

Institution: University of Roehampton
Unit of Assessment: 31 - Theology and Religious Studies
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>The Roehampton Theology and Religious Studies (RTRS) unit conducts publicly engaged research at the intersections of faith, religious practice, and race. It has a distinctive spread of scholars across the Christian tradition, with a commitment to the centrality of religious practice and a clear philosophical underpinning, and its unique culture builds on the religious foundations of three of the four of University of Roehampton's colleges (Digby Stuart [Roman Catholic, Society of the Sacred Heart]; Whitelands [Anglican, Church of England]; Southlands [Methodists, Southlands Methodist Trust]). The unit radically evolved in 2017, following the closure of Heythrop College, a 400-year-old Jesuit college and constituent of the University of London, and the incorporation of six staff into RTRS. The Jesuit foundation of Heythrop College resonated closely with the University's traditions and values, which resulted in an authentic coming together of research interests and outlooks, and a refocusing of the unit's priorities. RTRS now comprises 13 colleagues (10.6 FTE) in the School of Humanities. Research and knowledge exchange is concentrated across three key areas: <i>Philosophy of religion and systematic theology</i> (Ellis, Cottingham, Ward, MacDonald); <i>Catholic studies, and faith & gender</i> (Barnes, Poulson, Watkins and Beattie until 2020, Calderini); and <i>Practical theology</i> (Burgess, Cocksworth, Moxon, Rogers, Watkins).</p> <p>The key aims of RTRS at the time of REF2014 were to support major individual work, to maximise opportunities for creative and topical research synergies within the cluster and with external partners in both academic and religious communities, and to integrate research students into our research environment. Since 2014, we have sustained investment and enhanced research sabbatical schemes to enable long-term, and long-form, research projects to come to fruition. This has resulted in the publication of over ninety outputs. We have invested in new, sustained research collaborations that promote interfaith dialogue and community action; and the number of PGR students has grown to 45 overall (including 28 DTh and 17 PhD students). The major success of our research strategies, and their recognition, is evidenced by the increase of over 240% in our external funding when compared with REF2014 (earning £489,936 in total). RTRS's research ambitions have been significantly extended since 2014, following the integration of colleagues from Heythrop College. Since 2017, managed under the direction of the Subject Research and Knowledge Exchange Lead (Ellis), the unit aims have been expanded to: develop a cohesive and inclusive research culture; be recognised as an international leader in Catholic studies and the philosophy of religion; and catalyse new interdisciplinary research connections, applying theology and religious studies to the most urgent challenges facing society, locally and globally. These ambitions have been realised across our three core research themes:</p> <p><i>Philosophy of religion and systematic theology</i></p> <p>Research in this area is led by Ellis alongside Cottingham, Ward, and MacDonald, and much of it operates at the intersection of philosophy and theology. They have been assisted by a postdoctoral researcher (Jenny Leigh) whose position was funded by the Templeton Religion Trust for the 'The Quest for God: Towards a Philosophical Theology of Desire' project. Four major grants have been awarded since 2014 (from the John Templeton Foundation/University of Notre Dame; John Templeton/Fordham University; Templeton Religion Trust), and the corresponding research projects have yielded two significant publications: an edited collection of essays titled New Models of Religious Understanding which showcases our new vision for philosophy of religion (edited by Ellis, Oxford University Press 2017), and a special edition of the journal <i>Religious Studies</i> ('Religious Experience and Desire, edited by Ellis and Carlisle, 2019). Further significant outputs from staff in the Philosophy of Religion include Ellis' God, Value, and Nature (Oxford University Press, 2014), Cottingham's Philosophy of Religion: Towards a Humane Approach (Cambridge University Press, 2014), and Ward's The Christian Idea of God (Cambridge University Press, 2017). Ellis is seeking to develop the pilot project, 'The Quest for God', in collaboration with KCL and University of Virginia, into a larger initiative in which the relevant philosophical and theological work will be brought into dialogue with psychology and</p>

neuroscience. This research has been heralded as an important and welcome new direction for philosophy of religion and theology (<https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/return-of-religion>).

Catholic studies and faith & gender

Research in this area has been closely aligned with Digby Stuart College and the Society of the Sacred Heart. Our focus on Catholic studies has been practically oriented and publicly engaged. It has been key to the development of collaborative research and networks. **Beattie** (retired 2020) has led important work in this context, particularly the 'Catholic Women Speak' network, which seeks to bring Roman Catholic women globally into dialogue with the Catholic Church and wider society. Key publications include ***Catholic Women Speak: Bringing our Gifts to the Table*** (Paulist Press, 2015), and ***Visions and Vocations*** (Paulist Press, 2019). The study of gender in other faith contexts and its relation to theological practice has added a significant complementary dimension since 2014. **Watkins'** work with the International Permanent Seminar in Catholic Practical Theology (the 'Santiago Group') provides an international dimension to this research community and is attracting a growing number of research students (seven currently registered). The work of this group has been enhanced through the appointment of **Poulsom**, who also brings expertise in environmental theology and practical theology. This theme also provides a critical forum for the research and interfaith dialogue prompted by new colleague **Barnes**, together with **Calderini's** work on Islam and gender, as exemplified in ***Women as Imams: Classical Islamic Sources and Modern Debates on Leading Prayer*** (Bloomsbury, 2020).

Practical theology

RTRS has invested in practice-engaged theology as a key area of growth since 2014. **Watkins** (appointed 2014) has helped shape the discipline of practical theology, and the notion of theological action research is elucidated and defended in her monograph ***Disclosing Church: An Ecclesiology Learned from Conversations in Practice*** (2020). This methodology is being utilised by doctoral programmes internationally and is extended through the work of the Theology Action Research Network (TARN). Established by **Watkins**, TARN has attracted external funding for four projects to date, and growing numbers of research students, enriching our PhD (Elford, McArdle, Humphries, Dunlop, Thurgood) and DTh (Hardy, Gangemi) communities. **Rogers'** and **Burgess'** research on Black Majority Churches, and **Burgess'** internationally recognised scholarship in African Pentecostalism, have been integral to RTRS's longstanding relationships with the Black and Classical Pentecostal churches in London and, increasingly, nationally. Pentecostal Christianity is arguably the largest growing religious group in the UK and across the global South in particular, making this a recognisable area of development in scholarly research and societal engagement. Practical theology has been enriched further by key ECR appointments, including **Cocksworth** in 2018 (Lecturer) and a postdoctoral researcher (Rachel Rose-Burrell), and by the expansion of our professional doctorate, DTh programme, which has attracted 28 research students since 2014.

Interdisciplinary research

RTRS encourages and enables interdisciplinary research, both within the University and beyond. Through two funded research projects from 2014-2017, **Rogers** has investigated the critical issues arising at the intersection of diaspora faith groups, places of worship, and urban planning policy and practice. The Faith and Place Network, where **Rogers** was Principal Investigator, enabled collaboration between academics from a range of disciplines, including practical theology, religious studies, human and cultural geography, planning, sociology and architecture, alongside planning professionals, civil society organisations, local and national government, and faith group representatives. The conversations within this network led to the publication and dissemination of national policy briefings, which then informed subsequent publications on diaspora religious demography and theologies of place. **Ellis**, **Cottingham**, and **Ward** work at the intersection of philosophy and theology and have collaborated with colleagues in philosophy and theology from the UK (KCL), US (Virginia, Creighton), and Italy (Roma Tre, Bruno Kessler Institute, Trento). **Ellis'** recent work on the philosophy and theology of desire has involved collaboration with philosophers (Tal Brewer, UVA); theologians (Sarah Coakley, Cambridge, Clare Carlisle, KCL, Chuck Mathewes, UVA, Paul Fiddes, Oxford); psychologists (Steven Groarke, Roehampton, Richard Gipps, Oxford); and neuroscientists (Raymond Tallis, Buckingham). **Ellis** is developing a

new research project with Tallis entitled 'Love, Desire, and Transcendence'. **Ellis** and **Watkins** are also collaborating on a future interdisciplinary project – 'Experiments in Love' – which promises to bring together philosophy, theology, and the experimental sciences. Future avenues for interdisciplinary research include a collaborative project on the environment, which is being developed by **Poulsom**, **Cocksworth** and Honorary Research Fellow, Nick Mayhew-Smith, in collaboration with the Southlands Methodist Trust and Southlands College, Digby Stuart College, and other external partners.

Approach to Impact

Since 2014 RTRS has been focused on developing a public profile and enhancing the impact of its core research themes. We have developed our impact through key initiatives and projects – which have been designed in dialogue with the main users and intended beneficiaries of our research and facilitated with dedicated resourcing from major funders and institutional resources. Impact has been supported by additional workload allowances (of up to 10%), investment in professional practice staff (for example, Muir), recognition through promotion, and dedicated pump-priming funds within the institution.

Our research is public-facing, and our large number of partner organisations and institutions ranges from the local (Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, the Susanna Wesley Foundation) to the national (The Pentecostal Credit Union) and international (The Transatlantic Roundtable). Our collaborative approach is exemplified in **Poulsom's** work for Operation Noah, a Christian charity working with the Church to inspire action on the climate crisis in which theoretical work on the theology of creation is applied to various forms of practical action, in collaboration with environmental NGOs and other interest groups. A further key initiative in enhancing impact is Catherine of Siena College, which was established by **Beattie** to offer short courses on gender, justice, religion, and theology in order to support those working for gender justice around the world and particularly ODA-recipient nations. In 2015, it was integrated into the University of Roehampton as an independent charitable trust. Investment in postdoctoral research associates (James Butler, Rachel Rose-Burrell, Luca Badini) provide integrated and research-focused support to enhance impact across our core research themes, whilst simultaneously creating crucial bridging career opportunities for ECRs. Dedicated resources have also supported the research impact of PGR students, for example Mayhew-Smith, who now leads the 'New Creation Project', funded by the Susannah Wesley Foundation and the Southlands Methodist Trust, to help communities and the environment flourish through inspiring creative and productive relationships between people and place.

The Impact Case Studies illustrate our approach to maximising the benefit to society from our research. For example, our emphasis on collaboration is exemplified by **Watkins' Theological Action Research**, where her work has expanded and enriched the activities of the Catholic Education Service and Marriage Care, enhanced pedagogical practice at Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, and established an internationally-recognised methodology which is now core to the teaching and learning of practical theology in the UK and Europe. **Watkins' Theological Action Research** was supported with institutional impact funds in 2014-16 and was subsequently developed into the TARN. Similarly, **Rogers' work** has had a significant impact upon the role of religious minorities, and especially Black Majority Churches, in public planning. It inspired cultural organisations and creative practice, informed changes in policy and shaped the practice of government and planning professionals as well as the resources and projects of religious organisations. **Rogers' dissemination** of key research findings and policy briefings was supported by dedicated impact seed funding from central resources and ring-fenced workload allocation.

Research integrity and open access

Research ethics and integrity is led by a dedicated representative in RTRS, who mentors applicants, provides evaluations of ethics applications, and advises on ethical practices and integrity. Our governance in these areas is informed by the University of Roehampton Ethics Guidelines and the Code of Good Research Practice, and Research Integrity in accordance with the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity (Universities UK, 2019). Our approach is distinguished by its commitment to moving beyond procedural ethics to the instilling of

a culture of ethics and integrity. Ethics review is carried out at the departmental level by the Research Ethics Committee representative, in conjunction with a pool of authorised departmental reviewers. This review process takes the form of a dialogue between the applicant and the reviewer, facilitating a view of ethics as a critical, reflexive faculty. All staff and PGRs have access to training in research ethics and Good Research Practice and PGR student research is subject to the same rigorous scrutiny as that of staff, with training provided for students and supervisors through Graduate School. Common themes regarding the ethical and professional conduct and standards of RTRSs' research are reviewed annually. RTRS is also progressing towards an open research environment, and open access compliance throughout the period is 76%, with 100% compliance in 2019/2020. We have also supported the wide dissemination of research through social and broadcast media channels, and project websites, most notably through the Catholic Women Speak network and website.

Strategic priorities

Looking forward, RTRS will maintain a distinctive spread of scholars across Christian traditions, whilst advancing research into global religions that complements our vision of a publicly engaged research culture, operating at the intersections of faith, religious practice, and race. Within this context, RTRS will focus on expanding research and impact in interdisciplinary contexts in order to address the most urgent questions regarding the role of faith in society locally, nationally and internationally. Central to our plans are the continued investments in publicly-engaged and cutting-edge research at the interface of religion, philosophy and practice. We intend to extend the international reach of our research by working with international partners. Building on the success of the 'Quest for God' project, RTRS will aim to develop an innovative programme of funded research further exploring, in both theoretical and practical terms, the relationship between the cognitive and conative aspects of the human quest for God. Our expanded research focus beyond Christianity will be core to our efforts to further the international reach of our research through collaboration partners, networks and cultural organisations across North America, Europe and the Far East. Building on the success of recent initiatives, we will also extend our research engagement with local communities, faith groups and partners, to support inter-faith dialogue and to ensure the faith needs of marginalised communities inform church and local government policy. Finally, we will expand our capacity to develop diverse research talent, including supervising research students, building upon the success of the Professional Doctorate programme (DTh). Although our future research, impact and knowledge exchange strategy was designed and launched prior to the effects of the global pandemic, we remain committed to its delivery and will take advantage of the opportunities afforded by new working practices, such as virtual seminars, to extend our intellectual reach.

2. People

Since 2014, our staffing strategy has focused on investing in the recruitment and retention of outstanding staff, supporting them to produce world-leading research and impact and to secure external funding, and building on RTRS's strengths in targeted research themes to ensure the ongoing generation of our research. Underpinning our staffing strategy has been a commitment to protect investment in excellent research for individuals over sustained periods. All staff returned to this unit are on permanent contracts, and all are allocated research allowances of between 30% and 40% of their total workload time, with additional allowances of 10% utilised on an individual basis for strategic investments in impact or major bidding activity. In addition to these workload allocations, research staff are entitled to one semester of research leave every six semesters on a rota basis to support colleagues to complete major outputs and to develop new projects. 13 periods of research leave have been invested in staff since 2013/14. Research time is also protected through timetabling where possible, for example concentrating teaching in one semester, and ensuring dedicated research days. Recognition of research and its strategic importance is supported through the distribution of staff development funding. Fixed-term staff and part-time research staff are eligible for the same allowances and support as full-time research colleagues. Dedicated funds are deployed strategically to support research costs, including research trips, conferences, permissions for publications, along with impact development activity.

These funds are responsive and allocated to staff proposals according to ambition and deliverable objectives.

The strategy of RTRS has been to invest significantly in new staff at the senior level, and then to sequentially build ECR talent across our core research themes. Since 2014, the number of research active staff has increased from 7 FTE to 10.6 FTE. Appointments have been made with a view to strengthening our research base and developing our longstanding tradition of public engagement in our practical theological, ecclesiological and ecumenical commitments. The appointment of colleagues from Heythrop College has been a key strategic move in this context, consolidating expertise in philosophy of religion and theology (**Ellis, Cottingham, Ward**), interfaith dialogue (**Barnes**) and Catholic Studies (**Poulsom**). The appointments of **Watkins** and **Cocksworth** (ECR) strengthened research in the area of practical theology. A further four post-doctoral research positions, including Luca Badini (funded for three-years by the Wijngaards Institute to work on gender and social engagement in the Catholic Church) are supporting the expansion of our ECR community. Rigorous recruitment processes are in place to ensure that prospective colleagues align with, and enrich our research priorities, and also have a demonstrable track record of producing excellent research, appropriate to career stage. Research activity, including outputs, knowledge exchange, grant capture and impact are given weighting appropriate to RTRS's ambitions. New colleagues will typically have published at least one long-form output of the highest quality, and they will have a clear plan for their research development aligned with RTRS priorities, including the generation of external income, collaboration with other institutions, and public engagement.

All new staff are supported through their probationary period with clear objectives in relation to research, and additional workload allocations to support their integration in the unit. Meetings with research mentors and line managers support probation and annual appraisals, which offer structured opportunities to discuss career development and resources to support it. RTRS recognises that staff development needs vary according to research interests, the balance of research and knowledge exchange, and the career stage of each individual. Staff are supported to achieve their research ambitions through an extensive mentoring scheme. All staff work with a research mentor, who meets with them regularly to discuss, encourage, and advise on research plans, collaboration, impact, and bidding. All mentors are Professors or Readers and receive on-going training in which good practice is shared and facilitated. Mentors are matched with mentees according to research specialism and career priorities (for example, the development of bidding). Mentors might advise on the preparation of work for publication, and on-going strategy, including the professional and personal development of researchers, and – as appropriate – promotion. Our reward for research performance is primarily delivered through promotion, which is benchmarked against clear expectations for academic roles. All staff are supported to apply for promotion and receive extensive coaching to assist their applications from their mentors and staff within RTRS, and across the University where appropriate. Since 2014, two colleagues have been promoted (**Moxon** to Principal Lecturer, **Watkins** to Reader) in recognition of their exceptional contributions to the research base and their leadership work in RTRS. An annual staff appraisal and development scheme ensures that staff are given an opportunity to reflect upon the past year, detail any significant learning and development, including its impact upon individual, departmental or university objectives, and to look ahead to future objectives.

Further mechanisms to support staff development and progress include workshops on topics such as good research practice and research integrity, colleagues' experiences with bidding, career development for early career researchers, and the nature of practice-based research. RTRS has also contributed to interdisciplinary sandpit events, most recently on social justice and activism, as well as RTRS research seminars. The seminar runs every term, either in conjunction with an ongoing project or as a stand-alone theme. The most recent theme was *New Directions in the Philosophy of Religion* where authors of monographs on this topic were invited to discuss their ideas. **Cocksworth** also runs regular seminars on 'Theology, Religion and Practice' which play a critical role in the development of a research community for staff and research students working in the area of practical theology. It is especially important for DTh students and is integrated into core teaching timetables, forming an opportunity for cross-year group interdisciplinary discussion

and for students to present aspects of their research. The Digby Stuart Research Seminar also takes a student-oriented approach – this time for the MA Theology – and it runs weekly sessions on a variety of theological themes led by staff members and external researchers. Recent themes include Gender Identity, Christian Faith in dialogue, and questions of mysticism. The audiences for these seminar streams extend beyond the University, and the recent turn to online platforms has brought an international dimension to proceedings.

We also have the capacity to support the exchange of staff between academia and appropriate professional contexts through the flexible use of sabbatical time, the ability to reduce FTE of individual posts, and the use of honorary fellowships. We also have mechanisms to support those entering higher education, through the provision of a year-long Professional Development Allowances, which can provide dedicated workload allocation of up to 30% to support the transition to a research career. Our seminar series and Graduate School training programmes also include practical or professional speakers to encourage mutually supportive networking. Research Impact Officers also support these relationships once established and prioritised by Subject Research and KE Lead (**Ellis**).

RTRS places particular emphasis on career development support for ECRs and mid-career staff. New ECR staff are supported with an accelerated sabbatical and increased workload capacity to help establish their research careers in a new institutional context. They draw on the guidance of their mentors, who have generous workload allowances to coach new researchers. ECRs also benefit from exceptional peer-networks and support. The Early Career Academic Network was launched by **Cocksworth** in RTRS and is now supported as a cross-University initiative. ECRs are also proactively added to PGR supervisory teams. This serves to enrich the relevant PGR research programmes and provides opportunities for professional development as well as a pathway towards becoming the principal supervisor for research students in the future. RTRS supports colleagues who aspire to a research career with opportunities to develop their profile; for example, an enhanced professional development workload allowance has been put in place for O'Brien-Kopp (2020-) to support the transition to a research career at the University. Postdoctoral researchers are given similar opportunities to develop their careers and have access to the same range of research support as faculty, including mentoring and research funds. Attracting postdoctoral researchers is a key priority for RTRS, and we actively nurture research bids that involve such positions.

Postgraduate researchers

The PGR community has been central to the development of our research culture since 2014. PGR recruitment is facilitated through open competition for all funded opportunities, and PGRs are able to approach the Graduate School to identify appropriate supervisory teams. All PGR applications are supported by the Research Degrees Convenor (**Cocksworth**) and the Deputy Head of School (Research and Knowledge Exchange). PGRs are only recruited where projects align to staff expertise and research strategy. We have sought to build PGR capacity by recruiting high-calibre students through a range of funding sources and supporting them to successful completion. We have also assisted them beyond graduation by offering career development as postdoctoral scholars and lecturers. The growing research profile of RTRS has led to an increase in PGR students since REF2014. We have had 8 PhD completions in this period, a 14% increase when compared to REF2014. However, we have also significantly expanded our doctoral community. We currently have 17 PhD students enrolled, and the introduction of the Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology (DTh) in 2015 has been a great success in supporting the expansion of this community, with 28 current students. We also participate in the AHRC DTP, TECHNE, and have one successful completion in RTRS from this scheme (Mayhew-Smith). TECHNE embeds a cohort approach to research training, creating networking opportunities for an interdisciplinary community of doctoral scholars across the consortium's member institutions.

All PhD students, and DTh students at thesis writing stage, are allocated a supervisory team, usually consisting of two, and occasionally three, research active members of staff. These teams often straddle disciplines within RTRS and occasionally other departments, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of much of the work undertaken by our PGRs. Full-time students meet with

supervisors at least 6 times a year; part-time students at least four times a year, at least one meeting being with the whole supervisory team. A record of each supervision is made by students and supervisors together and this scrutinised at the School-level Research Student Review Board, and also at University-level. There is an Annual Progress Review, as well as milestones for progression. These processes, together with flexible arrangements for interruption, parental leave and other equality related circumstances, ensure that there is adequate support throughout the doctoral journey. Since March 2020, we have added further levels of support to all PGRs to help them through the pandemic. This has included funded extensions, extra academic and pastoral support when required, and the revision of research topics where necessary.

We support PGRs at the level of both research and teaching development. They are given various career-development opportunities including teaching experience and research assistance work. They are routinely encouraged to attend and offer short papers at conferences, and a minimum of £600 is available to each PGR student for such activity and other research needs. Our PGRs benefit from being members of a cross-University community, through the training and events offered by the Graduate School. In particular, RTRS research events are complemented by the Graduate School's provision of the Research Students' Development Programme (RSDP), while Arts and Humanities training is provided by the School of Humanities, with subject-specific provision offered by RTRS. We also recognise the diverse career paths pursued by our PGR students, and are committed to identifying mentoring and training opportunities that support their aspirations.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The overall health and wellbeing of all staff and students is a priority for RTRS. Staff wellbeing is delivered through our college system. All staff are affiliated to one of our four colleges, who provide research events, community building opportunities, and dedicated Wellbeing Officers for staff. All staff and PGRs have been offered mental health first aid training in 2020, whilst dedicated research staff and PGR wellbeing sessions have been delivered on mental health. In addition, the Subject Research and KE Lead and Research Degrees Convenor work with the Head of School and Deputy Head of School (Research and Knowledge Exchange) to identify and address the needs of colleagues and PGRs to ensure they are supported by University services (HR, Graduate School, Staff and Student Wellbeing). They also provide bespoke support, for example, the allocation of duties, timing of work, relieving pressures of internal deadlines and ensuring that workspaces are appropriate.

RTRS's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is guided by the University's Equality and Diversity Strategy and the policies in which these objectives are embedded. Researchers' particular circumstances are addressed within RTRS. We ensure that University-level policies are applied effectively and in ways that support research productivity. For example, University policy provides a semester research leave either immediately before or following a significant period of parental leave. Seminars are scheduled to support participation of carers and parents, and workloads and the distribution of teaching are managed to suit individual staff and their personal circumstances. There is support in place for those with long-term illness, and where this involves a phased return to work a significantly reduced workload is agreed. Arrangements for flexible and remote learning can be put in place if personal circumstance demands. Part-time and fixed-term staff are supported in the same way as full-time staff in terms of career progression. Research and knowledge exchange expectations, in terms of volume, are weighted according to FTE.

Our selection of outputs process was accompanied by a robust equality and diversity analysis to ensure decisions had no adverse effect on staff with protected characteristics. Of our 27 submitted research outputs, 11% were produced by staff who declared a disability while 71% are by male colleagues. Our submission is evenly distributed across age groups, with the majority of outputs belonging to the 50-59 (26%), 60-69 (22%), 70-79 (22%) and 80-89 (15%) groupings. We have strived for a balanced, inclusive submission comprising the work of researchers at all career levels: 48% of our submitted outputs are attributed to Professors, 22% to Readers and 22% to Senior Lecturers. Our research community's inclusivity is reflected in the diversity of our academic staff and PGR base. 23% of our research staff identify as female, 8% identify as disabled and 9% as

LGBTQ+. Of our PGR students, 67% identify as female, 14% identify as disabled, 18% as BAME, 6% as LGBTQ+ (with 14% withholding this information). We recognise that PGR recruitment is an important component of ensuring the inclusive nature of our disciplines, and growing numbers of our students are from BAME and other non-traditional academic backgrounds. There has been a concomitant expansion of research themes in the areas of race, gender, and interfaith dialogue. We also recognise the systemic inequalities represented in our own staff base and will address this through positive action initiatives in our future staffing strategy.

RTRS has made a distinctive contribution to the promotion of several features of this institutional strategy given our investments in race, faith, and gender. Examples include: work on Black Majority Churches as demonstrated by **Burgess**' research on African Pentecostalism; promotion of the role and voice of women in the Roman Catholic Church through the advocacy work of Catholic Women Speak; the promotion of interfaith relations and dialogue through **Barnes**' work with communities of faith in the London area, and his establishing of a theological framework for such work (*Interreligious Learning: Dialogue, Spirituality and the Christian Imagination* [2014] and *Waiting on Grace: A Theology of Dialogue* [2020]). Investment in the Catherine of Siena College has enabled a research informed approach to promoting CPD opportunities across the global south. We are also committed to supporting inclusive practices that address profound and systemic inequalities in relation to the diversity of academic staff in the discipline.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Since 2014, RTRS has intentionally built capacities for research and research leadership. This has led to an increase in our external funding of 210% (earning £489,671 in total). Successful grant capture has been generated from DIUS research councils and the British Academy (£26,781), EU Government bodies (£60,304), non-EU based charities (£97,462), UK based charities (£88,472), and UK Industry and Commerce and Public Corporations (£5,169). The diversity of funders is matched by the range of exciting research projects they have funded. Porticus has supported **Beattie**'s work (£75,315) and Watkin's development Catholic Practice-Engaged Theology (£19,648). **Watkins** was also awarded £31,881 from the Charles Plater Trust for 'Catholic Marriage Care Ltd', £20,270 from the Susannah Wesley Foundation for 'Social Action', and £23,801 from the Southlands Methodist trust for 'An Outline for a Theological Action Research Project'. These sources of funding have been integral in enabling the iterative and mutually reinforcing development of Watkin's research and impact. The Southlands Methodist Trust supported the 'Signs of Wonder' project led by **Rogers** and **Burgess** (£3,414), and **Burgess**' project on teaching and learning in practical theological education (£8,266). **Burgess** was also funded by the Susanna Wesley Foundation (£8,116) for a project on 'The Pedagogical Challenges of Teaching Ministerial Theology'. Our strength in philosophy of religion led to a significant grant for **Ellis** from the Templeton Religion Trust (£139,472) for a collaborative project with KCL and the University of Virginia on 'The Quest for God: Towards a Philosophical Theology of Desire'. External funding has increased our capacities for research, with the appointment of part-time administrators including a 0.6 FTE Research Administrator in relation to the Plater Trust funding (2016-2017), a 0.8 FTE Research Assistant in relation to **Watkins**' TAR projects (2018-2020), and a 0.2 FTE Research Administrator for **Ellis**' 'Quest for God' project (2019-2020).

We have leveraged major support from external sources to the benefit of the University's research community more broadly. In collaboration with the Society of the Sacred Heart (one of the University's founding Providing Bodies), five international PGR scholarships have been offered to increase research capacities in ODA recipient nations, and benefit individual scholars. The Southlands Methodist Trust, based at Southlands College, supports educational activities, including research, chaplaincy and charitable work undertaken in and through Southlands College, that reflects its Methodist foundation and ethos. One of its key aims is to support the development of scholarship, research and innovation by providing funding for projects. Since 2013, it has provided £150,298 to fund five projects by researchers within the unit (£2,424 to **Calderini** for one project, £2,504 to **Rogers** for one project and £145,370 to **Watkins** for three projects).

These awards reflect the robustness of our research management, mentoring, and support systems. Our approach to bidding, and our success in this area, reflects our broader operational and scholarly infrastructure for research and impact. All bids are supported through a rigorous process of internal peer-review, with additional review from an internal cross-institutional peer review college for all early career and substantial grant applications. Our success in the field of grant capture is a testament to the ambition and quality of staff at various stages of their career development, the levels of support provided by the University, and the emphasis we place on research excellence, impact, and public engagement.

The significant and sustained improvement in RTRS's research income has been led by the Subject Research and KE Lead (**Ellis**). The Subject Research and KE Lead oversees all research activity in RTRS, across staff and PGRs, and sets the strategic direction for the unit and its contribution to the delivery of the University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy. **Ellis** is supported by the Research Degrees Convenor, who enriches and empowers the research student community, and by senior colleagues who convene seminar series, drive participation in external research networks, and provide intellectual leadership across RTRS. The Subject Research and KE Lead is part of the institutional infrastructure. At the School level, research is coordinated by the Research Committee whose Chair, the Deputy Head of School (Research and Knowledge Exchange), also sits on the University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. The role of the School Research Committee is to provide strategic oversight of the full range of School research activity, including the work of individual research staff and students; the programme of research seminars, conferences and other events; invitations to, and support for, visiting scholars and research students; and the development of strategic initiatives (e.g., open access) and funding bids.

The University operates centralised models of research and impact support which have represented a major investment since 2014, with new dedicated posts to support developmental activity. RTRS is also supported by a dedicated Research Impact Officer, who assists with the development of pathways to impact for individual research projects as well as the evaluation and evidencing of any impact that is delivered through successful grants. External collaborations are facilitated by support from the Research Development Officer, the Communications team, and Legal Services and Contracts. Our research infrastructure includes the University's new conference facilities and Royal Institute of British Architects award-winning Library, which enable RTRS staff and PGRs to conduct their own research and to collaborate within and beyond the unit. RTRS research events including symposia and conferences are supported by the University's Estates, conferencing, IT and Catering departments. Recent successful conferences organised by RTRS at Roehampton include 'Growth and Decline in the Anglican Communion, 1980 to the Present' (2017) and 'Diaspora Churches and Public Engagement' (2020). All staff and postdocs have dedicated offices and IT infrastructure. PGR students share an accessible, secure space, with additional dedicated PGR study spaces in the Library. The Library, opened in 2018, provides access to a wide range of printed sources, e-books and online databases, journals and special collections. Three of the University's four historic colleges are built on religious foundations, and there are three corresponding archives housed at the University which are of research interest to RTRS scholars, as well as historians and education specialists. The archives are supported with dedicated archivists and are part of the University's investment in their historical significance. Specific archives and special collections of interest to RTRS include the Bishop's Conference Collection (a record of an approach to catechesis and religious education over three decades in the Catholic community in the UK), the Digby Stuart Archive on Catholic Education, the Queen's Foundation Authority and Governance Archive 1998-2002 (records of a project commissioned by the Queen's Foundation investigating the nature, exercise and experience of authority in the Catholic church in Britain), and the Jewish Resource Centre (a collection of theological, historical and pedagogical texts).

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

Contribution to society

Since 2014, we have extended our outward-facing focus, promoting research collaborations with academic colleagues in other institutions, whilst consolidating our communities of engagement locally, nationally, and internationally. Our engagement strategies are focused primarily on three constituencies: faith groups, NGOs and local government. In building these relationships, we have sought to make an active contribution to the advancement of a just society.

Central to our work with faith groups is the relationship between RTRS and the University's Providing Bodies. The work of RTRS and its focus on Catholic Studies, for example, is enhanced through our relationships with the Society of the Sacred Heart. The Society's ongoing investments in our research and its outcomes, including provision of PGR studentships, ensure that it remains topical. Similarly, our relationship with Southlands Methodist Trust (SMT), as the providing body for Southlands College, contributes exceptional investment in our research cultures, and essential resources to fund embryonic research projects (**Watkins** and **Rogers**). A further example of our extensive engagement with faith groups is to be found in **Watkins'** invitation from the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity to serve on the Methodist Roman Catholic International Dialogue Committee and the Joint Group for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. **Watkins** is also as a trustee of the relationship charity Marriage Care. Such social and ecclesial involvement forms mutually informative channels of communication between the RTRS's academic research and its potential and actual beneficiaries in the wider world. We also maintain a close relationship with the Wijngaards Institute, one of the leading independent think tanks promoting gender equality, evidence-based sexual ethics, democratic governance and accountability in the Roman Catholic Church. This institute has supported the work of Catherine of Sienna College.

Our reach extends beyond faith groups, and we participate in and enrich diverse networks of NGOs in particular. **Poulsom** is a trustee of the environment charity Project Noah, and a board member of Operation Noah, where he combines the theoretical focus of his research on the theology of creation, with various forms of practical action in justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, particularly with young adults. Through Operation Noah, **Poulsom** also supports Teach the Future – a student-led campaign calling for the education system to prepare young people to tackle the climate crisis which organises regular events. There is also a programme aimed at diocesan staff and volunteers whose role has an environmental aspect, and a new carbon footprint tool has been developed to enable Churches to measure their footprint from different activities – energy, travel, food, waste, water and other expenditure. **Beattie** has also been a member of CAFOD's Theological Reference Group and has acted as a theological advisor. **Rogers** has formally partnered with Theos Think Tank, Equality and Human Rights Commission through his Faith and Place network.

RTRS has invested significantly in local government networks, supporting the role of faith in society. We have focused the development of these networks in Greater London, but our reach extends nationally. **Rogers** and **Burgess** have developed extensive networks with London boroughs, many of which have been formalised through collaboration, partnership and impact through the Faith and Place Network, including Hackney, Southwark, Haringey and Wandsworth. David Muir (Head of Whitelands College) provides a crucial link between research and practice, collaborating with researchers in RTRS and connecting them with his extensive practitioner and policy networks. Muir is a member of the External Council of the Downing Street Black Leaders' Group and the Mayor of London Leaders' Group. These memberships have had an impact upon his collaborative work with RTRS. Muir has also engaged ecumenical structures, acting as Co-Secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Anglican-Pentecostal Theological Study group.

RTRS's commitment to engaging and benefitting a diverse range of research users through these discrete, but overlapping, pathways is complemented by a sustained programme of public engagement, primarily focused on broadcasts, podcasts, and interviews. **Calderini** contributed to the BBC World Service Heart and Soul programme 'Women making space in the mosque' presented by Samira Ahmad. She also took part in the BBC Radio 3 Islamic Golden Age Series. **Cottingham** was interviewed recently for his reflections on religion for 3.16, and for Aeon in

conjunction with the launch of his 2020 book on the soul. He has also taken part in numerous broadcasts, for example, a series of interviews on topics in the philosophy of religion on the website 'Why are we Here?'. **Ward** has participated in numerous podcasts and interviews, notable examples being a debate with Dennett on Premium Radio on the topics of God, soul, and freewill, and various public lectures on atheism and theism. **Beattie** has been a regular contributor to BBC Radio 4's *Thought for the Day*. **Ellis'** most recent interview was for Trip Fuller's Homebrewed Christianity podcast where she discussed the nature of expansive naturalism and the question of desire, and several of her public lectures are available to download on YouTube. Her two most recent research projects have included a significant public engagement element, including school workshops at Ripon Grammar School (2020) and Magdalen College School, Oxford (2018). She has also worked with the Progressive Christian Network and is part of a group run by Clare Carlisle at KCL which involves communicating new directions in theology and philosophy of religion to teachers in the sector.

Contribution to the research base

RTRS plays an integral role in the leadership of research through engagement in national and international research and professional bodies. **Watkins** (2013-2017) and **Rogers** (2017-2019) have both served as Chairs of the British and Irish Association for Practical Theology (BIAPT). **Cocksworth** is executive committee member for the Society for the Study of Theology (SST) (2013-present) and has been treasurer since 2016. He is also Assistant Editor of the Anglican Theological Review and Associate of the Aberdeen Centre for Protestant Theology (University of Aberdeen). **Rogers** has been a member of the UK Committee as a representative of BIAPT (2017-2019). In the field of Philosophy of Religion, **Ellis** is a trustee of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, and she serves on the executive committee of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion. She is also on the advisory board of the Major Research Network in theology and science at the University of Edinburgh (funded by the John Templeton Foundation).

The quality of research in RTRS has been acknowledged through awards and fellowships. **Ward** is a Fellow of the British Academy, and Honorary Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. He has received honorary doctorates from Amsterdam and Glasgow, and, most recently, from the Virginia Theological Seminary. **Cottingham** is Honorary Fellow of St John's College, Oxford. **Ellis** and **Ward** have been elected to the *International Society for Science and Religion*. **Barnes** received the Archbishop of Canterbury's Hubert Walter Award for Interreligious Cooperation (2019). **Rogers'** work on the *Faith and Place Network* was nominated for an award of the Royal Town Planning Institute's Excellence in Research programme (2018).

RTRS researchers also contribute extensively to editorial boards and editorships. **Ellis** serves on the editorial board of the philosophy of religion journal *Religious Studies* and she co-edited a special edition of the journal on 'Religious Experience and Desire' (2019). **Ward** is on the editorial board of *Modern Believing*, as well as being emeritus editor for *Religious Studies*. **Beattie** sits on the editorial board of the *Journal of Religion and Gender* and *The Journal of Theology and Sexuality*. **Rogers** and **Watkins** are on the editorial board of *Practical Theology*; **Burgess** was Assistant-Editor for *Pentecostal Studies* 2009-18; **Moxon** is on the editorial board of the *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theology Association*. All editorial board members participate in peer-review for relevant journals, and such work is also carried out by other staff members for other journals (e.g., *Ecclesial Practices* [**Rogers; Watkins**], *Political Theology* [**Rogers**]). Book reports for academic presses are also undertaken regularly by RTRS members, including Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Routledge, Rowman and Littlefield, and Bloomsbury, and SCM and T&T Clarke.

Our colleagues contribute to research assessment both nationally and internationally. **Beattie** has reviewed promotion applications to research posts at other UK universities, and **Ellis** has consulted with St Mary's University, London Metropolitan University, Creighton University, USA, and Australian Catholic University. **Ellis** was external panel member for the approval of the MA/PG Dip/PG Cert in Contemporary Ethics, Spirituality, Contemporary Faith and Belief, and Pastoral Care and Chaplaincy for the Cambridge Theological Federation (2018). She is also an assessor for the Templeton Religion Trust. Colleagues also conduct doctoral examinations both in the UK

and beyond. These have included viva examinations of students in Uppsala (**Beattie**), Australia (**Beattie**), South Africa (**Beattie**); Leuven (**Ellis**), Amsterdam (**Ellis**) as well as at prestigious UK faculties such as Durham (**Watkins**), Oxford (**Cottingham**, **Ellis**), Chester (Watkins; **Burgess**) and KCL (**Watkins**, **Cottingham**, **Ellis**).

All RTRS staff regularly present their research at national and international venues. **Ward** was a visiting Professor at four US universities between 2016 and 2018, and **Cottingham** was keynote in Finland (2015), Poland (2017), and Texas (2018), as well as at numerous UK gatherings. **Ellis** has given keynotes and panel presentations in Chicago (2016), San Antonio (2017), Rome (2018), Innsbruck (2017), Budapest (2018), Bologna (2019), San Diego, (2019), and Leuven (2020). She has also given many talks and workshops in the UK, including a keynote at the Scottish Church Theology Society in 2020 and addressing the Interfaculty Centre for Catholic Thought in Leuven (2020). **Beattie** gave keynotes in Nairobi (2015), Sarajevo (2018), and Stockholm (2014). **Calderini** has brought her scholarship on Islam to various events, including an address at an international conference on 'Wisdom, Faith and Dialogue' in Naples (2018) and the 2018 Edinburgh international conference on Muslim women's religious leadership and authority. **Watkins** was invited to speak at the 2017 and 2019 American Academy of Religion conference, and at the Universidad di Javeriana, Bogota (2018). Her other keynotes include conferences in Amsterdam (Protestant Theological University, VU, 2017), Bucharest (Ecclesiology and Ethnography Conference, 2015) Uppsala (2015), and Rome (International Academy for Marital Spirituality, 2015). **Poulsom** has presented work on Schillebeeckx and environmental theology at conferences in Nijmegen (2014), Swanwick (2016), and Krakow (2018). **Burgess** delivered keynotes on Anglicism in Nigeria in London (2018, 2017) and Nigeria (2016). **Cocksworth** has given keynotes at Princeton Theological Seminary (2018), the Diocese of Birmingham (2020), and Abtei Münsterschwartzach, Germany (2019).