

**Institution: De Montfort University**

**Unit of assessment: 17**

### **Section 1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy**

The research environment in the Business School (within which UOA17 is located) has continued to develop and grow since REF 2014. At the heart of this strategic growth has been the development of seven research centres and supporting infrastructure to enhance our interdisciplinary character and nurture our strengths. Our research addresses the increasing importance of social value and public good in the UK and beyond – we characterise our research as intersecting state, civil society and the market. We undertake work on a number of key research themes: local government and cities during periods of transition, changing employment practices, housing and transport policy, corporate social responsibility and business ethics, entrepreneurship, organisational resilience, creative industries, sustainable finance, and economic development. The consolidation of these and other themes around the emergence of our seven research centres has created an environment which has allowed us to develop a record of world-leading academic publications, and high-quality engagement and impact with partners nationally and internationally.

During the census period we have continued our trajectory towards a world-leading research environment and a sustainable, vibrant, innovative and inclusive researcher community. Some of the fivefold increase in researcher capacity (109.5 FTE today, compared with 22 FTE in 2014) is a result of developing the research capacity of staff who were in our Business School prior to 2014, enabling them to take on significant responsibility for research. The remaining growth comes from targeted investments in recruitment, particularly of early career researchers (ECRs). We continue to grow grant income in order to fund further interdisciplinarity and impactful research, and expect this to increase as our ECRs continue to develop their grant-bidding skills. Table 1 reflects the size and scope of our current submission. Beyond the Unit-level sustainability and growth, we show in this environment statement the emergent effects of our purposeful enhancements in research governance, leadership, development, mentoring and support for our research-active staff.

**Table 1: Unit Growth Since 2014**

Sustainability indicators, Business and Management Studies	REF 2014 (UOA 19)	REF 2021 (UOA 17)
Staff submitted Category A FTE	21.7	109
PhDs awarded	24	50

#### **1.1 OUR RESEARCH COMMUNITY AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Our submission is based on interdisciplinary research activities in the Leicester Castle Business School (LCBS), part of DMU's Faculty of Business and Law. LCBS comprises four academic departments (Accounting and Finance; Economics and Marketing; Management and Entrepreneurship; and Politics, People and Place) and seven research centres: Applied Economics and Social Value (IAESV), Centre for Enterprise and Innovation (CEI), Finance and Banking Research Centre (FiBRe), Local Governance Research Centre (LGRC), People, Organisations and Work Institute (POWI), Research in Accountability, Governance and Sustainability (CRAGS), and the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA). There is significant interaction between the seven research centres to create spaces for interdisciplinary work on outputs, impact and grant applications, which is why we made the strategic decision to submit as a large interdisciplinary unit, bringing different critical dimensions to our work on business and management.

For REF 2014, our submission to UOA 19 coalesced around three groups whose continuity is still evident in the work of POWI, LGRC and CEI today. We have also seen the emergence of new research centres, such as IAESV, to reflect the work of researchers who have joined since

2014. We took the strategic decision to grow areas of the Business School, to encourage interdisciplinarity and to underline the public value element of our critical thinking. In 2014, the large proportion of our Unit was from the Politics, People and Place department (18 people). While that has grown in REF2021 (29 people) it has been the smallest growth area. Our three other departments have seen higher levels of investment in researchers: Management and Entrepreneurship submitted 6 people in 2014 and 28 in 2021, Accounting and Finance submitted 2 in 2014 and 23 in 2021, and the largest increase has been in Economics and Marketing with no one submitted in 2014 but for REF2021 makes up the largest proportion of this submission, with 33 people (30% of the Unit).

Our University-wide strategic ambition is to challenge conventional thinking and find new knowledge to transform our society for the better. In this Unit our strategy focuses on enhancing public value, engaging with place by improving our city and region, and building responsible international trade and global relations – particularly considering the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. The Unit is fully aligned with DMU's commitments and processes relating to researcher integrity and open research. In the Unit, the commitment to nurture impact and interdisciplinarity is evident through the considerable development of impact cases (section 4.2) and interdisciplinary excellence within and beyond the Unit (section 4). The commitment to challenge conventional disciplinary boundaries is evident in our seven research centres, which bring together different fields within business and management studies and collaborate with each other to develop novel solutions to nascent challenges (such as IAESV and CURA's work on Covid-19). We meet the challenge to engage actively with a variety of non-HEI bodies by linking our work directly with policymakers and practitioners (sections 4.3, 4.4). Indeed, by adopting an embedded scholarship and co-production approach, work within the Unit is inextricably linked with non-HEI bodies – charities, civic and government organisations -- from the genesis of the research endeavour.

The impact cases selected for submission to REF 2021 fulfil the commitment to impact (section 4.2), notably by enhancing public value, engaging with place and enhancing our city and region, and building responsible international trade and global relations. Our commitment to the public good is expressed through, *inter alia*, collaborations with national and local governments to enhance urban living, entrepreneurship in developing economies, critical infrastructure (such as logistics and financial support), skills policy and financial system reform (section 4). Indeed, public value is at the very heart of our Business School, and a key theme in our research unit.

DMU's partnership with the United Nations since 2018 has been developed iteratively as a way of extending the University's visionary commitment to the public good and transformational scholarship. Specifically, DMU is the designated Global Hub for the support of SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Furthermore, as part of the LCBS strategic plan 2018–2023, we will align to SDGs including: SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 4 (quality education), SDGs 8 and 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure) and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

For REF 2014 we emphasised the importance of three core areas of research strength. The distinctive public value research theme of our Unit continues to develop, with its activity channelled largely through the centres, created since 2014, and work beyond disciplinary boundaries to conduct research, write publications and create impact. We used research centres during the assessment period as structures within which staff can innovate in their chosen fields of research with clear, proactive support from research leaders, and via funding schemes, and events. For instance, CURA, founded in 2015 following the award of a major ESRC grant which founded an intellectual caucus in this field, has a research team that spans multiple departments and schools across the university. Similarly, CEI, founded in 2017, has a membership that cuts across technology policy, entrepreneurship, organisational resilience, management education, creative industry management, marketing and open innovation. Collectively, research centre directors represent an important group of senior research leaders within the Unit and work closely with the Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) on staff development, funding and strategic development.

The Unit has a clear priority to undertake research with integrity and DMU as a whole is a signatory to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. As a Faculty, we have also developed a statement on responsible research metrics to ensure that research in the round is valued and that researchers are not perceived as a single index score. We consider this important because of the inequalities that can occur with metrics which do not, for instance, take account of the breaks that women may need to take in their career, and the effect this can have on predominant indices. The ten principles included in our Faculty *Responsible Research Metrics Statement* are based on the Leiden manifesto and the San Francisco declaration. We feel it is vital to value quality in all forms (rather than on the basis of a star rating for a journal title), and to support our researchers to undertake work of public value for societal impact.

With a number of new appointments and funding schemes to promote specialist areas of research activity, nascent research clusters have emerged to complement and act as bridges between our formal research centres. These clusters include:

- African Entrepreneurship – supported by CEI (**Kolade, Mafimisebi, Nyame, Woldesenbet-Beta**)
- Latin America Network – supported by CURA (**Fishwick, Guarneros-Meza**)
- Consumers, Markets and Society – supported by IAESV (**Baines, Bebek, Bhogal-Nair, Dalziel, Dekel-Dachs, Harman, Harwood, Hickman, Hsu, Ojeme, Omar, Phillips, Takhar, Thomas, Tsakona, Wohlfeil**)
- Innovative Logistics and Supply Chains – supported by CEI (**Budd, Hatamimarbini, Ison, McLaughlin**)

In each of these clusters, research vitality and sustainability are achieved through a combination of existing capability (i.e. researchers in post for REF 2014) and new appointments at all research career stages during the assessment period.

## 1.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC AIMS FOR RESEARCH AND IMPACT DURING THE ASSESSMENT PERIOD

Following our REF 2014 (UOA 19) submission, the Faculty identified eight strategic challenges that we needed to address in order to enhance the vitality and sustainability of our research. Our response to these challenges is summarised below and detailed thereafter in this research environment statement:

- 1 Building core research capacity, retention and career management of staff to broaden and deepen the research base:
  - Development of seven research centres, each with opportunities for research leadership and developing ECR and PGR capacity.
  - Faculty-wide research mentoring scheme, developed in 2018 in partnership with Vitae, which provides a framework for the support needed by all researchers to progress in their career.
  - Prioritised recruitment of early career academics since 2014, particularly through the University-wide flagship Vice Chancellor's Lectureship (VC2020) Scheme, uniquely designed to nurture ECRs. Introduced in 2013, the VC2020 scheme has enabled ECRs to have designated time (two days per week) in their first year to develop their research career; they have also had the opportunity to bid for up to £5,000 internal University funding to amplify a particular project (see Table 2).
  - Clear promotions pathways from Early Career Academic Fellow (ECAF) to VC2020 lecturer, to associate professor (reader) to full professor. This is specifically enhanced in the Faculty, and this Unit, through the recent introduction of ExCeleRate – a framework for ECRs to understand and access the support available to them. We have 19 VC2020 lecturers in the Unit, and have also seen two ECAF posts become permanent lecturer posts following support and development opportunities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fivefold growth in the number of staff with significant responsibility for research, from 26 people (22 FTE) in 2014, to 112 people (109.5 FTE) in this period.</li> </ul>
2	<p>Addressing imbalances in research density across sections of the Business School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted recruitment in specific departments and subject areas to amplify areas core to a critical business school (Strategic Management, Marketing, Economics and Accounting &amp; Finance).</li> <li>• University-wide introduction of individual research plans to provide dedicated time and a framework of support for researchers.</li> <li>• Funding schemes to pump-prime ideas and projects for development into grant-funding bids across all disciplines in the Unit. This is delivered through the internal research funding processes and has resulted in a recent acceleration in the number of successes.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Increasing research quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal review and feedback processes, particularly led by the seven research centres, including reading groups and writing clubs, to provide a collegiate atmosphere for critical reviews to develop work for publication and grants for submission. This support, combined with the pump-priming internal funding has led to recent successes in external grant capture. For example, in the latest British Academy GCRF round the Unit had three awards (out of a total of five across DMU), with a total value of £147,111.</li> <li>• Faculty-level writing retreats support events led by research centres, to create spaces for serendipitous interdisciplinary conversations and connections (these have continued online during the Covid-19 pandemic).</li> <li>• Staff development events including 'meet the editor', ECR 'Q&amp;A with the professoriate', 'pitching your research', 'developing resilience and bouncing back after rejection' to provide generic research support advice which transcends disciplinary boundaries.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Diversifying funding sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated research development officer to support grant applications in the Faculty, resulting in a large increase in the number of bids submitted, particularly in recent years (over the census period, the number of external grant applications per annum has grown by 347%).</li> <li>• Faculty workshops on research grant funding (not only from research councils), to provide advice from those with recent awards. Coupled with a strong peer-review process, this is enhancing the quality of our bids, and starting to increase our success rate.</li> </ul>
5	<p>Increasing number and quality of PGR students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building supervision and examination capacity, particularly through the development of the role of Institute Head of Research Students, leading to strategic growth in high-quality students seeking to work within a group of productive researchers in a high-profile area; 50 PhDs were awarded in this period, against 24 in 2014.</li> <li>• In addition to University-wide PGR roadshow/recruitment exercises, faculty events, including our 3-minute thesis competitions, create opportunities to showcase our PGR offering, with events such as the CURA's PGR summer school. More recently, work has been undertaken to establish and grow a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) programme, and a variety of other PGR routes including by concurrent publication.</li> <li>• PGR scholarships, such as that open to 'high-flyer' graduates, provide a strong pathway from postgraduate taught to PGR. Over the period the Unit has secured 36</li> </ul>

University-funded bursaries, and secured one external AHRC Midlands4Cities studentship.

6 Building excellence in research groups:

- The development of seven research centres in the Unit provides space for interdisciplinary intellectual endeavour that enhances the enjoyment of undertaking research and allows support and mentoring within the Unit to provide pathways for enhancement of careers and improvement of grant and publication success rate.
- Strategy meetings between research centre directors and the Associate Dean Research and Innovation build interdisciplinary links leading to recent projects on Covid-19 response, sustainable supply chains and modern slavery.
- Through strategic alignment via our research centres and with the leadership of our centre directors who are professors, along with the wider faculty professoriate, support our large new cohort of ECRs over the REF period.

7 Engaged scholarship and generating impact:

- Work in the Unit is aligned to DMU's strategic goals to engage with key stakeholders outside the academy. There is a unit impact coordinator who works with the University-wide impact officers to provide support to current impact case authors, as well as develop cases beyond this REF period. Our Faculty impact strategy focuses not only on REF impact case development, but wider engagement for the public good. For example, engagement with the city and the region, on economic development, is led from our Faculty (e.g. with the work of **Granger** and **Rae**).
- Much of the university's recent involvement with Leicester City Council to 'Build Back Better' after Covid-19 has been led by our researchers in UOA17.
- Impact-specific funding, training and development has been provided in the Unit. Our 'Love Impact' day in February 2020, with an external facilitator dedicated solely to the impact case authors in the Faculty to support completion of case writing is one such example.
- Corporate development events foster research dissemination and engagement with business (e.g. the Leicester Business Festival).

8 Raising our research profile

- International conference participation has supported colleagues to network, develop publications and interdisciplinary research grant applications.
- Research centres have an online presence and research staff have an individual profile for the web page, and are encouraged to create an ORCID account.
- Media training for staff is available across DMU, and bespoke training days have been arranged in our Faculty with workshops for researchers to write press release summaries and draft articles. Our colleagues contribute to *The Conversation*, and more recently *Byline Times* (e.g. **Giovannini**, **Rae**).

### 1.3 KEY PRINCIPLES INFORMING FUTURE RESEARCH STRATEGY

This UOA has worked within a framework of key principles and priorities since 2014, namely: enhancing public value, engaging with place by improving our city and region, and building responsible international trade and global relations – particularly considering UNSDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. Looking forward, we have a vision to enhance our research environment to amplify public value and focus further on inclusivity. This is important as we have seen from findings in our own research undertaken with the Business School of the unequal effects from the Covid-19 pandemic on the city of Leicester. We will therefore be focusing on (1) inclusive places and cities; (2) inclusive economies; and (3) inclusive supply chains that do not harm through modern slavery or poor work practices, as themes to stimulate further interdisciplinary work between research centres and with stakeholders beyond the academy. These three key themes will be underpinned by a strong commitment to sustainable



research, reflecting on how we develop our networks, for example through travel to international conferences, and the impact this has on environmental sustainability. The UOA will continue its commitment to open access, through use of institutional repositories (DORA for text outputs and DMU Figshare for data), and by making new research available through the newly formed DMU Press and publication with open access journals, including the planned University-led openly accessible journal based on the SDGs. We will continue to share our research widely through, for example, our business research magazine *Research Connections*.

## Section 2. People

### 2.1 STAFFING STRATEGY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

During the assessment period for REF 2021, the Unit has enjoyed a fivefold increase in the number of Category A staff. All new staff attend an induction event at which the Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) outlines research activities, priorities and support. We operate a holistic approach to staff development and support from the first steps in the research process as an ECR to being part of the Faculty professoriate and from appointment to succession planning (e.g. data stewardship and research data management). The process for research allowances in this UOA is governed by the institution-wide Research and Innovation Allowance (RIA) system introduced in September 2014. The RIA system provides feedback on research plans and, coupled with the main appraisal system, identifies training and development needs along with mentoring requirements. During the census period, the average research allowance has grown considerably from 33% of time for 26 staff in 2014 to 45% of time for 112 (109.5 FTE) staff by 2020. Thus, new and existing appointees have benefited from increased time to develop and implement their research plans. This strategic investment has provided space, particularly for ECRs, to balance teaching workloads with research ambitions, and provide time for networking and capacity building towards research grant bidding.

#### 2.1.1 Recruitment

In order to support the large expansion of research capability through the recruitment of ECRs, the strategic decision was taken to expand the professoriate in the Unit in subject areas such as Accounting and Finance (**Boateng, Werner**), Strategic Management (**Hughes**), Leadership (**Stokes, McLaughlin**), Entrepreneurship (**Rae**) and Economics (**Cartwright**), reflecting the institution's commitment to providing both research management and leadership for early- and mid-career researchers. These appointments have been made in subject areas identified as being under-represented in our REF 2014 submission, as well as to provide senior leadership and mentoring to the large cohort of ECRs recruited since 2014.

During the census period, DMU has created three positions that have been designed to attract and retain research talent. The specific roles are VC2020s, ECAFs and Associate Professor (AP). The VC2020 Lecturer Scheme has enabled ECRs to have designated time (minimum two days per week) in their first year to develop their research career.

The Unit has been successful in recruiting and retaining a considerable number of VC2020 positions since 2014, reaching 19 VC2020 lectureships and two ECAFs by spring 2020. The introduction of the Associate Professor (AP) role reflects a transition from traditional senior teaching/research roles to reflect mid-career researchers who are working towards an application for a full professorial appointment. The ECAF, VC2020 and AP roles have provided a major boost to the Unit's capacity, quality and profile but the increase in numbers has necessarily required further strengthening of research management and support within the Unit to ensure that with growth comes vitality and sustainability of the research base (see section 3 for an overview of key research roles) and we have not taken for granted the challenges of retaining our best researchers in a highly competitive global labour market for academic researchers.

#### 2.1.2 Retention and promotion

Opportunities and support are key to the retention of researchers in our Unit. As noted above, the introduction of new positions (ECAF, VC2020 and AP) offers a clear research career

pathway. In the short time since their introduction, the Unit has had staff promoted from ECAF to VC2020 and from VC2020 to AP Research – 9 colleagues have been promoted to AP. The annual full professorial promotions process has resulted in a number of appointments during the period (**Granger, Harwood, Hatamimarbini, Payne**) and we are seeing an increase in the number of women professors in the Unit, from 2 to 5 in the period, with women now representing 29% of the Business School professoriate.

We have enhanced our mentoring for staff. For ECRs (specifically VC2020 lecturers), we have had a dedicated VC2020 champion who has been a mentor and advocate for issues pertaining to the challenges of embarking on an early teaching and research career. Our processes for research allowances and internal research funding applications (some of which are ring-fenced for our ECRs) include an opportunity to check and evaluate mentoring requirements for individual members of staff.

### 2.1.3 Development and support

New staff are assigned a research mentor and guidelines for mentor selection and responsibilities are harmonised into a Faculty-level policy, supported by Department heads. The Faculty mentoring policy was renewed in 2018 during a consultation with the professoriate facilitated by Vitae. This allowed a common understanding to be developed to frame the mentoring approach, and has now extended the provision of a research mentor for all staff with significant responsibility for research. Staff wishing to move from a teaching focus to significant responsibility for research can apply to join DMU's Next Generation Researchers scheme with mentoring provided by senior colleagues based within the Unit. Each of the four academic departments within the Unit has a designated research coordinator who (in addition to responsibilities set out in section 3) is an important point of contact as new colleagues settle into professional life at LCBS and who may require guidance on important milestones in the academic/calendar year. This framework of mentoring support, along with dedicated time for research and innovation activities through the RIA, has provided a conducive environment for research in our Unit.

Within the UOA, training opportunities relating to research ethics and research funding complement the wider institutional provision of professional development provided by the Research Services Directorate. Training sessions on Institutional Research Ethics Approval, following strengthening and enhancement of the ethics process in the Faculty, have been delivered monthly within the Unit since 2018. Research centres within the Unit also play a critically important role in the provision of researcher support and training, exploring research synergies between groups within the Unit, and establishing collaborations beyond the institution.

We made research impact a major theme in our Faculty of Business and Law annual research conferences in 2017, 2018 and 2019. We also held a two-day impact case event in July 2018 (facilitated by Professor Mark Reed – Fast Track Impact), an impact case development workshop in July 2019 (facilitated by Vertigo Ventures), and impact case awayday in February 2020 (facilitated by Dr Julie Bayley – Director of Research Impact Development at the University of Lincoln). External facilitated days have complemented our in-house ongoing support from the impact team at DMU. Regular Faculty writing retreats (discussed in 2.3) have also continued to provide opportunities for impact case study authors to continue writing up their cases. An outcome of this considerable staff development focus on impact case development is that at the time of the submission we were in a position to select from a larger pool of developed cases (detailed in 3.2).

The Unit has been successful in identifying and supporting applicants for DMU's Future Research Leaders (FRL) programme that has been in place since 2013. The scheme is designed to develop the research leadership capability of a specially selected cohort (12 staff per year) within the University. We have been especially well represented on the FRL programme in recent years with 9 members of staff on the programme and many of the colleagues selected now have research leadership roles at DMU or at other research institutions. For some, the FRL programme has been a launchpad within the Faculty. For example, **Fishwick's** leadership potential was recognised in 2017 when accepted onto the

programme. Since then, Fishwick has succeeded in securing an international, collaborative grant award from Leverhulme, has continued to publish world-leading outputs, and has taken on a research leadership role for PGR in the Faculty.

Research funding schemes operate at University, Faculty and Research Centre levels. Within the Unit we support development needs through targeted budgets for doctoral support, ECRs, VC2020 lectureships and PhD scholarships. For new project development and research centres, we have discrete Faculty research funding/seed-corn and Research Centre budgets respectively (Table 2). With the exception of the PhD scholarship fund, all other funding schemes enable colleagues to fund conference attendance, carry out data collection, or buy tools for research (such as software and datasets). Across the census period we have committed 37% of the Faculty's research fund to support doctoral students, ECRs and VC2020 lecturers (the latter having their own personal research budgets until 2020). Budgets dedicated to ECRs/VC2020 (i.e. Doctoral Support Fund, Early Career Researcher Fund, VC 2020 personal budget and PhD scholarships fund) lectureships ensure that they have dedicated access to funds to develop their programmes of research. These investments in our next generation of researchers were front-loaded at the start of the census period and reached a peak during the 2017/18 financial year when our next generation investments represented 50% of the total Unit budget commitment within the Unit. Since then (and reflecting the development of our research base) funding has increasingly been devolved to research centres for the purposes of supporting and developing clusters of researchers within strong research domains.

**Table 2: Unit research budgets by area of focus**

	<b>PGR Support Fund</b>	<b>ECR Fund</b>	<b>VC2020 Budget</b>	<b>PhD Scholar ship Fund</b>	<b>Faculty Research Funding/ Seed- corn</b>	<b>Research Centres Funding</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2014/15</b>	2,631	3,098	n/a	n/a	4,600	4,380	<b>14,709</b>
<b>2015/16</b>	3,159	3,000	n/a	20,000	22,161	17,880	<b>66,200</b>
<b>2016/17</b>	3,949	4,044	26,000	22,000	30,308	41,380	<b>127,681</b>
<b>2017/18</b>	4,090	3,950	52,887	22,000	26,400	55,000	<b>164,327</b>
<b>2018/19</b>	3,298	6,771	60,600	35,000	23,490	129,000	<b>258,159</b>
<b>2019/20</b>	7,200	5,425	52,000	4,000	68,800	163,000	<b>300,425</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,327</b>	<b>26,288</b>	<b>191,487</b>	<b>103,000<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>175,759</b>	<b>410,640</b>	<b>931,501</b>

Funding decisions are informed by review panels who also ensure that mentoring is in place to make the most of funding awarded. As noted earlier, the Faculty has a dedicated research development officer to support grant applications to external funders. This role has existed throughout the census period and from early 2018 the Research Development Officer from Research Services Directorate has dedicated more bespoke time to working with colleagues seeking advice and guidance on funding opportunities and grant applications. In 2013/14, 58% of grant applications came from Professors in the unit and 42% from mid-career researchers and by 2019/20, 27% of grant applications came from Professors in the unit, 54% from mid-career researchers, and 19% from early-career researchers. Over the census period, the number of external grant applications per annum has grown by 347% and by the end of the census period, early and mid-career researchers were Principal Investigator for 73% of all external grant applications in the unit, thereby signalling further maturation of our research community since REF 2014.



In addition to regular research staff development seminar programmes organised by individual research centres (but open to all staff and PGRs), the Unit has hosted over 60 workshops and events during the census period. Table 3 provides a flavour of the increased vibrancy of the Unit as a hub for a wider research community. Since September 2015 the Faculty has held an annual one-day research conference that acts as a showcase for our researchers, and offers a forum to network and meet staff from central university professional services that support research. With keynote speakers including external speakers and research leaders within the University, our research conferences have centred around important strategic priorities such as impact and the social value of research. Since 2018 we extended the annual research conference to become a week-long Faculty festival of research with events on measuring the social value of research, impact case development, impact tracking technologies and research media impact. PGRs are at the heart of the event with a specific 3-minute thesis competition which is open to PhD candidates and other ECRs. Our research festivals culminate with a Faculty 'Research Oscars' awards ceremony to celebrate research successes and contributions to the research community.

**Table 3: Workshops and cross-institutional events – illustrative examples**

04/2015	British Academy of Management Entrepreneurship workshop: Framing and Writing for Entrepreneurship Journals
06/2015	British Universities Industrial Relations Association Conference (BUIRA) hosted by DMU
11/2015	Centre for Urban Research on Austerity – Inaugural Conference
05/2016	Workshop on Austerity and Local Economic Development in England – Mapping a Research Agenda
06/2016	Research methods workshop (2-day) – Critical Discourse Analysis, Institutional Grammar and Social Network Analysis
05/2017	Workshop on Governance and Conflict in Urban/Peri-urban Infrastructures in Europe and Latin America
07/2017	12th Interpretive Policy Analysis International Conference
06/2018	The 1st International Symposium on Entrepreneurial Resilience
06/2018	Municipal Socialism in the 21st Century
10/2018	Meet the Editor workshop – ( <i>Journal of Marketing Management</i> )
04/2019	Municipalism 2019: An International Exchange
05/2019	1st POWI Conference on 'Millennials, Older Workers and Organisations: How can firms cope with a changing workforce?'
05/2019	Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship in Minority Group Launch Event
05/2019	1st Global Conference on Creating Value
06/2019	Urban Methodologies Summer School
06/2019	Intersectionality and the City: a 1-day interdisciplinary workshop
06/2019	1st International Conference on African Entrepreneurship and Innovation
06/2019	Urban informality Workshop: Linking informal working practices and the governance of everyday life
07/2019	Workshop on Economics for the Social Good. Sponsored by the Royal Economic Society
11/2019	British Academy of Management Research Methodology Workshop

## 2.2 SUPPORT MECHANISMS, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

During the census period 50 students have completed their PhD degrees (compared with 24 for REF 2014). Of these graduates, 10 are currently in academic positions within our Unit, 4 are based at other UK HEIs and 15 are in academic positions at overseas HEIs. Eight of our PhD graduates during the census period have moved into enterprise roles, including 4 start-up companies. Three of our PhD graduates work in the local government/policy sectors.

During the census period we have embarked on a considerable expansion of our PGR community with 102 PhD and 2 DBA students currently registered. Of our PGR students, 17% study part-time and our DBA (launched in October 2019) is designed to provide variety in our PGR offering. The number of PGR students currently registered is nearly 50% higher than for the submission to REF 2014. All research students are subject to the governance and monitoring of DMU's central Doctoral College. As well as providing training and administrative support for the doctoral programme, the Doctoral College (established in 2010, renamed in 2018), focuses on the integrated development and governance of the research degree programme across DMU.

The Faculty Head of Research Students (FHRS) (**Fishwick**), who is based in UOA 17, is responsible for leading on development of PGR and represents the Faculty on DMU's Research Degrees Committee and Research Training Committee (with Faculty Head of Research Student Training). The FHRS also chairs the Faculty Research Degrees Committee and is an *ex officio* member of the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee, thereby ensuring that PGR matters have a strong voice in broader discussions relating to research strategy, support and investment. Working with FHRS is the Faculty Head of Research Student Training. All supervisors are required to obtain DMU's Certificate in Research Supervision and from 2019 are required to attend Faculty-level supervisor training workshops (replacing generic University-wide refresher courses) to disseminate good practice and keep updated with regulations and procedures.

PGR students have access to a wide range of research and professional development training, coordinated by a dedicated Researcher Development Manager and overseen by the Research Training Committee. Our Doctoral Training Programme (DTP) incorporates a discipline-specific Faculty-level programme that comprises an overarching syllabus of methods training, permitting synergies in the basic training needs of different research areas. This contributes to a wider set of activities to support researcher development organised in the Faculty and by the Doctoral College. The DTP is delivered through timetabled classes delivered two or three times per academic year. Each research centre is expected to have a nominated Head of Research Students to ensure that PGR students are clearly embedded in a research community and development support related to their field of study. One example is the Urban Methodologies summer school led by CURA attended by 25 selected participants from 8 countries. The PGR endeavour is supported by external funding, such as the AHRC Midlands4Cities scholarship funding for a PhD student under the supervision of **Granger**. Granger is also the institution's site director for the Midlands AHRC DTP, managing DMU's AHRC scholarships under the Midlands3Cities, Midlands4Cities, and National Productivity Investment Fund programmes and co-managing the current £21,000,000 AHRC Midlands4Cities programme (2018–2025).

The Faculty introduced the Postgraduate Research Forum in 2020, replacing our PGR Milestone Days from 2018, to provide further opportunities for the Faculty's PGR community to come together, present their work-in-progress and to receive feedback from the wider academic community in the Faculty. PGR students are also invited to an expanded Faculty PGR Induction in October, with sessions on managing supervisor–supervisee relationships and opportunities to meet with continuing PGRs and academic staff in their research centres, embedding them in the respective research culture and community. We have found that these specific Faculty events provide a conducive environment for PGRs and we have seen improved satisfaction in the Unit in the most recent PRES scores with positive feedback about the quality of supervision (95.1% agreeing – a rise of 0.7 percentage points on 2018), and in respect of research skills the positive

feedback score was 94.9%, a rise of 6 percentage points on the previous year and exceeding the sector average by 9.1%. Supervisors in the Unit use the University PGR management system to work with students on their PGR journey. We have a Faculty DTP and series of PhD events (particularly supporting the PGR community online during lockdown in 2020), which complements the central programme administered by the Doctoral College.

Four of our current PGR students are University staff registered for a PhD and many also undertake part-time hourly-paid teaching (supervisors and the FHRS ensure that PGR students do not undertake levels of teaching that might impede project progression). PGR students share facilities with academic staff in the Hugh Aston building (our main Faculty building) and have access to study and networking spaces in our recently refurbished facility at Leicester Castle. DMU also supports a programme of full and fees-only doctoral bursaries (introduced in 2009). The Unit has been successful in securing 36 PGR university scholarships/bursaries (21 of which were full bursaries) from central university competitive schemes during the census period. All PGR students have access to our dedicated Doctoral Support Fund (section 2.1.3; Table 2) as well as central Doctoral College funding and opportunities to participate in their lecture and workshop series.

### 2.3 SUPPORT AND PROMOTION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The research environment in our Unit, which is predicated on the University's equalities strategies, is vital in our endeavour to produce a varied and mixed economy of research, engaging and impacting a wide range of stakeholders. We strongly believe that an inclusive research environment produces better quality research.

Equality and diversity considerations are embedded in the culture of DMU and reflected in everything we do, as marked by the award of a Race Equality Charter. Staff returning to work following a career break are offered research mentoring to help them resume their research activities, while project staff benefit from our commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. We have ensured that all staff within the unit are supported with flexible working arrangements in line with university guidelines and policies. Family friendly policies such as parental leave have also been supported throughout the census period, ensuring arrangements are in place to cover the workload of those on leave schemes.

We are committed to making progress on a better gender and ethnicity balance in senior research posts. Our data show that, as a whole we have increased the number of women researchers from 35% of the Unit in 2014 to 39% now; and for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff we have risen from 12% of the Unit in 2014 to 43% now. We have seen improvement in the number of women professors in our Unit (from 2 to 5), and we have also seen progress in promotions for our BAME staff, for example in promotions round to associate professor. However, we are committed to further improvement. Our Associate Dean Research and Innovation (ADRI) (who is also co-chair of the University staff network 'DMU Women') encouraged the establishment of a faculty Women in Research (WiR) Forum led by an ECR. The WiR Forum brings together women in business management and law to reflect the needs and interests of women in the Faculty, including professional skills development and exploration for the future of WiR-friendly policies. The Unit has also sought to support women returning from maternity leave to resume their research, for example through external writing retreats where appropriate (two researchers supported in this way during 2019/20). Since 2014 there have been six awards of research leave from the University scheme, five of which were for women researchers.

DMU is committed to decolonising both curriculum and research agendas. Strong connections between the Business School (particularly through CURA) and the University's Stephen Lawrence Research Centre provide a rich and diverse environment to tackle injustice in society and to ensure the race equality agenda is at the heart of what we do, and how we do it. We monitor internal research grant budgets to ensure equity of support for women and BAME colleagues, as well as ensuring a representation across career stages too. Staff involved in

panel-based decision-making are required to undertake mandatory equalities training, and for those involved in RIA panels, there was a further requirement to participate in unconscious bias training. In addition to the institution's Code of Practice policy and procedures for the selection of outputs for our submission, within the Unit we have used the baseline of our profile of staff with significant responsibility for research to evaluate the profile of internal reviewers, the selection of outputs for external reviews, and the profile of external reviewers, thereby attesting to our robust and fair review processes.

We encourage and support staff engagement with University and Faculty-level initiatives to augment and incentivise researcher careers (sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3), with training programmes (including writing retreats and workshops) and mentoring (2.1.3). We celebrate success through our annual Faculty 'Research Oscar' awards (2.1.4) and regular research updates via Faculty research and our enterprise social networking platform, Yammer.

### Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1 EXTERNAL INCOME

External grant funding income from 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2020 totals £1,498,492.37. Our commitment to investing in ECR recruitment, rather than appointing senior researchers, has meant that our calculated risk in developing for the longer term has resulted in a dip in grant income in the short term (£1,498,492 in this REF period compared with £2,000,000 in the 2014 submission). This reflects a longer-term strategic approach during the census period to recruit and develop ECRs rather than just appointing senior researchers with large grants. Additional knowledge exchange income during the last five academic years, through 16 HEIF projects, totals £184,755.

No single source of research income predominated during the census period, with 31% of income originating for UKRI (ESRC and AHRC), with UK charities, central/local government and professional/industry bodies representing other notable sources of income (Figure 1). Indeed, the deliberate design of our Business School around the 'public value' focus means that a mixed economy of research, and research funders, allows us to work with state, civic, charitable, societal, commercial and entrepreneurial organisations, for maximum engagement and impact.

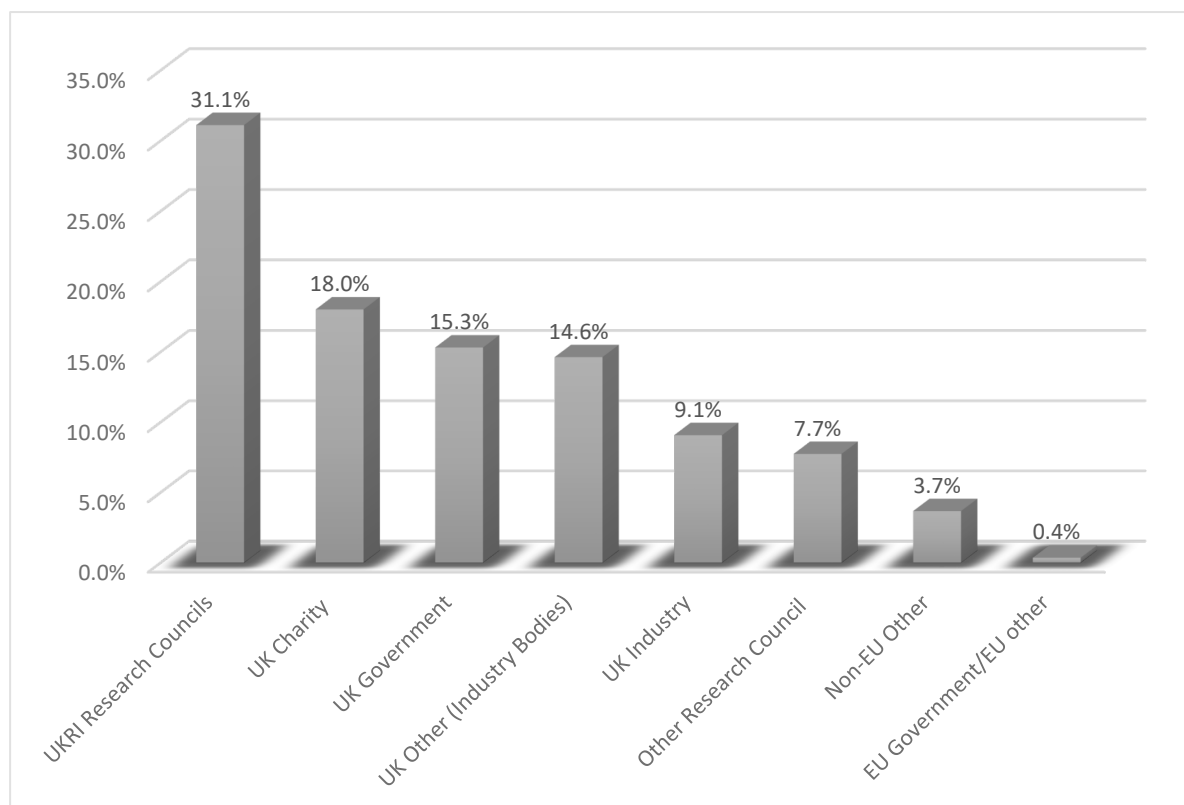
More than 50 external research grant funding awards have been made, including the following substantial awards:

- A £435,131 grant from the ESRC for comparative study of collaborative relationships between government, business and civil society actors in austerity conditions in the cities of Athens, Baltimore, Barcelona, Dublin, Leicester, Melbourne, Montréal and Nantes (**Davies**)
- Leverhulme Trust funding of £160,633 for a project led by **Payne**, looking at 'Digital Technologies and Job Quality: Do Trade Unions Make a Difference?'
- Two grants totalling £123,000 from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to examine co-producing conflict resolution methods for Gypsy and Traveller sites (**Richardson**)
- A British Academy – Newton Advanced Fellowship (£77,000) around the theme of 'Conversing with Goliath? Participation, Mobilisation and Repression' (**Guarneros-Meza**)
- A British Academy – Mid-career fellowship (£90,000) on 'Trade Union Features in Europe: Representing the "New Working Class" in France and the UK' (**Connolly**)
- ERDF/HEIF Partnerships in Knowledge Transfer project (£54,000) with TravCom (**Bradshaw**)
- Commonweal Housing Funding (£44,000), 'Freedom2Work: Buying the Future' pilot project study (**Richardson**)
- Welsh Local Government Association (£32,000), Reviewing the interrelated aspects of governance and the performance of devolved public services in Wales (**Copus**)
- AKN GCRF Network Plus Phase 2 Grant (£27,592) 'Voices and Images of Migration, Exploitation, Reintegration and Emancipation in Nigeria' (**Ejiogu**)

- World Bank (£21,000) 'Choosing the Right Tools to Support Public Financial Management (PFM) Reform' (**Mear**).

Research funding plays an important role in enriching our research environment. For instance, **Davies's** ESRC grant has been central to the growth of CURA, the first research centre of its kind to bring together an internationally recognised and influential group of researchers on urban austerity. Indeed, two ECRs engaged directly in the work of the ESRC project have subsequently been appointed as full-time lecturers in the UOA (**Bua**, **Cortina-Oriol**). **Payne's** recent grant success has enabled recruitment of a full-time two-year research fellowship that will build capacity within POWI, reflecting our success in attracting funding from civic and public sources, beyond the traditional research councils, and the impactful outcomes can be seen in our impact case studies. There are many examples of diverse funded, engaged research, including **Budd** and **Ison's** work on airports, **Rae's** work on regional economic development and **Hatamimarbini's** work on supply chains, the latter providing interdisciplinary links with research on modern slavery with our Law School.

**Figure 1: UOA 17 Sources of External Income**



### 3.2 INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES PERTAINING TO RESEARCH AND RESEARCH IMPACT

The fivefold increase in staff submitted to REF 2021 (Table 1) has been accompanied by considerable investment to support the research environment for our colleagues (Table 4). Across the census period, our investment in resources for UOA 17 staff includes research workload allocation (£7,815,236) and internal research funding (£931,501). Combined with external research income (£1,498,492), and dedicated infrastructure investment (section 3.2.1),



the total value of financial commitments to support the Unit's research environment exceeds £10 million.

**Table 4: Internal research investments and outputs**

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
<b>Unit resources</b>						
Staff with RIA	37	47	51	79	106	109
Value of research time <sup>1</sup> (£)	585,736	720,614	995,385	1,302,071	1,736,420	2,475,010
Unit research funding (£)	14,709	66,200	127,681	164,327	258,159	300,425
HEIF <sup>3</sup> funding (£)		34,493	5,952	21,189	15,000	15,904
<b>Total £</b>	<b>600,445</b>	<b>821,307</b>	<b>1,129,018</b>	<b>1,487,587</b>	<b>2,009,579</b>	<b>2,791,339</b>
<b>Unit outputs<sup>2</sup></b>						
Articles	88	98	118	147	124	143
Books	6	11	8	7	5	7
Book chapters	23	30	31	25	22	13
Conference	42	44	40	38	29	7
Other	4	18	23	18	13	10
<b>Total outputs</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>180</b>
Impact cases in development	5	6	6	7	8	10

<sup>1</sup> Based on proportion of staff contract relating to research allowance. Uses mean annual salary data for latest active contract from the 2019/20 HESA return. 2013/2014 data not available as research allocations were not based on centralised protocols (i.e. RIA)

<sup>2</sup> Source: DMU institutional repository [www.dora.dmu.ac.uk](http://www.dora.dmu.ac.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Higher Education Innovation Fund.

We have committed 37% of our total funding to support our next generation of researchers (2.1.3, doctoral students, ECRs and VC2020 lecturers). Outputs are a lagging indicator of research investments (in both volume and quality) but, given the large number of ECRs recruited to the Unit during the census period, we are pleased to see the growth in quality outputs.

### 3.2.1 Infrastructure

Since REF 2014, the business school changed its name to Leicester Castle Business School. More than a rebranding exercise, this reflected the opportunity in 2017 for DMU to renovate the disused 11th-century Leicester Castle as an additional physical locale. The £3,700,000 development of the Castle has provided a catalyst and location for many of our wider executive education, corporate development and community engagement activities, including business breakfasts, showcase events and our 'visionary leadership in challenging times' series. This is a series of late afternoon / evening talks by leading figures in business, sport, education and government, which is particularly popular with our PGR students, including those on the DBA programme. The renovation also includes several workspaces designed to facilitate collaboration, which has been useful for research colleagues to meet with industry, civic and charity partners in their research engagement practice.

To further consolidate our engagement with enterprise and third-sector stakeholders in the city and region, the Unit has played an important role in supporting and hosting the annual Leicester Business Festival, creating opportunities on this national and international platform for researchers to engage with their city stakeholders in order to attract inward investment that will facilitate economic growth fundamental to the aims of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership.

As noted in section 2.2 above, the Unit has significantly increased its PGR provision since REF 2014 and in order to support this larger cohort, physical infrastructure has been redeveloped, including a new PGR office space in 2018/19 to the value of £29,135. Additionally, investment has been made in specific facilities to support research growth areas – for example for our Accounting and Finance colleagues £162,674 was invested in 2017 for the creation of a new Bloomberg suite, which has provided modelling facilities for researchers and PGR candidates.

### 3.2.2 Research roles and support infrastructure

Given the substantial increase in the number of staff with significant responsibility for research during the assessment period (including recruitment of many ECRs), the Unit has considerably enhanced its research management and support structures (there are now 20 support roles, compared to just 3 in 2014). To illustrate this, the following roles have been introduced since August 2013: Associate Professor Faculty Research, Research Development Officer (RDO), REF Deputy Coordinator, REF Impact Coordinator, Research Centre Directors (×7), Research Centre Head of Research Students (×7) Academic Interdisciplinary Theme Leads (Urban Living, ×2) and a VC2020 Champion. Furthermore, the Faculty Research and Innovation office now has four research support officers (3.6 FTE) to provide enhanced levels of support for, *inter alia*, research funding schemes, event organisation ethics approval, and research management. Such changes have been introduced to ensure that the recent rapid growth in the number of staff is purposefully and sensitively managed to enable alignment of the aspirations of individuals and the Unit as a whole. Seven roles provide support and expertise for impact case development (ADRI, REF Unit of Assessment Coordinator, Department Research Coordinators, Associate Professor Faculty Research, REF Impact Coordinator, Research Centre Directors, Associate Professor Faculty Research), demonstrating our commitment and focus on engagement and impact.

Since 2014, the Unit has developed from three research groups to seven formal research centres (1.1). Over the census period, the seven centres have become integral to delivery of outcomes in our research community through provision of mentoring, coordinating PhD recruitment and progression around centre foci, and disbursement of research funding from dedicated budgets. Across the census period the proportion of Unit funds disbursed by centres has risen from 29% to 54% (Table 4). Yet, despite this greater formality and clarity of research entities, we have remained responsive to opportunities for interdisciplinary research. Research Centre Directors meet as a group every six weeks with the Associate Dean Research and Innovation to share ideas and work on plans for interdisciplinary research. Two examples of projects that have emerged from these meetings are the interdisciplinary Covid-19 survey being led by IAESV, CURA and LGRC, and the emergence of a research cluster on logistics and supply chains which is led by **Hatamimarbini** in CEI and which draws on expertise from other centres. The purpose of the regular Directors' meetings is to provide mutual support to one another, and to move the research agenda to a more interdisciplinary footing.

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

### 4.1 COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout this UOA, researchers have developed world-leading and international research collaborations and partnerships to undertake grant-funded projects, to deliver written publications and to engage with non-academic organisations in a variety of countries. Illustrative examples include:

- **Davies's** ESRC-funded project 'Collaborative Governance in Cities under Austerity: An Eight-Case Comparative Study' (2015–2018) involved researchers from University of the Aegean, University of Melbourne, University of Sydney, York University (Toronto), Autonomous University of Barcelona, Dublin City University and University of Montréal. This project led to the establishment of the research centre CURA.
- **Fishwick and Hammer**, with colleagues at the University of Sussex, co-convened the 'Labour, Work and Development in the Global South' network, an inter-university and interdisciplinary network that brings together senior and early career scholars working on the Global South. It was launched at DMU in June 2016, followed by the next research workshop at the University of Sussex in February 2017 that drew contributions from academics and activists working on South and South-East Asia, Latin America and Africa in disciplines of sociology of work, anthropology and international political economy.
- **Guarneros-Meza's** British Academy Newton Advanced Fellowship project ('Conversing with Goliath? Participation, Mobilisation and Repression Around Neoextractivist and Environmental Conflicts') is in partnership with Gisela Zaremborg (FLACSO-Mexico), (March 2017–March 2020).
- In March 2018, **Griggs, Giovannini** and LGRC researchers hosted an international workshop supported by the Political Studies Association's Italian Politics and Local Politics Specialist Groups, on 'Governance Rescaling in Comparative Perspective: Lessons from Italy, Reflections on England'.
- Also in the LGRC, **Richardson's** research on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation has led to her being invited by the British Embassy in Bucharest, to make a speech as part of a human rights debate in March 2015. Furthermore she was invited to give a visiting professor lecture at Harvard Law School's programme on Negotiation in May 2016.
- **Payne** and Caroline Lloyd (Cardiff University) conducted a British Academy (2017–2019) 'small-grant' project examining the impact of digital technologies on jobs and job quality, involving grounded empirical studies of workplaces in the healthcare and food/drink processing sectors of Norway and the UK. Their Leverhulme research grant (commencing 2019), led by Payne, examines trade union strategies around digital automation, and asks whether unions can 'make a difference' to job quality in four sectors in the UK and Norway. They have forged links with the Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research in Norway.
- **Chytiri's** work on HRM and Performance involves collaboration with King's College London and Athens University of Economics and Business and her HRM practices in the hospitality industry study partners with University of Kent, Canterbury and University of Piraeus, Greece (2019, ongoing).
- **Ejiogu** is working on a VIOMEREN research grant funded by AKN/GCRF on Migration. Partners include University of Leicester and the University of Ibadan and Samuel Ilorin Foundation, Nigeria (2020, ongoing).
- **Amaugo's** cross-cultural study of Workplace Bullying brings together researchers from University of Wollongong New Zealand and the University of South Wales, Cardiff (2019, ongoing)
- **Luong** was awarded a research grant from the Foreign Trade University (FTU) in Vietnam with a budget of \$20,000 (£15,000) for two years (2017–2019). The project involved collaboration with researchers from FTU in Vietnam, the World Trade Institute in Switzerland and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.
- The CEI African Entrepreneurship Cluster organised its first International Conference on African Entrepreneurship & Innovation 'Frontiers of African Entrepreneurship' in June 2019, with over 70 participants and seven international collaborators including Africa Academy of Management; Covenant University, Nigeria; Strathmore Business School, Kenya; National Technology Business Centre, Zambia; Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; National Centre for Technology Management, Nigeria; University of Nairobi, Kenya. This event has led to the *Palgrave Handbook for African Entrepreneurship* book, to be published in 2021.

- In 2019, **Boateng** and his colleagues in FiBRe undertook a project examining government R&D subsidies and innovation, in collaboration with Professor Xiuping Hua and Dr Miao Wang (Centre for Inclusive Finance, China). Also in FiBRe, **James** and **Abiahor** are founders of the International Network of Scholars in Infrastructure and Project Finance which includes members from academia and industry across the globe.

Staff in the Unit have initiated 37 research projects that address one or more of the following SDGs: (1) no poverty, (4) quality education, (5) gender equality, (8) decent work and economic growth, (9) industry, innovation and infrastructure, (10) reducing inequality, (11) sustainable cities and communities, (13) climate action, (16) peace, justice and strong institutions and (17) partnerships for the goals.

Our research intersects 'state, civil society and the market' and collaborations attest to the high quality of our researchers through involvement in institutional collaborations, multi-stakeholder collaborations and supporting the SDGs. In line with our emerging focus on 'place', our research connects not just globally, but locally as we work with a range of stakeholders in the city of Leicester including, during 2020, to help the city 'build back better'. The Unit draws on support from DMU's media team and from our DMUlocal team to ensure that our researchers connect with the city of Leicester and the wider East Midlands region, to engage with the public and with industry and civic and charitable organisations to demonstrate DMU as a 'public good'. We also undertake stakeholder-driven research on a national and regional basis. Unit researchers engage with a very wide range of stakeholders, local businesses, sports clubs, councils, charities and organisations. For example, East Midlands Homes and Action Homeless in a European End Street Homelessness Campaign for Leicester, spearheaded by Unit colleagues, has led to an ongoing relationship for research projects, and included over 80 students during the campaign week (as shown on *East Midlands Today*, broadcast 8 November 2017, 687,000 viewers).

## 4.2 CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY THROUGH IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Our contribution to society and the economy is undertaken through impactful work in this research Unit, which focuses on three core themes; (i) public value; (ii) engaging with place and enhancing our city and region; and (iii) responsible international trade and global relations.

### 4.2.1 Public value

The LGRC has directly informed the work of UK local councillors under austerity, challenging the paradoxical waning of executive and legislative attention on the role of councillors under localism. **Copus** and **Griggs**'s research has led new thinking on councillors across local government associations and individual councils. By working directly with councillors, it has developed systems and mechanisms which strengthen local political leadership and accountability.

Working closely with MPs, **Whitham**'s CURA-funded research directly shaped the findings of a cross-party parliamentary inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims into defining Islamophobia. The APPG definition, shaped by Whitham's research findings, was subsequently adopted by a wide range of organisations in the UK.

**Richardson**'s research has provided an evidence-base of need and a critical reframing of the planning and public policy debate on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation nationally. This has led to additional site delivery (new sites housing 300 people in Leicester) and improved site management across the country.

### 4.2.2 Engaging with place and enhancing our city and region

These impact cases exemplify research undertaken *with* key partners to improve outcomes for local businesses and residents.

Research led by **Woldesenbet-Beta** resulted in Leicester City Council (LCC) making significant and sustained changes to its procurement rules, policies, and practices, including the adoption of the flagship Social Value Charter in 2018. These substantial and sustained changes have led to LCC increasing its procurement spend on local SMEs. Large first-tier contractors now spend a minimum of 3% and up to 85% of their contract awards with local small suppliers.

**Granger's** creative cities research focuses on developing alternative economic analysis and alternative data sources that better reflect creative knowledge exchange, networks and local learning. Creative cities have benefited from the augmentation of data provision and analysis, from enhanced business performance and creative practice, new creative networks and new approaches to policy design.

Research by **Harwood** has resulted in commercial development of a diversity-led performing arts business. The business has been able to devise and monetise new digital products and services that exploit its unique archive of assets. It has transformed to generate value and income from what it previously would have offered free of charge, and has grown by increasing its business activity.

**Kaur's** work uses a novel synthesis of underpinning research with the use of enabling technologies used in an organisational context to overcome limitations and dysfunctions in the differentiation of clinical and non-clinical management and to enhance strategic performance in a healthcare business setting. This has benefited a national healthcare provider by improving its business efficiency.

#### 4.2.3 Responsible international trade and global relations

Our researchers have international impact with a focus on fair trade and aid policy globally.

Through direct involvement with the Association of Vietnamese Scientists and Experts, **Luong's** research has informed the renewal of trade and investment policies in Vietnam. The strong trade focus of the research is a significant piece of new economic policy focusing on the attraction of foreign direct investment and on the quality and efficiency of foreign investment cooperation.

**Mear's** research for the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Secretariat led to a set of guidelines on diagnostics tools to be used by Development Partners when commissioning evaluations of national government financial planning, execution and governance systems. The research is central to capacity building in understanding aid conditionalities in programmes for the European Commission, national governments and Chinese provincial governments, ultimately to ensure that aid gets securely to where it is needed.

The development of our impact, in collaboration with local, national and international partners has greatly enriched the research environment for business and management. As a result of these collaborations we have recruited PGRs to work on emerging research agenda, and we have attracted grant funding during the research, or in response to findings (e.g. **Richardson** and **Woldesenbet-Beta**). Our themes of public value, engaging with place and enhancing our city and region, and responsible international trade and global relations have also enriched the wider interdisciplinary environment creating pathways to work, for example, with law colleagues on emerging areas of study in a new research cluster looking at responsible supply chains and modern slavery, particularly responding to some of the issues thrown into stark relief during the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### 4.2.4 Future impact strategy

This UOA works with the Faculty strategy for developing engagement and pathways to impact for future case studies. Indeed, colleagues are already planning impact activity that will be submitted in future REF exercises. Support for impact development is practised at Unit level, but in collaboration with central University colleagues, including our impact officers. Research impact will be at the heart of our forthcoming Faculty research conference and 'Research Oscars' event again in July 2021. Internal Faculty research funding for the academic year 2021/22 will again embed impact within its criteria for award, and there will be dedicated events, including our media and communications team, to support colleagues to build impact into their



work. At University level, this will be enhanced through amplified use of Vertigo Ventures tracker as a hub for recording research activity, and it is likely we will utilise this tool in a number of research projects to create impact as habit, from the design of research projects, through the recording and sharing of findings and engagement with stakeholders and the public.

### 4.3 CONTRIBUTIONS BEYOND THE IMPACT CASES

Our researchers have made a significant contribution to the economy and society beyond the impact case studies submitted. Notable examples are found in research centres that are at the heart of our research environment.

#### 4.3.1 Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (CURA)

In CURA there are strong and sustainable networks developed from ESRC-funded research led by **Davies** such as with the Autonomous University in Barcelona. Since the original ESRC project (April 2015–July 2018) there have been two further funded projects, both aiming to shine a light on the impacts of austerity in the Global South. Davies has served on the Governing Board of Urban Affairs Association (2014–2020) and latterly as Chair of the Publications Committee. In 2018, represented by Davies, CURA was appointed to advise the UK Labour Community Wealth Building Unit (CWBU). **Guarneros-Meza** led work looking at conflicts in Mexico, which was funded by the British Academy and Newton (2017/18). In 2019 **Fishwick** embarked on a Leverhulme-funded project that expanded Latin American research networks further in Argentina with CEIL-Conicet, and in Chile with OHL-COES for a comparative labour research project. PGR candidate **Reichle** undertakes research with tenants in Leipzig, Germany, to understand the effects of displacement in the city. In June 2018, CURA hosted a conference on 'Municipal Socialism in the 21st Century', with a further international conference in April 2019 'Municipalism 2019: An International Dialogue'. This event built on the 2018 appointment to an advisory position with the UK Labour Party's CWBU, and to enhance CURA's position at the centre of international debates about 'new municipalisms'.

#### 4.3.2 People, Organisations and Work Institute (POWI)

POWI engages in industry facing knowledge exchange. For example, a team led by **Butler** presented an industry report from their project examining the quality of work and job satisfaction in a leading fast-food organisation. It was presented to senior managers including the Head of Training and Internal Communications in November 2017 and has since led to a series of knowledge transfer training sessions. POWI research also engages with global grand challenges, such as the future of work and the impact of robotics and artificial intelligence. For example, **Payne** and Professor Caroline Lloyd (Cardiff University) presented findings in the food and drink processing sector from their British Academy-funded project to a roundtable event held in a participating Norwegian company attended by representatives from Norway's 'social partners'. Vital international networks are also being built by ECRs, for example in 2020 an online international conference on African leadership and management research has strengthened relationships with international universities such as the University of Pretoria (South Africa) and Lagos Business School (a Pan-African University) as well as UK universities including Durham, Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Queen Mary and Nottingham. This conference, organised by **Eyong**, followed on from his work on a \$40,000 Danish Government-funded grant on public service leadership in West and Central Africa. The research has been adopted by the Tanzanian Government and will be published in the Government's Institute for African Leadership for Sustainable Development. The findings of the work have been considered by the African Union.

#### 4.3.3 Local Government Research Centre (LGRC)

Colleagues in LGRC are active in networks such as the European Research Network for Local Government (EUROLOC), the Observatory on Local Autonomy, the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) standing group on Local Government and Politics, the European Urban Research Association (EURA), the International Political Studies Association (IPSA)

standing group on Comparative Studies of Local Government, and the UK Political Studies Association Italian Politics and the Local Politics Specialist Groups. One example of the exchange of knowledge is seen in a partnership with North Ayrshire Council. **Griggs** worked in partnership with Leeds Beckett University on the local planning and collaborative in North Ayrshire. A co-produced research study for the local authority was funded as part of the partnership with APSE on the 'Ensuring Council'. This has led to further partnerships, such as one with the Association for Local Council Clerks in which LGRC members embarked on a series of online workshops in 2020 and which is part of a suite of work underpinning a new Masters in Public Leadership that will facilitate and embed research-led postgraduate teaching to benefit the public sector. The LGRC works with policymakers to shape policy debates and develop new ideas and policy solutions which benefit local government. For the All-Party Parliamentary Group for District Councils (APPGDC) inquiry into council collaboration, LGRC's **Copus, Giovannini, Jones** and **Roberts** worked with this influential group of parliamentarians to scope the inquiry, conduct the research, sift and analyse the evidence submitted, attend parliamentary hearings, advise the chair on witness selection and draft the report of the APPGDC. This was launched by the Minister for Local Government, Marcus Jones MP, at the House of Commons on 12 July 2017.

#### 4.3.4 Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI)

CEI is a key link for DMU in our contribution to economic growth. In particular, **Rae** and **Granger** have worked with the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership on their strategy and furthering links with a variety of partners through involvement with the Midlands Engine Research Partnership. A Knowledge Transfer Partnership with East Midlands Chamber has been awarded to create a Regional Business Intelligence Unit, building on the East Midlands Top 500 Companies index launched in 2020. CEI has strong links through **Rae** with the Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship and Rae's contribution to this field was recognised in the prestigious international European Entrepreneurship Education Award for 2020. International academic networks are also sustained through strong links and an Inclusive Entrepreneurship event with the British Academy of Management. The CEI African Entrepreneurship research cluster has undertaken work to share knowledge with business enterprises in Africa. For example, **Kolade** has provided a series of master classes and practical workshops. The first, in Oyo, Nigeria in 2018, saw 60 participants taken through important processes, steps and tips on starting small, business planning, use of technologies, social enterprise and customer service. More recent editions of the 'boot camp' were held in 2019, in three other Nigerian cities – Ogbomosho, Iwo and Ibadan – with 500 additional participants benefiting. In addition, he was recently awarded an EPSRC grant as a co-investigator in an interdisciplinary project that is developing a new multi-country, pan-African network of stakeholders for digital innovation for transitioning into a circular plastic economy (DITCh Plastic).

**Woldesenbet-Beta** continues to build on his entrepreneurship work and has recently been awarded a British Academy GCRF grant to explore developing resilience and enterprising opportunities for internally displaced women in Ethiopia and Zambia. Another international project, led by **Berlan**, is working with cocoa industry leaders on children's rights, community development and global value chains. The start of 2020 saw a new research cluster emerge – the Innovative Logistics and Supply Chains (ILSC) group working with logistics and supply chain industries, building on the work of **Hatamimarbini** and incorporating research expertise from **Budd, Ison** and **McLaughlin** on air and land transport – this emergent group is a key priority for impact development in the future.

#### 4.3.5 Institute for Applied Economics and Social Value (IAESV)

IAESV researchers transcend disciplinary boundaries – they work, for example with colleagues in computing and engineering on a EPSRC-funded project looking at the threat of ransomware and on a Home Office-funded study exploring why individuals and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) often take insufficient protection against cyber-attack. Understanding human behaviours was at the heart of a recent, internally funded study in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to understand why and whether people would follow the lockdown rules, as well as

how they felt impacted in a number of spheres in their life as a result of the pandemic. This rapid-response, interdisciplinary study, supported by the Faculty and the University, has resulted in a large and growing database of results and the findings so far have been reported in *The Conversation*, *Wired* and a number of other media outlets. In early 2020 **Wang** was awarded British Academy grant funding to examine the gravity of talent. In autumn 2020 researchers in IAESV were awarded British Academy GCRF funding to explore food resilience and rural poverty in Vietnam (**Cartwright** and **Luong**) and a further project on inclusive poverty reduction (**Igudia**) was also invested in by the British Academy GCRF fund. Within the IAESV is the Markets, Consumers and Society Research Group. This is a vibrant group of early- to mid-career researchers who have strong research outputs and ambitions for increased external grant income to support their body of work.

#### **4.3.6 Finance and Banking Research Centre (FiBRe) and the Centre for Research in Accountability, Governance and Sustainability (CRAGS)**

Together, FiBRe and CRAGS engage on a global level. In CRAGS, **Werner**'s research on alternative models and approaches to sustainable high-growth development, such as seen in East Asia with the Chinese Belt and Road initiative, is disseminated in a variety of global forums. **Chijoke-Mgbame**'s work across FiBRe and CRAGS is in collaboration with organisations in Nigeria, examining board gender diversity and financial performance.

**Werner**'s work on the role of banks in local economic development and corporate finance of SMEs was used as the justification for a multi-stakeholder pilot project to establish suitable not-for-profit community banks, capitalised by local authorities and universities, whose corporate governance is designed to prevent takeovers and benefit the local community in the long run. The first such project, the Hampshire Community Bank, in 2020 completed the 'Applicant Journey' with the Prudential Regulatory Authority and the Financial Conduct Authority to obtain authorisation as a bank and is now proceeding to the authorisation application stage. Meanwhile, over 20 SMEs have already received business loans amounting to ~ £1,700,000.

In FiBRe, **Mear** was invited to be a guest speaker to a delegation of senior finance staff from Hainan undertaking a study tour in the UK to discuss the use of international public sector accounting standards (IPSAs) in assisting greater efficiency and effectiveness in Chinese local governments. This follows from publications in China on Chinese debt and the use of IPSAs in China with colleagues from Wuhan University and Liaoning University. FiBRe has been a vital growth area for sustainable research and since **Boateng** took over leadership of the centre in 2017. Within FiBRe we have seen the ECR cohort and the PGR student cohort grow – developing high-quality publications and leading debate through an emerging series of international talks and burgeoning networks.

**Boateng** is working with ECRs to investigate board diversity, risk disclosure and performance of UK HEIs after a successful bid from British Academy of Management Transitions grant (Co-I with colleague at Nottingham Trent University). FiBRe, through **Boateng** and **Du**, is currently undertaking two collaborative research projects with Centre for Inclusive Finance, University of Nottingham campus in Ningbo.

Our business and management research has emerged from a strong focus in REF 2014 on public sector management and governance, and SMEs, to a larger, richer and more diverse range of work now in 2021 with particular growth in accounting and finance, economics, strategic management, leadership and marketing.

#### **4.4 STRENGTHENING THE RESEARCH BASE: SUSTAINING EXCELLENCE**

We have sustained and reinvigorated scholarship in business and management studies, developed links across subject boundaries and responded to national and international priorities and initiatives. We further demonstrate our achievements through a number of 'esteem' factors. Among staff in the Unit with significant responsibility for research, 16 are reviewers for research councils (including British Council, Independent Social Research Foundation, Danish Research

Council, Economic and Social Research Council, Leverhulme, British Council / DFID, Arts and Humanities Research Council, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, South Africa National Research Foundation and Medical Research Council). Researchers in the Unit have organised, chaired or been invited keynote speakers at more than 30 conferences during the assessment period; 24 staff are members of editorial boards, including 11 as editor or associate editor of multiple journals; 60 staff have *ad hoc* reviewing roles (an average of six journals per staff member). Our staff have acted as reviewers for 294 individual journals during the assessment period. Research colleagues have also contributed to a variety of panels, committees and APPG proceedings.

Staff hold memberships and fellowships of more than 70 professional and learned societies, including:

- Academy of Social Sciences
- Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
- Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
- Chartered Institute of Housing
- Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors
- Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
- Chartered Institute of Marketing
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
- Chartered Management Institute
- Housing Studies Association
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
- Institute of Leadership and Management
- Institute of Risk Management
- Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship
- Political Studies Association
- Urban Affairs Association

Our researchers are involved in a number of advisory roles and they have been recognised for their contributions.

- **Budd**, demonstrating our emerging focus on sustainable transport, is a scientific committee member of the Climate Change Targets and Urban Transport Special Interest Group of the World Conference on Transport Research Society.
- **Giovannini** was seconded, as interim Director, to the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) North (2019–2020). Giovannini also serves on the Political Studies Association board, recently being voted in for a second term.
- **Ison** is an expert panel member of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise, and he is editor-in-chief of the journal *Research in Transportation Business and Management*.
- **Rae** received the European Entrepreneurship Education Award in 2020 from the Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship at Lund University in Sweden, showing the importance of knowledge transfer and research into teaching practice at the heart of CEI.
- **Richardson's** work on housing and homelessness led to her being invited as an expert advisor to the Local Government Association Housing Commission (2016) on 'Prosperous

places where people want to live', and more recently elected President of her professional body, the Chartered Institute of Housing, becoming President in June 2021.

- **Werner** is a Member of Linacre College, Oxford and is also founding chair of Local First, a community interest company establishing not-for-profit community banks in the UK.

We will continue to build on the vitality of the research in our unit. We have a solid and sustainable base from which to grow, with a particular aim to consolidate our increased grant bidding into higher research income, allowing us to pursue our public-value themes of inclusive places and cities, inclusive economies and inclusive supply chains that do not harm through modern slavery or poor work practices, as well as to focus on environmentally sustainable research practices.