: Brunel University London
Unit of Assessment: 22 – Anthropology and Development Studies
1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy

a. Overview:

As a currently nine-strong team of full-time academic staff, boosted by an increased flow of post-doctoral researchers and new PhD students, Brunel Anthropology's size, which enables staff to work closely together as a team, continues to be a virtue. Colleagues produce an exceptional corpus of international research spanning Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, and the Middle East. Since 2014 we have more than tripled our research income to well over £2M, have produced 17 books and edited volumes, and 74 articles and chapters. We have also disseminated our research via 78 seminars, keynotes and invited lectures in 14 countries across four continents. Ten students have successfully completed PhDs, and six externally funded post-doctoral fellows have further strengthened our research culture. University-backed investment to enhance impact, including the appointment of a Global Challenges Research Fellow, has sharpened the international effectiveness of our research and encouraged inter-disciplinary engagement. These headline statistics evidence the success of the strategy set out in our REF2014 submission. Our accomplishments were enabled, on the one hand, through focused work within existing research groupings: the anthropological study of global health; childhood, youth and education; histories and concepts of anthropological knowledge; and performance, politics, and violence. On the other, they were facilitated through the proactive embrace of new global challenges, demonstrated by work that engages with international environmental crises, human-animal relations, and contemporary imaginings of the future. The agility to respond to these new research agendas has been enabled by streamlining our activities into a single Social Anthropology research grouping.

b. Research and Impact Strategy:

Evidence of achievements: Our three-pronged research strategy for this period, set out in the REF2014, was:

- to develop our longstanding commitment to mainstream anthropological research, including new forms of anthropological writing;
- to encourage application of anthropological knowledge beyond anthropology and the academy; and
- to keep alive our vibrant research culture with a steady flow of doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows and active research associates.

Concrete evidence of achievement across these aims includes 11 single-authored monographs, more than one per full-time staff member, and six edited volumes or special journal issues with publishers including the university presses of Cambridge, Cornell, Stanford and Washington, as well as Berghahn, Bloomsbury, Palgrave Macmillan, Routledge, and Zed Press. We published articles in high-ranking journals including the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (JRAI)*, *Social Analysis*, *Social Anthropology*, *Ethnos* and *Medical Anthropology*, and in leading regional studies journals. Staples became co-editor of *Medical Anthropology*; Beatty and Froerer were

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associate editors on *Emotion Review* and *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, respectively; staff served on the editorial boards of a further seven journals (including *JRAI*, *Oceania*, *Journal of Legal Anthropology* and *Journal of Southern African Studies*); and Staples was Chair of the RAI's publications committee. Ten doctorates and one MPhil were awarded, with many recipients taking up prestigious positions or fellowships at Universities including Brunel, Exeter, Keele, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, SOAS and Oxford. Seven internationally-recruited post-doctoral fellows (funded by Leverhulme, ERC, ESRC/DfID, and by Brunel's investment in developing researchers to respond to global challenges) served to revitalise and sustain our research base. In addition to keynotes and conference presentations, staff organised a dozen conference panels (with strong representation at the annual ASA and AAA conferences), and over 10 independent conferences and workshops. The latter included Chua's Wenner Gren funded workshop on alterity and affinity in Anthropology, planned with the University of Cambridge, and Staples' University of Chicago-funded three-day conference on disability and human rights, in New Delhi.

Our strategy for maximising the public impact of our research includes utilising training from Brunel's Research Support and Development Office (RSDO) and the pragmatic impact tools it has developed. It also includes creating a research culture that a) encourages colleagues to build-in pathways to impact from the planning stages of research projects, and b) ensures that they are alive to the serendipitous impact potential of current projects. Froerer's ESRC/DfID-funded interdisciplinary project on aspiration—resulting in concrete changes to Chhattisgarh education policy—and Chua's team's ERC-funded work on orangutan conservation are exemplars of the first approach. Rollason's post-fieldwork engagement with a Rwandan tech start-up to improve the safety of motorcycle taxi drivers in Kigali is a fine example of the latter. This alertness to impact potential became especially evident during the Covid-19 pandemic: Chua, for example, drew on established research with indigenous communities in Sarawak, to assist the Malaysian Health Coalition with: 1) providing advice/input on social dimensions of the pandemic; 2) designing and customising Covid-19 related messages to the needs of rural communities in Malaysia; and 3) translating crisis communications (via websites and social media) into Bidayuh. The success of both approaches was enabled through Brunel's agility in responding to requests for knowledge exchange funding. This allowed, for instance, Froerer to make repeated visits to government offices in India at short notice, and for Rollason to return to Kigali to share and disseminate research findings as required. Similarly, Chua's POKOK project (anthropology-conservation collaboration on orangutan killing) was enabled through a combination of core funding from the Arcus Foundation and top-up funding from Brunel.

Strategic initiatives that supported all of the above included the following:

1) **Enabling new anthropological research and increasing post-doctoral numbers by substantially increasing research income.** Our tripling of research income over the audit period has been achieved through:

- a) College- and University-wide schemes to support writing funding proposals.
- b) Membership of new research institutes developed as part of the University's transformational change programme in 2014/15.
- c) The strategic use, at subject level, of Brunel's new sabbatical and study leave scheme to develop and/or complete research projects.
- d) Successful grant applications that increased post-doctoral researcher numbers.

2) **Forging links beyond anthropology and the academy.** These aims have been fostered through two distinctive initiatives:

a) **Strengthening engagement across disciplines and with external stakeholders.** This has been operationalised through our broad-based conception of anthropology and its relationship to related disciplines. Examples include: Staples' ongoing collaborations with Disability Studies' scholars in India and the US, plus being an active trustee of a leprosy-related charity; Froerer's co-hosting of a major international policy workshop at Brunel, drawing on the lessons of her ESRC-DfID funded research project, 'Education systems, aspiration and learning in remote rural settings'; the collaborations and exchanges with orangutan conservationists and natural scientists that Chua's ERC-funded research has enabled; Kastrinou's work on Druze statelessness in the Golan Heights, bringing together local activists, human rights lawyers and geographers; and the latter's advisory role in the University of Aegean's Observatory of the Refugee and Migration Crisis. This interdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder work has also been embedded through longer term projects, such as Beatty's collaborations with philosophers, cognitive scientists, and psychologists (social, cross-cultural, and cognitive) in the field of Emotion research, and Niehaus's engagement with historians through his work on biography and life history. Hirsch also engages with community groups from Papua New Guinea in the UK and is a trustee of Wantok Support charity.

b) **Exploring alternative forms of communicating scholarly research.** Beatty has led the way in developing our longstanding commitment to present anthropological ideas to broader, non-specialist audiences. In addition to the narrative approach he developed in his last two monographs, books by Argenti, Niehaus and Staples (all included in our submission) draw on these approaches to deploy life history accounts and/or innovative forms of ethnographic representation. Kastrinou's recent project extends this to documentary film making, while findings from Chua's Arcus-funded project on mitigating orangutan killing in Borneo were communicated via a Dutch documentary on orangutans, and through regularly updated blogs. Chua's project also entailed working with conservationists to improve their social research and strategies; through, for example, providing recommendations, writing case studies, running ethnographic methods workshops, and helping to design and analyse social surveys in orangutan areas.

Achievements made through these initiatives resulted from a strategic decision to streamline our efforts into a single **Social Anthropology** research group over the current period. Within this, vital work in **environmental anthropology**—especially pertinent in the 'age of the Anthropocene'—is a key focus that has grown out of Chua's longstanding work on human-environment relations in Borneo and Hirsch's seminal work on the anthropology of landscape. As a politically charged issue this work speaks directly to our previous **performance, politics, and violence** theme but also expands beyond it. Chua's developing interests in the global nexus of orangutan conservation culminated in two major projects—one funded by the ERC (2018-23) and the other by the Arcus Foundation (2017-22), bringing in two post-doctoral researchers and two PhD students. Institutional support, including mock interview panels and administrative back-up, was key to her success. Chua's projects have led to a major interdisciplinary workshop on orangutan conservation in Cambridge, two international keynote lectures (Malaysia and Germany), six publications and ten seminar or conference presentations. Schubert's Leverhulme-funded post-doctoral research also taps into this emergent strand in environmental anthropology through his focus on extractive industries in post-conflict Angola—demonstrated in his co-edited collection, *Extractive Industries*

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and *Changing State Dynamics in Africa Beyond the Resource Curse* (2018)—as well as reflecting the group's interest in the politics of everyday life.

A further, overlapping dimension to this research trajectory is a focus on **more-than-human landscapes**. In addition to a specific focus on human-orangutan relations—a corollary of Chua's work on human-environment relations—this strand also connects with and inspired Staples' ongoing research on animal-human relationships and bovine politics in South Asia. His monograph, *Sacred Cows and Chicken Manchurian* (2020), was completed during a University awarded research sabbatical. These projects extend anthropological knowledge beyond the academy and engage with pressing contemporary concerns. In that they also relate to **anthropologies of the future**—they are about projections of what might be as well as about what is—they also resonate with Froerer's ESRC/DfID-funded work (2016-18) on aspiration, which is central to our childhood, youth and education theme. This collaborative, multi-regional project, which incorporated two post-docs and a PhD student, examined education systems, aspiration and learning outcomes in remote rural areas in central India, Lesotho, and Laos. The project led to Froerer's forthcoming book, *Education, Aspiration and Social Mobility in Rural India*, as well as significant changes to the primary school curriculum and teacher training in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh. These impacts, embedded in an MoU between Brunel and the Chhattisgarh government, have major implications for children's futures and for the region's long-term socio-economic development. Argenti's work on memory and trauma, particularly in *Remembering Absence* (2019), which draws on ESRC mid-career fellowship funded Aegean research, likewise engages with the shared project of problematising temporalities, and how different representations of the past might shape the present and the future. In his case, it does so as an innovative challenge to assumptions that have dominated trauma discourse.

In common with Froerer, a major strand of Rollason's research grew out of our **childhood, youth and education** theme; specifically, using knowledge exchange funding from Brunel he worked with young male motorcycle taxi drivers in Kigali, Rwanda, to explore state power. As well as considering how people's everyday relations to power constitute them as certain kinds of persons, his work illuminated debates about agency, resistance, and obedience, culminating in *Motorbike People: Power and Politics on Rwandan Streets* (2020). His enquiry into the nature of state power in sub-Saharan Africa, an interest shared with his mentee Schubert (*Working the System: A Political Ethnography of the New Angola* [2017]), makes manifest the links between our research strands on youth and on **performance, politics, and violence**. State power, and the pressing need to understand the emerging forms of nationalism that were flagged up in earlier work by Froerer and by Argenti, has been taken up in different ways by Staples, Kastrinou, and Tuckett (who brought a new focus to the group on African migration to Europe). Staples' research with sellers and consumers of beef in India demonstrates how a Hindu nationalist state deploys rhetoric about culinary choices to exclude and persecute non-Hindu Indians. Kastrinou's *Power, Sect and State in Syria* (2016) sheds light on everyday politics, violence and performance by tracing the intimate contours of embodied marriage performances. As the war in Syria unfolded, Kastrinou expanded her remit to respond to new emergent realities of Syrian refugees in Greece, and stateless Syrians in the Golan Heights. Tuckett, whose fieldwork with migrants in Italy is also concerned with how people experience and manage the state in their everyday lives, explores the role played by bureaucracy and the law. Her monograph, *Rules, Paper, Status: Migrants and Precarious Bureaucracy in Contemporary Italy* (2018)—winner of the prestigious William A. Douglass Prize in Europeanist Anthropology in 2019—offers new insights into established anthropological debates concerning the state, brokerage, subjectivity, and ethics through the lens

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of a high-profile contemporary social issue, while providing unique perspectives on debates around legality, illegality, and integration. Collectively, in its attention to fine-grained ethnographic detail in locations across the globe, this work addresses vital questions about how state power works and how it is simultaneously complied with, resisted, and experienced on the ground.

An active exploration of new forms of anthropological writing that extend our reach beyond the Academy also intersects with all of our research. Monographs by Niehaus (*AIDS in the Shadow of Biomedicine: Inside South Africa's Epidemic*, 2018) and Staples (*Leprosy and a Life in South India: Journeys with a Tamil Brahmin*, 2014) constitute major contributions to the anthropological study of global health, but also draw extensively on life history and biography. They do so both to fulfil our strategy of making our work more widely accessible, and to offer unique perspectives on global health problems: biographical accounts place the wider lives and times of those who are affected by diseases at the centre of their analysis, rather than, as is more common in global health research, on the diseases themselves. Beatty, whose innovative monograph, *A Shadow Falls: in the Heart of Java* (2009) was followed-up with *After the Ancestors: An Anthropologist's Story* (2015), written in ethnographic narrative form, has increasingly used narrative to convey complex anthropological ideas in ways that go beyond conventional academic formats. Argenti's *Remembering Absence* (2019), which draws on literary as well as anthropological sources, achieves similar aims. In common with Beatty's latest monograph (*Emotional Worlds*, 2019), these books are also representative of the productive debate within the unit, including Chua's concerns with the affective dimensions of orangutan conservation, on the significance of emotion to our understanding of the human condition. Despite being a preoccupation of our age, emotion has otherwise been under-explored in contemporary anthropology.

Our focus on *how* as well as on *what* research our unit presents also engages with of-the-moment debates about the decolonialisation of the discipline, slotting neatly into our **histories and concepts of anthropological knowledge** theme but, again, going beyond it. Such debates are addressed explicitly in Chua's work, about who precisely the anthropological "we" is. Published as *Who are "We"? Reimagining Alterity and Affinity in Anthropology* (2018), this co-edited volume—with a contribution from Niehaus on his archival work on Radcliffe-Brown's intellectual biography—considers the creation of disciplinary identities, and how they shape the way we think, write, and do anthropology. These broad-based and important questions are also central to how Hirsch and Rollason's 600-page edited volume *The Melanesian World* (2019) is framed. Their introduction to the book interrogates the implications of imagining Melanesia in terms of the apparent radical cultural difference to the West that has made Melanesian ethnography a fertile source of anthropological theory, or, conversely, in terms of inequality, as a region comparable to those of the global south more generally and subject to the same world-wide trends. The work also contributes to our wider thinking about how ethnographic regions come to be identified as such, and the politics underpinning those distinctions. Hirsch's monograph, *Ancestral Presence: Cosmology And Historical Experience In The Papuan Highlands*, develops these ideas, highlighting the limits of Western ways of understanding history by foregrounding alternative formulations, rooted in the logics of Papuan cosmologies.

While much of the unit's work reflects upon everyday ethical concerns, it also takes place within a culture of research integrity, practically structured through Brunel's research integrity training, engagement with the ASA's ethical guidelines, and ethics committee approval via the Brunel Research Ethics Online (BREO) system for all research projects.

c. Strategy for the coming period:

Our core strategy is rooted in the three-pronged approach described in section 1b, with the aim of accelerating both our intellectual contribution to the discipline and the wider impact of our research. Both demand that we extend our notable successes in grant capture, aided by the strengthened institutional support we have outlined, and by the new collaborations this has enabled. They also demand proactive responses to emergent global challenges, such as climate change, and the capacity to stimulate ongoing theoretical innovation of the kind demonstrated over the current period: both challenges that our size gives us the proven agility to achieve.

Staples, e.g., is being supported to develop a major project with senior medical anthropologists in the US that will entail a uniquely multi-scalar, ethnographic enquiry into leprosy policy on a global scale: one that will both enhance our understanding of the current situation, consider what might be done to address it and, crucially, develop an effective research model for the holistic study of other, currently less well understood global health concerns, including Covid-19. It will also contribute to the flow of new post-doctoral researchers bringing fresh ideas to the group.

Tuckett (mentored by Staples, with inter-disciplinary support from Sociology colleagues) will also strengthen our commitment to medical anthropology by seeking funding to explore attitudes towards vaccinations in Europe through new fieldwork in Italy. Tuckett's focus on vaccination bureaucracy and what it can reveal about state-citizen relationships will directly engage with issues raised by the Covid-19 crisis. Tuckett's collaboration with Professor Heidi Larson from the Vaccine Confidence Project at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in developing this project will maximise policy impact.

Through her new project 'Resistance work: the Syrian Druze in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights', Kastrinou is building a collaborative interdisciplinary network, with geographers and human rights activists, to produce an historical ethnography. Supported by a Brunel Athena SWAN research award, she is writing a substantial grant application to explore and critique theories of freedom vis-a-vis statelessness.

We are also making full use of Chanchani's expertise, and her position as an interdisciplinary Global Challenges Research Fellow (GCRF), to develop projects that crosscut the group's interests. For example, her recently submitted proposal to the Global Challenges Research Fund, with Staples as co-investigator, will, if successful, kickstart a project on food security in India that builds new networks with research institutes and researchers, while creating a springboard for subsequent research proposals. Chanchani is also developing a project with Froerer to consider the impact of Covid-19 on early childhood education in rural Chhattisgarh.

Unlocking the full impact of our research also relies on accelerating our shift towards Open Science. This means, in addition to ensuring all published outputs are open access, either via BURA, Brunel's research repository, or by utilising University funds to buy Gold access, we will also ensure that as much of our research data (including transcripts of interviews or redacted fieldnotes) as is ethically possible is digitized and shared via FigShare and online platforms including Researchgate.net and Academia.edu. In tandem with working closely with Brunel's press, marketing and social media teams, this strategy will enable us to guarantee the long-term impact of, for example, Chua's team's current project on orangutan conservation. Their recommendations,

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workshops, partnerships and engagement with conservationists, particularly in relation to mitigating orangutan killing, will achieve maximum coverage, thereby shifting public perceptions and understandings of the threats to orangutans and ways to save them. Froerer's ongoing work on aspiration, for which she is seeking further ESRC funding, will likewise benefit from this comprehensive strategy for maximising impact.

At the same time, taking seriously our broad commitment to equal opportunities, we are also strategically well-positioned to contribute to the de-colonisation of our discipline. This will be achieved in part through process (ensuring equal opportunities for applicants from the Global South for post-doc positions, for example), and in part through continuing our tradition of excellent research into our discipline's history. Niehaus's ongoing work on an intellectual biography of Alfred Radcliffe-Brown engages with these debates by exploring how Radcliffe-Brown worked with different colonial contexts marked by racism, political repression and the extermination of indigenous people. We are also committed to collaborations with partners in the Global South, through exchanges (e.g. through Chua's Newton Mobility grant), co-authored publications, and on-the-ground collaborations (e.g. Rollason's work with a tech start-up in Rwanda).

2. People

Staffing strategy and development

Our policy in relation to staff, fully aligned with our overall research strategy, has been to retain and extend our regionally diverse scope, whilst remaining at the cutting edge of mainstream anthropological thinking. The strategic recruitment of Kastrinou expanded our expertise into Syria and the Middle East, and strengthened our contributions to political anthropology. The appointment of Tuckett, who conducts fieldwork in Italy and in London, consolidated our coverage of Europe, already expanded by Argenti's shift in ethnographic focus from West Africa to the Aegean. Tuckett's thematic focus on bureaucracy, the law and the state in everyday life also took our work on power and performance into exciting new territory. Rollason's planned move from Papua New Guinea (PNG) to Rwanda ensured that, with Niehaus's ongoing work in South Africa and our Leverhulme research fellow Schubert's work in Angola and Mozambique (which complements Tuckett's interest in infrastructure and bureaucracies), we made a continuing and strong contribution to African anthropology. Other colleagues lead the field in South Asia (Froerer, Staples, and Chanchani), South East Asia (Beatty and Chua) and Melanesia (Hirsch and Rollason).

Recognising the need for continual revitalization of this broad ethnographic base has driven our strategy of recruiting post-doctoral researchers: since 2014 we have welcomed seven new post-docs, demonstrating our commitment to the development of new researchers as well as bringing new ideas into the unit. Groke joined us as our third Leach-RAI fellow in 2014, completing a monograph on her Bolivian fieldwork and jumpstarting an emerging interest in the role of non-human agents in social life. Schreer (who works on conservation and human-environment relations in Borneo), and Fair (who works on climate justice in the Pacific, especially Vanuatu) are both contributors to Chua's £1.2M ERC project on orangutan conservation. Schubert, a political and economic anthropologist working on state institutions, infrastructures, and transnational trade in Angola and Mozambique, joined as a Leverhulme research fellow. Dungey and Dost were researchers on Froerer's ESRC/DfID project on aspiration, conducting comparative fieldwork in Lesotho and India respectively. Chanchani, a Brunel-funded GCRF, works in India on pressing

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development issues, including economic security and health. It is a mark of our esteem within the institution that one of only four GCRFs across Brunel was appointed within Anthropology.

Brunel has invested significantly in improving support for academic researchers at all career stages, in line with its commitments to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, and to promoting the well-being of all staff. RSDO advises on costing grants and submitting applications, and the Graduate School has developed several innovative training initiatives, including the Researcher Development Programme, open to all research-active staff. One-to-one coaching is available.

The University also replaced its previous competitive research leave scheme with a more flexible and research-friendly sabbatical programme, enabling time out from teaching and administrative responsibilities for periods of between a few weeks to a full academic year, in which to undertake new research, develop funding proposals and write-up completed research. Hirsch was awarded a full-year of research leave after service as head of department, during which he completed a manuscript of his PNG monograph. Beatty, Staples, Froerer and Rollason were all given sabbaticals of two terms to complete major writing projects. Chua was relieved of teaching responsibilities for three-years to enable her to work full time on her ERC/Arcus project, and both Rollason and Kastrinou benefitted from University awards offered to early career researchers. The latter was also given additional time out following her first period of maternity leave to complete her AHRC project. Knowledge exchange funding and Research Impact Awards have supported impact-focused leave, successfully utilised for example by Froerer and Rollason in preparing their impact case studies.

A key contributor to our increased success in capturing grants over the REF period has been a systematic improvement at College level in the support mechanisms made available to colleagues applying for funding. For example, we now benefit from a College peer review process for all applications, which involves one reviewer internal to the Department, and an external reviewer. A Research mentoring scheme is also in place. For some funding schemes the College now offers pitch-to-peers events, which are followed by internal reviews. The departmental research funding allowance, available to all research active staff, can be utilised to develop work towards grant applications. At University level, the RSDO has been exceptionally proactive in encouraging and supporting postdoctoral fellowship applications. Leverhulme and UKRI applicants, for example, are given mentors from the beginning of the application process and receive substantive feedback (including peer reviews) up to the point of submission. It has also developed a dedicated post-award division in response to internal feedback from grant-holders.

All researchers reflect on the ethical implications of their research, formally through research integrity training and the requirement that all projects are approved by the University's ethics committee. Applications through BREO help to ensure that our research is not only ethically robust, but that risk assessments have been conducted to protect both researchers and those they work with, and to ensure we work within the legal frameworks of the UK and the nations in which we undertake fieldwork.

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Support for early career researchers

Schubert's permanent post at University of Konstanz (April 2021) and Fair's three-year lectureship at Oxford evidence the success of our support to post-doctoral researchers, who benefit from the same support structures as all staff. They attend our weekly staff lunch and research seminars (contributing at least one paper during their tenures); monthly informal staff writing workshops; and have full access to research training opportunities, through the RSDO and the department's existing structures, with additional support in writing and submitting funding bids. All early career researchers are assigned mentors with comparable research interests, ensuring that non-permanent colleagues fully develop their research capacities to enhance their own careers whilst making globally significant contributions to anthropological research. Fixed-term contract staff benefit from the same resources as permanent staff, and, after three years' service, are offered permanent contracts if they meet expected standards. Tuckett, for example, joined our team on a fixed-term contract to replace Chua during externally-funded research leave, and, based on her contribution to our research environment as well as to teaching, has been made permanent.

Support for PGR Students

Despite the highly competitive funding environment for doctoral researchers, Brunel Anthropology has sustained a steady flow of research students over the period, most coming specifically for our expertise in education and schooling, in medical anthropology (especially the anthropology of disability) and in psychiatric anthropology. We have had 19 research students over the current REF period, 10 of whom had successfully completed their PhDs by 2020. Three of the current cohort were funded by staff grants; others benefitted from Commonwealth scholarships, employer sponsorships and Brunel studentships. Several were self-funded, completing their PhDs whilst working part-time. Eight of the 19 were former Master's or undergraduate students.

Brunel's recognition as a Doctoral Training Centre (jointly with the University of Oxford) has enabled the University to benefit from quotas of RCUK-funded students, including inter-disciplinary students co-supervised by anthropology staff who are recruited through our research institutes. Restructuring at University level has already significantly enhanced administrative support for students and supervisors, with Post-Graduate Research offices established for each College. PhD programmes have also become more rigorously structured to ensure that we consistently offer the best training, student support and monitoring of progress possible. Whereas students previously had a principal and second supervisor, each student now also has a Research Development Advisor (to help them think strategically about their career development as a researcher) and there are additional touchpoints at which students' progress is reviewed at formal meetings convened by the department's Director of Post-graduate Research and an independent research-active staff member. At each stage students present work to demonstrate that they are on track, with additional training and support offered if needed. Students also meet formally with supervisors at least once every six weeks (in practice, more frequently) and the outcomes of these meetings are officially recorded. Stringent application of these procedures has contributed to a positive upturn in our completion rates, and no student attrition during the audit period.

All research students attend a weekly Anthropology writing seminar, convened by a senior staff member. Students in the early stages of their doctoral careers present pre-circulated research proposals and expositions on the development of research questions; more advanced students present draft thesis chapters. Students are encouraged to engage critically with their peers' work, equipping them with vital skills for post-doctoral careers. We also run an inter-disciplinary conference for PhD students within the wider department, at which students present their work in

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panels and receive feedback from peers and academic staff. Students additionally attend our weekly term-time research seminar and, towards the end of their writing-up phase, are invited to present their own material. The Graduate School offers a programme of well over 100 master classes and seminars from which students, in conjunction with their supervisory teams, select those most appropriate for their own research trajectory. In addition to specific courses on research methods, ethics and research integrity, and on writing-skills, students (in common with staff) are also offered workshops on leadership, on post-doctoral careers and on managing stress and well-being. All PhD projects must comply with the same ethical standards as those of staff, as outlined above.

All research students have access to College funds for conference attendance and access to Brunel's excellent library facilities and those of other universities across London. Ample PGR workspaces close to staff offices are provided, equipped with desktop PCs. These have standardised hardware in line with the rest of the College. Printing facilities are provided for all PGR students. All workspaces have access to nearby kitchens.

Brunel anthropology also co-organises the annual Anthropology in London Day which showcases the research of mostly London-based PhD students and staff. Relative to the size of our PhD community Brunel has consistently been well-represented at this event, with students encouraged by the multiple opportunities to present their work that are inbuilt into our programme.

Any students whose research has been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic have been supported by extending deadlines for completion of their research if required, by increasing supervisory contact and moving it seamlessly online, and by offering resources and training in alternative forms of ethnographic research appropriate to the situation.

Supporting equal opportunity and diversity

Recognising that world class research requires the talents of *all*, regardless of gender, ethnicity or disability, Brunel has developed robust procedural frameworks to ensure equal opportunities in all academic staff recruitment and promotion. 72% of our PhD cohort are women (compared to 40% nationally for anthropology), and, perfectly reflecting their make-up of the general population, 14% are from BAME backgrounds (compared to 9.5% across the sector). A quarter of our PhD intake over the past two years have identified as disabled (compared to 11% nationally). Including post-doctoral researchers, 70% of colleagues employed over the REF period originate from outside the UK, 20% are from BAME backgrounds, and over 60% are women.

All staff, including new recruits who pass probation, have an annual opportunity to apply for promotion, and are supported in preparing for this through annual Personal Development Reviews with senior staff, and a rigorous mentoring system. In the current period three staff (Staples, Froerer and Chua) were promoted to Reader, and Rollason and Niehaus were promoted to Senior Lecturer, in recognition of their contributions to research and impact. All staff take relevant training through Staff Development courses, and are encouraged to engage with wider training opportunities. The Graduate School, for example, provides a Research Development Training Programme integrated with the national Researcher Development Framework.

Staff returning from maternity leave are actively encouraged to apply for Athena SWAN research leave to ensure they are not disadvantaged in relation to their peers; both Chua and Kastrinou have benefitted from this. Staff returning from periods of ill health or other non-research related

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leave are also supported back into the research environment, often via initial reduced administrative and teaching loads and, as appropriate, flexible working arrangements. All staff benefit from provisions supporting flexible and remote working, with colleagues permitted to work off campus—in research libraries, field locations or at home—when other obligations do not demand their presence on campus. Staff are allocated funds to attend conferences, to support fieldwork and to work-up grant applications. A new dedicated research office at College level administers all grants and offers administrative support throughout the life of an award. Evidence of the success of these policies is that all staff—even recent recruits and those who have had periods of absence during the REF period—have been able to contribute to this REF submission, through research outputs and, in some cases, contributions to impact. This approach to remote working has come into its own since the first Covid-19 related lockdown, with excellent online library access, laptop facilities, peer-mentoring and online training enabling analysis and write-up of research, and research proposals, to continue seamlessly.

The University's implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers ensures the early integration of research students into the departmental research culture.

The University renewed its commitment to Equality and Diversity in 2020 by creating the new post of Director of Equality and Diversity for our department. The director attends all recruitment, probation, sabbatical and promotion panels, and works to ensure implementation and monitoring of equality and diversity obligations, including the provision of specialist equipment if required by staff with protected characteristics. Brunel successfully renewed its Athena SWAN Bronze award, expanded in 2017 to recognise work undertaken in the social sciences, and for trans staff and students. The University also has a robust four-year plan in place for sustaining and improving equality and diversity to which Anthropology is fully committed.

The REF2021 Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the outputs submitted are a well-balanced representation of the protected characteristics and contractual positions of staff, with the exception that 27% of staff on fixed-term contracts only contributed 20% of the outputs and 36% of staff aged 30-39 only contributed 27% of the outputs.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research Income: Since 2014 our strategies for increasing research income, which included streamlining our research themes into a single Social Anthropology group, have paid off handsomely. We have achieved a three-fold increase in staff research and post-doctoral training from £600K to around £2M. A major chunk of this came via Chua's £1.2M ERC grant to study the global nexus of orangutan conservation, which included provision for fully-funded post-doctoral and PhD researchers. These funds were won with institutional support. An additional Arcus grant added £54K to the project. Chua also obtained Wenner-Gren funds of \$20K (£16K) (plus £300 from the RAI's Esparanza Fund) for a well-received workshop on alterity and affinity in Anthropology (out of which came a prestigious edited volume) that she organised in conjunction with the University of Cambridge. Froerer's joint ESRC application with human geographer Nicola Ansell for £700K funded two post-doctoral researchers and a PhD student and enabled ground-breaking cross-cultural research in education and aspiration. University support in pre-screening applications and rigorous internal peer-review enabled Argenti to secure a Leverhulme grant to support Schubert's fellowship on 'The Afterlives of Oil-Backed Infrastructures in the Port of Lobito,

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Angola', a project that, since Argenti's departure, is overseen by Rollason. Including the University's contribution the grant is worth a total of £352K to the department. Kastrinou's collaborative project on electricity supply in post-conflict Greater Beirut raised £97K from an AHRC/ESRC conflict call. She was also awarded \$2K (£1.6K) as PI from the Transnational Institute's Emancipatory Rural Politics Initiative for a collaborative project on resistance, land and landscape in the Golan Heights. This led to a further £23K from the Druze Heritage Foundation for a new major project: 'Resistance work: the Syrian Druze in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights'. Staples' fieldwork on everyday beef-consumption and attitudes towards cattle slaughter was achieved with a British Academy Small Grant of £6K. Staples' joint application with a colleague in Chicago (Michele Friedner) to fund a conference on disability and human rights, held in New Delhi, was also successful in achieving an award of \$19K (£15K), administered by Chicago. This covered the travel and accommodation costs of scholars attending the conference from the Global South as well as a day of roundtables open to the public attracting 150 registrations.

A strong strategy for increasing research income both at subject level, with colleagues willingly giving constructive feedback on each other's funding applications, as well as at University level, has been vital in enabling our unit's ground-breaking research. The upturn in our income also reflects the fact that our projects address extremely timely and topical projects of wide contemporary concern. Brunel has a robust system for peer-reviewing all grant applications; runs support workshops at which potential applicants pitch their ideas; and the RSDO offers specialist support with costing and helps colleagues to grow their research income by providing directed support for strategic research stimulation activities. Chua, for example, was awarded Brunel funding for a PhD studentship that strengthened her successful ERC application. Restructuring the University into three Colleges has also made for a clearer, more effective infrastructure to support grant applications. Information on calls for grants, as well as support throughout the grant-writing process are cascaded seamlessly to the departmental research director. In tandem with this, several Anthropology colleagues have joined the Institute of Environment, Health and Societies (Beatty, Froerer and Staples), one of four University-wide research institutes, which combines social, health and environmental sciences with engineering and design to enable exciting and innovative cross-disciplinary approaches. Froerer and Ansell's successful grant application, for example, was facilitated through the Institute.

Space and facilities: All academic staff, post-doctoral researchers and PGR students are provided with dedicated office space and IT facilities that have been upgraded in 2019. All permanent staff members have their own offices, situated off a single corridor alongside shared office spaces for our other researchers. This proximity allows for daily informal collaborations, while a larger meeting room offers space for more formalised gatherings, such as monthly writing workshops.

We are also aided by a subject-level librarian in the University's central library in accessing materials relevant to individual research projects. In addition to our own outstanding online resources and collections of books, staff also have access to other University of London libraries, many of which they use regularly. Other major research libraries are also within easy reach of Brunel, and our participation (and sponsorship of) the annual Anthropology in London conference, ensures our continued close collaboration with other anthropologists based at key institutions in the capital.

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

Our strategic shift away from multiple research clusters to a single **Social Anthropology** research grouping has, as intended, broken down barriers to scholarly collaborations, both within Brunel and beyond, facilitating high-impact research that is effectively disseminated. Within the University, the move from eight Schools and multiple research centres to three Colleges, four cross-cutting research institutes and larger, inter-disciplinary departments, placing Anthropology with Politics, History, Sociology, Communications, and Media, has likewise created opportunities for staff to work together on shared interests. For example, through Kastrinou's collaboration with Rugo (Film and TV) and Ghanem (STS, Manchester University) she contributed anthropological knowledge to a documentary film and blogs, as well as to conversations with architects, urban planners and energy sector stakeholders. Kastrinou also co-published with Neocleous (Politics) on Syrian refugees and police power; and collaborated with Birringer (Theatre) in co-organising an internally funded research cluster ('Transcultures-Survival [Hosts and Guests]'), which resulted in an interdisciplinary symposium of academics and artists. Similarly, Froerer's work on development, education, childhood and youth led to her joining forces with human geographer Nicola Ansell (Sociology, Brunel), whose research on the same topic informed their joint ESRC/DfID 'Raising Learning Outcomes in Education Systems' project.

International collaborations with institutions *beyond* Brunel have also been central to ensuring the wide-reach of our research, to maximising impact, and to creating and strengthening networks for future high-impact research. Froerer's inter-disciplinary project, referenced above, also brought together co-investigators from the Erasmus University in Rotterdam and the University of Strathclyde, while Staples' co-organised conference in the University of Chicago's Center in New Delhi strengthened existing bonds with scholars and institutions from across the sub-continent. Outcomes of these strategic collaborations include joint publications (e.g. Staples with Nilika Mehrotra, at JNU, Delhi), and the hosting of the South Asia Anthropologists Group annual conference at Brunel in 2014 on 'South Asian Utopias' (Froerer and Staples).

Froerer co-convened two further inter-disciplinary conferences, both drawing on her aspiration-related project with Ansell. The first, 'Theorising young people's aspirations in global context: an interdisciplinary conference', resulted in three forthcoming edited journal volumes; the second, 'Education systems, aspiration and learning in remote rural settings', was an international policy workshop co-organised with the Royal Geographical Society.

Chua's collaborations also led to important conferences and workshops. The first, co-organised with Nayanika Mathur (Cambridge), was 'Who are "we"? Reimagining alterity and affinity in anthropology' (2014), which led to a co-edited book that consolidated research on contemporary anthropological practice and has been influential in shaping current disciplinary debates. As part of her 'Refiguring conservation in/for "the Anthropocene": the global lives of the orangutan' ERC Starting Grant project Chua organised a multidisciplinary, cross-sector workshop entitled 'Conservation and the social sciences: beyond critique and co-optation' at Kings College, Cambridge (2018). This put conservation scientists and practitioners in dialogue with anthropologists and other social scientists, resulting in a groundbreaking cross-disciplinary article on the conservation/social science relationship in the new *People and Nature* journal (2020). She also convened a workshop with Southeast Asian anthropologists, 'Unpacking indigeneity in Southeast Asia', as part of 'Beyond resistance and acquiescence: indigenous rights and citizenship in Malaysia' (funded by a Newton Mobility Grant, British Academy). This took place at the

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University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, co-organised with Rusalina Idrus. Cumulatively this work has led to several long-term collaborations with groups including the Arcus Foundation Great Apes Program; Borneo Futures; Borneo Nature Foundation; Orangutan Foundation UK; International Animal Rescue; Orangutan Information Centre, Sumatra, Indonesia; and the Section on Human-Primate Interactions, IUCN Primate Specialist Group, of which Chua is a founding member.

We have also built an extensive network of relationships with state and local government organisations, and with NGOs, in order to maximise policy impact. Both Rollason and Tuckett are currently engaging with the Cabinet Office's Open Innovation Team, scoping the possibility for research projects with civil servants; Froerer has shared her findings with the Chhattisgarh state government, the Indian Ministry of Education, and Oxfam India—and in doing so has changed government policy; and Staples continues to work with a number of Indian-based NGOs in the disability field to improve the efficacy of those NGOs ongoing projects. Staff also communicate research findings through media interviews (e.g., Niehaus's interview on *Radio Sonder Grense* [Radio without Boundaries], in South Africa, on 'Masculinity and Myth' and 'The Marikana Killings,' and Staples' podcast interview with New Books Network on food politics in India).

Such collaborations are indicative of ongoing and extended networking with Universities and other institutions globally, including a long-established staff exchange programme with Anthropology at the University of Vienna. Hirsch visited in 2018, and will return post Covid-19 to discuss his work on alterity in Melanesia. In addition, Beatty works with the International Society of Research on Emotion (and was part of the organising committee for their recent international conference); and Froerer held a visiting fellowship at the Danish Pedagogical Institute at Aarhus, Denmark.

Publications arising out of all the above activity are made publicly accessible through BURA, and staff can also apply for funds (on which no limit has been set) to ensure that material requiring urgent publication is given Gold access status.

Contributions to the discipline

Disciplinary collaboration is essential to high quality, high impact research which brings public benefit: consequently, we take very seriously our responsibility to reproduce and advance anthropology through service at various scales. In addition to regular peer review of articles that all staff are engaged in—collectively, for more than 25 different journals since 2014—colleagues also contribute more specifically as editors (Staples was recently appointed co-editor of the leading journal *Medical Anthropology*, and Hirsch is an editor for the new Berghahn book series, *Lifeworlds*) and on the editorial boards of key journals. Collectively, we have reviewed multiple monograph manuscripts for major presses, including Lexington Books, Manchester University Press, University of Hawaii Press, Indiana University Press, Oxford University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, Pluto Press, Routledge, and Sage.

Staples has facilitated publication and distribution of state-of-the-art anthropological knowledge through his seven years' service as chair of the Royal Anthropological Institute's (RAI's) publications committee; a key committee which serves as the *de facto* editorial board not only for the JRAI's special issues but for the RAI's various book series and occasional publications. The role includes chairing the search committee for new editors of the *JRAI*, Britain's flagship anthropology journal. Staff have also been well-represented on the RAI's other committees and on its organising body, in doing so helping to shape the discipline's development. Staples was vice-president for three years, serving on the subcommittee which redrafted the institute's constitution

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and successfully applied for its Royal Charter, a move that will heighten anthropology's national profile and status. Hirsch served as long-standing RAI Secretary and a member of the RAI's steering group; Froerer remains an active member of the institute's education committee, ensuring anthropology is publicised in schools; and Argenti, Niehaus and Chua were all elected to the RAI's Council of Trustees for three-year terms. Staff have also served on the Honours and Awards committees and on committees for several of the institute's prizes. This collective activity has made a major contribution to the RAI's mission to sustain the discipline and ensure its national and global influence and effectiveness.

Most staff are fellows of the Association of Social Anthropologists (ASA), with Staples one of the former committee members responsible for drafting the ASA Ethical Guidelines. Staff are also active in other bodies pertinent to their research interests: Argenti is a member of the Anglo-Hellenic League and of the ESRC peer review college; Froerer is a Council member of the British Association of South Asian Studies; Chua is a member of the IUCN Primate Specialist Group; and Kastrinou is an affiliated scholar at the Centre for Syrian Studies at the University of St Andrews and a GCRF peer review group member.

Given its size, Brunel anthropology has made an especially strong contribution to the long-term viability of the discipline through colleagues' work in the scrutiny of research and scholarship at multiple levels. Staff examined 31 Anthropology PhDs in eight Universities across the UK (Bristol, Brunel, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Kent, Oxford, SOAS and UCL) and five internationally (Aarhus [Denmark]; Australian National University; Free State [South Africa], Radboud [Netherlands], and Stellenbosch [South Africa]). They also served as external examiners on degree programmes at eight of the UK Universities offering Anthropology degrees: Birmingham, Goldsmiths, LSE, Manchester, Oxford, Oxford Brookes, SOAS and St. Andrews. In terms of funded research proposals, we have reviewed proposals for the ESRC; Marie-Curie; the Israel National Research Foundation; the Croatian Science Foundation, Zagreb; ESRC Global Challenges Research Fund; the Druze Heritage Foundation; National Science Centre, Poland, and the National Research Foundation, South Africa. Froerer is also a member of the ESRC's grant assessment panel.