

**Institution:** Leeds Beckett University

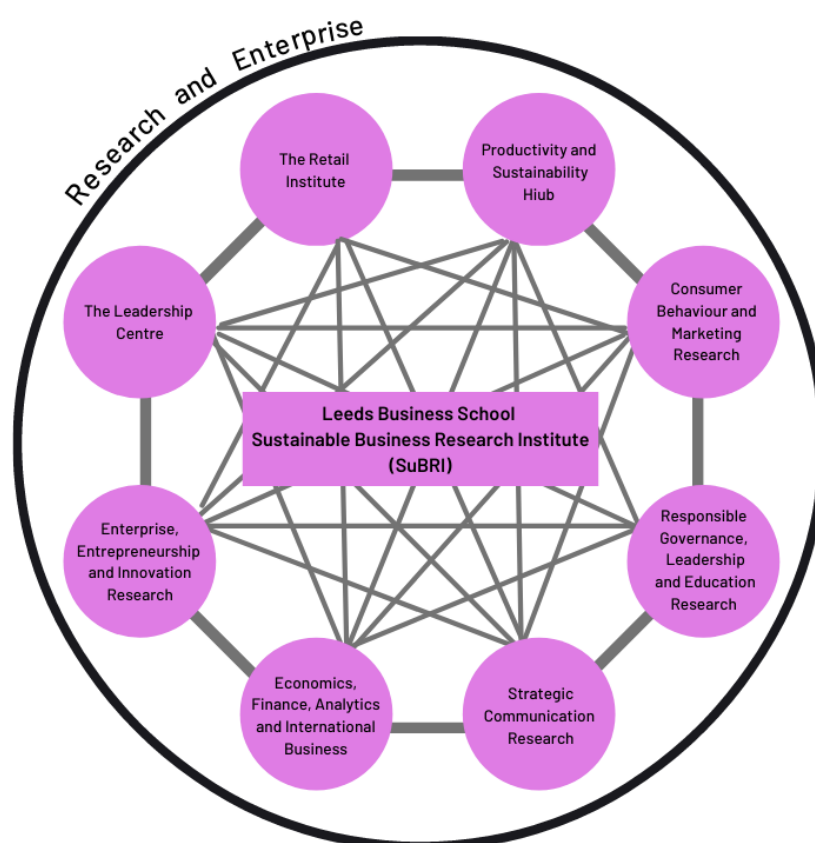
**Unit of assessment:** 17 Business and Management

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

### 1.1 Overview and context

Leeds Business School's (LBS) mission is **'to engage in impactful applied research that supports business performance, leadership and responsibility'**. LBS is a large School of 130 academic staff (112.3 FTE) operating within Leeds Beckett University (LBU). The Unit's mission towards impactful and applied research matches the University's strategic plan and is reflected in the organisation of research around a coordinating Institute (the Sustainable Business Research Institute (SuBRI)) with subject themes (each with a subject leader) and research centres (see Figure 1). These areas represent both LBS's teaching and research focus:

Figure 1. Unit 17 research environment for Business and Management within LBS



Although staff research agendas map roughly onto the six research, teaching and governance areas, colleagues also work across and between them, as well as contributing to interdisciplinary research projects across LBU. As one of the core mechanisms to deliver our REF aims we established SuBRI in 2018 as the umbrella research unit within LBS.

LBS has maintained research excellence, returning high-quality outputs for RAE2008 and REF2014. LBS is committed to producing research that contributes innovatively to knowledge and professional practice across disciplines: this commitment is underpinned by a range of methodological and theoretical expertise, as well as by ongoing engagement with local and UK government, EU funders and institutions, small businesses and large multinationals, the third sector, and international organisations. LBU is a recognised '**anchor institution**' (impact case study) within the Leeds City Region and the wider Northern economy, and LBS is a vital hub of knowledge and support for local business and policy.

As signified in SuBRI's name, the underpinning mission of research across LBS is **business sustainability**. This is reflected in the key areas of strength represented in the themes emerging from three case studies submitted to REF:

- work providing **small medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** with support and tools to thrive sustainably;
- originating work and research about '**anchor**' institutions and the local economy;
- work on strategic communication and the principles of **excellence in communications** management.

LBS's inclusive research strategy has borne fruit over the last REF period and our REF2021 return will **double** that of 2014 in terms of FTE staff returned. We **tripled** the completion rates of our doctoral students, recruited more staff on doctoral programmes and **increased** our **bid funding** activities and related impact.

## **1.2 Research strategy**

The School's research strategy is set by the LBS Senior Leadership Team (SLT: Dean, Director of Research, Research Manager, Heads of Subject, Academic Services Manager) with input from the SuBRI Steering Group (SG). The SG is chaired by the LBS Director of Research (**Tench**) and comprises six Research Leads, all LBS professors, and two external critical friends (one from a different School and one a Visiting Professor with extensive business practice experience). The principal goal of SLT is to promote and support a community of researching academics with a focus on developing and supporting staff in an engaging research environment.

The LBS Director of Research sits on the University Research and Enterprise Committee,

and Research Degrees Sub-Committee as well as the Directors' Forum. This forum is where all LBU Directors of Research meet to support and steer the strategic formulation and delivery of the University's research strategy.

Following REF2014, LBS evaluated and benchmarked its performance to identify areas for improvement encapsulated in its three strategic aims:

**Aim 1: We have *increased the number of academics engaged in independent research*.** Following the internal REF2014 review, LBU created the post of Director of Research (DoR), currently held by Tench, and embarked on a concerted effort to build breadth and depth in research and integrate primary research activity more fully across and throughout the School. This included overhauling the system for allocating research profile hours, consolidating research activity under the SuBRI banner, and introducing the Small Bids funding scheme to accelerate and support staff research activities (see Section 2). In **RAE2008 we submitted 16.8 FTE staff**, which in REF2014 **improved to 17.4 FTE staff**. We aimed to increase this to 25-30 FTE and for REF2021 our return is **38 colleagues (34.3 FTE)**, representing 30% of LBS academics, almost **doubling** our 2014 submission. This is an exceptional transformation that reflects LBS's commitment to developing our staff research profile and growing reputation as a respected venue for business and management research in the North.

LBS has developed and consolidated an effective administrative support structure for research under SuBRI, to position the Research and Enterprise Support Team as a 'one-stop-shop' for academics in need of research support at all levels. This structure mirrors the facilities and services being provided by LBU centrally through its Research and Enterprise offices. As a measure of meeting this aim since the last REF return, LBS targeted an average of 4 outputs per FTE for REF2021 (137). This target has been surpassed with demonstrable improvement in the number and quality of publications resulting in **over 350 externally reviewed eligible outputs** for REF2021 compared with just over 70 in REF2014. As investments in staff development and research support yield results, we are well positioned to keep improving the number of staff publishing as well as the quality, quantity and range of those publications beyond this REF cycle.

Since 2015 LBS has developed small working groups for research, aimed at creating and encouraging a research culture at the subject group micro-level. Each group includes up to four experienced members of staff with an established publication profile and research

skills. Members meet regularly to discuss current events, publications and ideas. Members can also develop early research ideas through subject-level seminar series. LBS has also focused on building and expanding research networks and integrating into existing networks beyond the university. This is evidenced in Section 4 with long-standing international collaborations.

LBS is committed to open access and requires that all research outputs, not just those hoping to be submitted to REF, are logged in the institution's research management system, and, where copyright allows, the author accepted manuscript is deposited in the Leeds Beckett Symplectic Repository. LBS as a School prefers the Green OA model and has adopted a policy of not funding journal publication fees.

**Aim 2:** we continue to deliver on our overall mission by building a vibrant research community and by *improving research student management and performance (Aim 2)*. LBS has had a policy of recruiting capable postgraduate research students with insightful ideas and enabling them to produce high-quality, practice-relevant research. LBS has maintained a strong doctoral cohort since 2014 (**53 HESA qualifying doctoral completions** in the period, up from 17 in REF2014) and throughout this REF period, with a well-represented Doctorate in Business Administration (the DBA, which was re-designed and launched in 2019) alongside our PhD programme, with a focus on recruiting students with professional and academic experience. Four LBS students who completed within this REF period went on to take FTE posts as academic staff within the School (e.g. Robertson), while others have gone on to other institutions (e.g. Mariutti, Amo-Mensah, Bin Saedan) or senior leadership and board director positions in PLCs, and international firms (e.g. McCulley, Obi, Lokpobiri ) in the private and public sectors, including in Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Ghana, Greece and Mauritius.

To support LBS's research strategy a new role of Post Graduate Research Student Programme Director (held by **Shubita**) was introduced in April 2019 to oversee all development and quality processes for postgraduate research students and to act as a conduit and liaison with LBU's central Graduate School structure.

Building on academic collaborative networks and research projects, the School has had an **internationalisation policy** of actively attracting and supporting **visiting scholars** and doctoral students to facilitate network-building and collaborative research. Since the inception of SuBRI, LBS has made it easier for international academic colleagues to visit

LBU for up to a year as Visiting Scholars. LBS hosted six visiting academics in 2019 alone, from *Argentina, China and Malaysia*. The Visiting Scholar programme has enabled our Accounting and Finance area to collaborate with scholars from Ningbo and Hubei universities on the Chinese financial context, with the first of several papers resulting from these collaborations currently in review.

**Aim 3:** To help advance our mission ‘to engage in applied research that supports future sustainable business performance, leadership and responsibility’ we have **strengthened the research environment through increased internal and external research funding (Aim 3)**. LBS has a long history of engaging in applied research which is designed or commissioned to create business and social impact. Our strategy is, therefore, to continue investing in and looking for support (QR and internal Small Bids Fund) to fund research that makes an impact on the professions serviced by the School’s teaching framework as well as the research themes within SuBRI. The ongoing impact strategy for the Unit is two-fold:

1. To continue building the long-standing impact areas for LBS concerning **SME innovation and productivity, communication and social change, and responsible governance and leadership** in business;
2. To support new and emerging research to develop future **societal impact** based on other areas of long-standing engagement with business stakeholders including **sustainability initiatives** for the British retail industry, **women and leadership**, service delivery in **local government**, and **integrated reporting**.

We produce impactful academic research that adds value not only to LBS but also to the people and organisations we partner with and to society as a whole (see Section 4). This is reflected, for instance, in the work with SMEs undertaken across the region through programmes such as **Ad:Venture** ([ad-venture.org.uk/partners/](http://ad-venture.org.uk/partners/)) and the **Independent Food and Drink Academy** ([www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/ifda/](http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/ifda/)). LBS holds the **Small Business Charter** award for its contribution to the small business sector - re-awarded in 2019 with reference by the review panel to LBS’s foundational work on **Anchor Institution** research (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, **Gold and Devins and impact case**).

Linked with LBS’s mission and aims, we develop research that supports future sustainable business performance, leadership and responsibility that contributes to knowledge and practice nationally and internationally. Examples include work with local authorities (**Barnett**) and in the Leeds City Region (**Devins and Gold Anchors** impact case) but also work with global practitioner organisations and networks as done through the annual

European Communication Monitor, now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year (**Tench** impact case and book, Tench, 2017). Further meeting the sub-objectives outlined above (impact on the Northern economy and its key stakeholders), the Unit develops research that has impact and meaningful benefit for the Northern economy, such as the work undertaken on **succession planning** and transfer of knowledge within **family businesses (Devins)**.

To further deliver on Aim 3 on external research since REF 2014, we have introduced several initiatives:

1. Structured all research developments through the DoR and SuBRI;
2. Supporting this process, we appointed a **Research Bids Manager (Douglas)** to develop plans to build critical mass in research, by coordinating and streamlining funding applications and contract research around the six key themes, and by increasing the amount of support offered to research staff, including recruiting additional professors to strengthen research leadership. Over this REF period, LBS has worked to put this plan into action (see Section 3, bid submission increase value);
3. Offer **research time on work allocation** models (WAM) to support staff in developing and delivering impactful research projects;
4. Allocated resource through the Leadership Team for the School's Research Manager (**Wymer**) to be the **impact champion** and manager for LBS;
5. Invested additional School resource in an impact research assistant;
6. All research bids are critically peer-reviewed before submission by the bids manager and a bids review panel;
7. Our Professor of Enterprise (**Devins**) supports the Unit's external relations with regional anchor businesses and chairs the small business group to facilitate business research and collaboration.

Through LBS's new bid management structure, we have increased the submission of research bids to external funding bodies and organisations nationally and internationally (**120 unique external bids**); increased the **value of bids to a total of £9.69m** in the period; as well as improved the diversity of bid targets (British Academy, UKRI etc).

Lastly, building on our current strategy and upward trajectory our ambitions are to continue to *strengthen the research environment through increased internal and external research funding* (over the next 5 years) by aiming to:

- develop a broader cohesive research community and culture;

- consolidate and build upon the School's reputation for excellence in income-generating applied research within the region (at levels including 10 local authorities within the Leeds City Region, Yorkshire, and the areas covered by the Northern Powerhouse);
- develop projects aligned with the national Industrial Strategy, particularly in working with **LBU Enterprise Services** to build mutually productive links with business, expanding our contribution to practice and to academic enterprise (evidenced through **4 new KTP awards** since REF2014);
- continue to work on European and international research funding initiatives that fit with the Institute's themes and strategy such as the recently won (December 2020) **£1.5m** project with the **European Union's European Social Fund** for the **Women Empowered through Coaching And Networking (#WECAN)** project (**Topic**);
- identify and explore new and significant problems, questions and issues within business, management and government policy, and contribute to up-to-the-minute academic responses to topical issues such as **Brexit (Morgan, Nasir)**, **sugar tax (Bridge and Tench)**, **integrated reporting (Robertson)**, **COVID19** crisis (**Tench and Bridge**) and electrification of transport (**Morgan**);
- contribute to new pedagogies, methods, and discourses for practitioners and business academics (**Devins**, Green Business School), and build on existing workplace/practice-focused programmes – such as those offered by The Leadership Centre, the Degree Apprenticeship schemes at BA and MA level, and the DBA – and the new ways of thinking and research directions emerging from them;
- build our research findings back into our teaching and professional work, to ensure that all our provision is founded on well-grounded, up-to-date thinking and to enhance student and client engagement (**Diers-Lawson; Dean**).

## 2. People

### 2.1 Staffing strategy and staff development

LBS has been committed to **increase the number of academics engaged in research** (Aim 1) by focusing our research staffing strategy on staff development. The objective has been to develop their research profile and to support early career researchers (ECRs) to transition to full independence (Research England REF guidance and LBU *Code of Practice* which equates to staff receiving 20% of time responsibility for research, as part of their WAM). The School now has **53.8% of academic colleagues (doubled from REF2014)** engaged with research as research-independent staff (38), developing researchers (9) or those studying research degrees (23). Of 130 staff in LBS, 30% are being returned in

REF2020 as independent researchers, an increase of almost 100% from REF2014.

LBS invests approximately **£400,000** a year in staff time annually (7 FTE). This involves an annual research hours allocation process where colleagues apply for extra protected research time (additional to 10% (150 hours) allocated to all staff for research and scholarly activity) based on their recent and projected output. Research-independent colleagues receive 20% of their work profile (280 hours or one full day a week equivalent), while colleagues not yet conducting fully independent work receive 10% (150 hours) to support their research development. Last year LBS's investment equated to more than **11,000 hours** via this process, equivalent to approximately **7 FT staff** – a significant investment in future research strength. For lecturers, delivery profiles are managed so that classes are stacked up, freeing up full days for research.

To **strengthen the academic environment** all staff are supported to incorporate their research and that of colleagues into their teaching. The annual Staff Conference was expanded in 2018 to a **Research and Teaching Conference** to explore the benefits that one can provide the other. This conference has run for over **15 years** (a separate Doctoral Student Symposium was split off from it in 2013) and incorporates staff presentations on current work, workshop and plenary sessions on topics such as presentation advice, academic writing and career development, as well as a keynote speaker. The conference attracts over 60 internal participants, with representation from newer colleagues and doctoral students. Informal feedback has consistently been positive and suggests that researchers benefit from presenting their work in this supportive environment and engaging with their peers.

LBS has expanded the staff development funding available for colleagues interested in undertaking doctoral degrees, covering all **doctoral fees for staff and currently has 23 FT** colleagues studying for research degrees, representing **18.5% of LBS staff**. Over this REF several colleagues have completed research degrees and been promoted outside the University and eight colleagues have completed their doctorate and are still at LBS (Beech, O. Jones, Rasha, Richardson, Robertson, Sajjadi, Topić, Trem); most have outputs eligible for this REF cycle, meeting our aim to **increase the number of staff engaged in independent research** (Aim 1). Colleagues studying for a PhD, DBA or Research Masters receive 10% additional hours per year on top of the standard allocation for research and scholarly activity (a total of 20% of the WAM).



In 2018 LBS launched the **Small Bids scheme**, a competitive collaborative research pot funded out of LBS' share of LBU Quality Research (QR) funding to support and develop **early career staff and collaborative projects**. Awards range between £2000-£10,000 each. Researchers can apply for funding to support a pilot collaborative project to be completed within 12 months, acting as a springboard for further bids and work. Each project must include LBS team members from more than one subject area (external collaboration is highly encouraged but not compulsory) and collect primary data. In total, 4 projects were funded in 2018, 7 in 2019 and 10 for 2020. One of the 2018 projects, led by **Miguel**, became the basis for the **European Commission-funded COLECO** project examining the impact of Airbnb and other accommodation companies in the 'collaborative economy', a project worth approximately £90,000 over two years.

### **Research mapping**

As part of the staffing strategy and to address our **aim to 'strengthen the research environment through increased internal and external research funding'**, the DoR conducted an audit of all academics' research knowledge and skills (survey September 2018). From this, he commissioned two **network mapping** specialists within the School (**O. Jones and Cardoso Castro**) to collect data on recent, in-progress and upcoming research projects and publications within LBS and to map the relations between them. The process revealed several previously unrecognised clusters of common interest between colleagues in disparate areas and has helped individual subject areas identify directions for new work (e.g. productivity, women in business and leadership, leading to bid success). This mechanism is being used to inform current and future bids for funds by bringing together academics from different disciplines to work on themes.

Additionally, each subject group now has a **Research Lead** whose role is to represent their area in School-level research discussions and to connect colleagues in their area to people, support or resources that can help develop their work. This includes facilitating research development activity (for instance, writing groups) in their area and providing a systematic mentoring scheme for ECRs.

### **2.2 Staff engagement in subject areas**

All research-active staff are associated with a research centre or research theme. This facilitates co-operation and collaboration in several formal and informal ways as demonstrated below in terms of research forums and research roles.

### **Research forums**

To further the School's and University's goal of increasing the percentage of staff engaged in research, the six subject groups within the School actively support staff research development. For example, all subject groups are supported by LBS to resource training and development courses and fund attendance at academic conferences. Examples of activities include:

- Improving the formal organisation of in-house events intended to support staff to conceive and develop individual and collaborative research. **P. Jones** convenes a monthly research forum (Economics, Analytics and International Business group), which includes presentation of new work by a member of staff, a current PhD student or an invited speaker and a period for discussing possible directions for future work.
- Senior researcher mentors for staff who are completing their PhD (Business Strategy, Operations and Enterprise).
- The Public Relations and Journalism (PRJ) subject group holds a monthly research seminar series for internal colleagues and external guest speakers to share research and develop ideas for future research collaboration. Visiting Prof **McKevitt** has engaged in lecturing, guest speaking and research project development in addition to his work with cross-School groups.

Across all groups a system of mentoring has also been introduced, with senior researchers supporting mid-career and ECR colleagues, forming research partnerships (e.g. for the Small Bids internal funding) and sharing writing opportunities.

### **Research roles**

LBS currently has nine Professors (Douglas; Devins; Gold [0.2]; Lodorfos; Morgan; Reynolds [0.6]; Robinson [0.6]; Rhodes; Tench; total 7.4 FTE) and two Readers (Sun; Wu; 2 FTE). As a means to 'improve the research environment' through internal investment, four professors and one reader received their titles following a 2017 **internal promotion round**. All LBS professors have an **international profile**; publish at a high level, are all being returned for REF2021, and are pivotal in connecting research-active staff to broader networks and opportunities. As an example, **Tench** - as **President of the European Public Relations Research and Education Association** (EUPRERA; 2017-2020 term) – has introduced **Topić** to the association and its research networks. Topić has then successfully collaborated with academics from the association across Europe to develop an international network and project on **Women in Public Relations** research resulting in four journal

papers and one book as well as guest editorships on the theme.

Over the REF period, LBS has seen four additional Professors (Brown, Nath, Shutt and Turner) and two Readers (Kostopoulos, Yeomans) leave the School. All have nonetheless contributed to, and improved, the research environment and overall outputs of LBS through collaboration and mentorship. The School has recruited **40 new lecturers** (including 15 lecturers promoted from fixed-term contracts in line with the University's commitment to the Researcher Development Concordat), many of whom are being **supported as ECRs** or with doctoral study support. Each year LBS supports and mentors colleagues to go forward to the University's promotion round for readers and professors. LBS also maintains links with **distinguished associates, alumni and emeritus** staff (e.g. Professors **Judge** and **Robinson**) who constitute a more extensive network of potential mentors and collaborators. LBS has an active and **growing visiting professor** network with current visiting professors including Visiting Professors Dean Fathers, Leo-Paul Dana, Olga Matthias, George Pierrakos, David Welbourn, Christophe Stueckelberger, and Steve McKeivitt.

### **2.3 Research students**

LBS has overseen **126 doctoral completions** in this REF period, of which **53 are HESA** returnable, almost **tripling** our REF 2014 return. LBS supports **87 research students**, studying across all 6 subject areas. All students are supported by a Director of Studies (DoS) and second supervisor expert in the student's field, who have attended appropriate training on LBU codes of practice and research regulations provided centrally by the Graduate School. The DoS is an experienced supervisor with previous successful completions. The supervisory team may include additional advisors for students whose chosen topic area crosses multiple disciplines or involves specialist techniques.

In this REF period, LBS has been successful in attracting **bursaries and funded PhD** students with funding from overseas research councils and educational funds (including **Brazil, Ghana, Libya** etc.) as well as a 100% increase in the number of students through external - or match-funded - HEIF and NHS schemes. LBS has active doctoral students in all six subject areas as well as students conducting interdisciplinary work with other areas of LBU. For example, **Tench** currently supervises two bursary-funded students in partnership with the School of Sport, while **Claxton** supervises two students in Education. Several colleagues (e.g. **Douglas**), have continued to act as advisors for students they supervised at previous workplaces in the interests of maintaining continuity for the student.

Over this REF period, LBS has been able to internally fund fees and salary for two **Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)**, one of whom, **Topić**, has completed her studies and joined LBS full-time (and has now been promoted to Senior Lecturer). Rasha, Pugh, Trem and Carbery are among other students who did not begin as staff members but have joined LBS in FTE posts during or after their doctoral degree. Many other PGR students take on part-time lecturing, enabling them to become familiar with the broader work of LBS and to gain experience towards future academic work.

### **Research student facilities and support**

Research students have dedicated desk space within the School and are supported with laptops and **annual research accounts** to support conference, workshop and personal development costs. All students are expected to keep written records of actions from each supervision meeting. They undertake a Confirmation of Registration (CoR) after their initial period of study (four months FT/six months PT), presenting their developed proposal to an independent academic panel to demonstrate that they are ready to commit to the full programme. Continuing students undertake Annual Progression (AP) once a year. Supervisors are required to submit progress reports ahead of these events. A small majority (55%) of LBS PGRs are part-time studying alongside FT work, and a minority are based overseas and study remotely. To ensure that LBU processes are accessible to students abroad or with limited time, supervisory meetings, CoRs and APs are routinely conducted via videoconferencing and all paperwork may be submitted electronically.

The **Graduate School** provides administrative support to students and their supervisory teams. A suite of **training workshops** is run throughout the academic year that are designed to give students and staff training in a wide variety of expertise relating to research as well providing information regarding university regulations relating to research activity. These online bookable workshops cover research methods, writing and supervisory skills. Online supervisory training for staff is provided through **Vitae Research Development Framework** and is run in combination with framework-aligned LBU bespoke workshops delivered by experienced academic supervisors. Supervisory workshops are tailored for new or relatively experienced supervisors. Additionally, students and supervisory teams are supported with regulatory aspects through interactions with two sub-committees of LBUs Research & Enterprise (R&E) Committee; i) The University Research Degree Sub-Committee (RDSC) deals with and oversees any requests for changes to a candidate's current status, while ii) The University Research Ethics Sub-Committee (RESC) deals with ethics and aspects of research integrity. Both of these Sub-Committees are Chaired by

Directors of Research, who are also ex-officio members of the R&E Committee.

Students can access pan-University research training and can attend specialised business and management workshops, seminars and retreats via the School's membership of **NARTI** (the Northern Advanced Research Training Initiative) of which **Rhodes** is a Board member. LBS holds an annual **Doctoral Student Symposium**, the counterpart of the Staff Conference, where current doctoral students present their work-in-progress to an audience of peers and academic colleagues, enabling them to build their presentation skills, receive feedback in a supportive setting and helping them prepare for external conferences.

Non-staff students studying on-campus (54% of the total LBS PGR body) are allocated a yearly discretionary allowance that can go towards conference attendance or other research costs, and can apply to the DoR for additional funding in special circumstances. Over this REF period, LBS has disbursed £14,500 in this discretionary support funding, including sponsoring students to attend 29 external conferences. Two have been fully funded to attend a week-long doctoral symposium aligned to an international conference (Oslo and Aarhus). On-campus students have access to a private hot-desking space to enable them to work in a quieter environment than the main library.

## **2.4 Equality and diversity**

LBU has strong institution-wide Equality and Diversity policies is a member of the Race Equality Charter, holds an **Athena SWAN Bronze** award and was a **Stonewall Top 100** employer for 2015, 2016 and 2017 with 2020 accreditation being applied for. At a local level LBS has an Equality and Diversity working group. Analysis against the University's criteria shows that more **BAME colleagues in LBS** meet the measures of research independence **(39.5%) than non-independence (23.9%)**. The School provides performance and development reviews (PDR) for all academics on an annual basis. At this review, colleagues can discuss with their line manager development opportunities from within the University as well as support for external research support such as training programmes, conference attendance etc.

In 2018 LBS supported a University strategy, in line with the **Researcher Development Concordat**, to convert part-time hourly paid staff to substantive posts. In LBS this accounted for **25 new academic colleagues** joining the school on substantive contracts which were more than 50% of the whole University commitment. These colleagues are now working within the School and **supported with research and scholarly development**

**time.**

To further enhance the School's equality and diversity **three working groups** are currently looking at the areas of **diversity, impact** and **staff promotion and development**. Each of these working groups is led by a member of the School's academic community and report to the SuBRI research Institute Board four times a year.

LBS is committed to supporting an ethical and sustainable working environment that enables all colleagues, especially those in underrepresented groups, to reach their full potential. 10 of 38 (**26%**) of the colleagues currently expected to return to REF2021 are **women** and 10 (**26%**) **BME**, an **improvement on REF2014**.

### **3. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

LBS has continued to pursue its mission by *strengthening the research environment through increased internal and external research funding* (Aim 3). During this REF cycle, using HESA-guided returns the School has generated approximately **£1.2m** in research income and submitted bids worth approximately £9.69m to a wider range of funders at local, national and international level.

#### **3.1 Research income leading to impact**

LBS has a history and reputation for delivering high impact applied research across the business and management field. Over the last 20 years, LBS has generated substantial income through applied research and enterprise engagement as well as regular contributions to international public and privately funded work and a more recent chain of related projects undertaken for competitive **EU funds**. Our case studies showcase some of the impacts this has had.

Research income from successful projects in this REF period totals approximately £1.2m. This figure does not reflect income classed as **Knowledge Transfer or Enterprise** rather than research. Given LBS's focus, there is considerable overlap between our research and enterprise activities.

Since REF2014 LBS has diversified its income streams, seeking more funding from the industrial sector and increasing the proportion of bids seeking to contribute to business practice rather than academic knowledge. LBS won funding in this REF period from **Leeds**,

**Sheffield, Wakefield, Calderdale, North Ayrshire and Westminster Councils**; the **Department for Work and Pensions**; two Research Councils (**ESRC and NERC**); and various directorates of the **European Commission**, but also did substantial work for **ASDA, Mattel, Nestle, Heinz and Mars** as well as with smaller local businesses such as that through our Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with Bradford-based Label Makers (led by **O. Jones.**) and D Benson Controls (**O. Jones** and **C. Ashworth**).

This strategic reorientation has seen LBS continue to pull in at least £100,000 a year in income designated as 'from research'. The LBS strategy has been to focus on areas of knowledge base and strength aligned with the School's management scholarship. Since 2014, this has translated into a **focus on EU funding with significant success**. With LBS as a research lead or partner, we have **won six major EU projects** out of 12 bid for (50%), many of which have fed into 2021 impact case studies and have helped meet the strategic aims for the unit:

- **Work-Based Learning as an Integrated Curriculum (WBLIC, Devins)** – a two-year Erasmus funded project which explored the significance of joint university-employer development and delivery of curriculum across seven European countries. LBS was the lead partner in the project which was worth €280,000. This project was begun in the previous REF cycle and is noted in our 2014 return.
- **The European Communication Professionals Skills and Innovation Programme (ECOPSI, Tench)** – a two-year Erasmus funded project which explored the competencies required by communication professionals in Europe. LBS was the lead partner in the project which was worth €300,000. This project was begun in the previous REF cycle and is noted in our 2014 return. This project feeds into the communication impact case study.
- **Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Deliberative Engagement (SME-DE, Tench)** – a two-year project funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme. LBS was the lead partner working with five businesses, delivering the project in seven European countries. The total grant was worth €500,000.
- **Intergenerational Succession in SMEs' transition (INSIST, B. Jones)** – a two-year Erasmus-Strategic Partnership funded project to support the sustainability and growth of family based-SMEs. The grant for LBS was worth €50,928 and has contributed to an impact case.
- **Family Business Sustainability and Growth (FAME B. Jones)** - LBS is working with Budapest Business School and other partners on this project which is a follow

on from the successful INSIST (Intergenerational Succession in SME's Transition). The grant for LBS is worth €61,219.

- **Innovative Solutions for Sustainability in Education (ISSUE, Devins)** – a transnational project that plans to support the development of governance, faculty, staff and students in Higher Education and to promote greater understanding of sustainability and the capacity to act and promote sustainable practices. The grant for LBS is worth €58,348.
- **Business Mentor Training and Certification (MentorCert, B. Jones)** – a transnational project that seeks to improve the quality of business mentors for small businesses. The grant for LBS is worth €51,250.
- **Integrated Reporting for SMEs' Transparency (INTEREST, Robertson)** – a transnational project seeking to develop a robust, research-based guide, and supporting materials, for SMEs interested in implementing integrated reporting, with a focus on adapting techniques already proven in large organisations for the needs of SMEs. The grant for LBS is worth €50,569.

LBS academics are also regularly commissioned for smaller pieces of research by local organisations, or in fields where the School's expertise is internationally recognised. For example:

- **Devins** and colleagues evaluated the success of Wakefield Council's unique 'Mortgage Breathing Space' scheme and make recommendations to improve and develop it - a project worth £14,700.
- **Tench, Diers-Lawson** and **Topić** were commissioned by the **European Public Employment Service (PES) Network** (2017) to review the communications and branding strategies of member-state PESes and to develop a communications toolkit to make consistent good practice easier for Network members, in a project worth £16,000. **Tench** has been asked again in 2020 to support the Commission and the Employment Services Network on a follow up 1-year project (additional £10,000).
- **Douglas** and colleagues were commissioned by **UKTI** (now Dept. for International Trade) to, 'Understand the Business Needs of Medium-Sized Businesses in the West Yorkshire Region'. This applied research collected and analysed data and reported on the level of internationalisation regional MSBs were currently, or have been, engaged in. It aimed to better understand MSBs notions of export intentions, capabilities and, barriers and fears associated with engaging in trading outside the domestic market. £11,500.



- **Barnett** has acted as a consultant for two pieces of work worth ~£7,000 each for the **Association of Public Service Excellence**, examining the changing role of Chief Officers in local councils and the impact of austerity on the job of councillor.

LBS continues to conduct research in and about the region. For example, **Gold and Devins** led a **Joseph Rowntree Foundation**-funded project which used Action Research to examine the local impact of **anchor institutions in the Leeds City Region**. The project aimed to understand the role and levers that may be pulled to optimise the contribution of these institutions to the alleviation of local poverty in the Region. The project was worth £63,000.

The income generated from these projects helps support our investment in research across LBS. Alongside publications in returnable categories, this type of commissioned research has produced more than 30 reports for clients and major funding bodies throughout this REF period.

### **3.2 Infrastructure and facilities**

The University has provided substantial investment in the Unit's infrastructure to support high-quality research, education, enterprise and knowledge exchange activities. LBS is located in the Rose Bowl building on the LBU City campus, which is a state of the art teaching and conference facility in the heart of Leeds. Significant investment has been made since 2014 in the **Professional Practice Suite (more than £700,000 over five years)**, which comprises the Immersive Learning System and the **Thomson Reuters** model trading floor. The **Immersive Learning System** is a unique, high-fidelity learning environment that enables the monitoring of real-time leadership and decision-making in simulated scenarios of critical incident response, and has been used by all subject areas to explore crisis response and other ethical issues as well as data collection feeding into research projects and outputs (**Diers-Lawson**). Both the Immersive Learning System and Thomson Reuters have been integrated into research and teaching. Inter alia the School has also invested in research tool software, such as UCINET for social network analysis.

### **3.3 Libraries and learning innovation (LLI)**

Library and Learning Innovation (LLI) plays a key role in the staff and student experience at the University, providing 24/7 access to physical and online resources supporting the research, teaching and learning needs of our community. Academic librarians ensure collections meet the research needs and staff and research students are able to use them.

LLI offers 24/7 access to research collections both physically (over 380K books) and online (150K journal titles).

Academics are supported by experienced research support staff in LLI. Through the two complementary systems, Symplectic and EPrints, research is managed and outputs made available as Open Access complying with publisher, REF and funder requirements. Information from Symplectic also feeds through to the public academic staff profile pages.

The Rose Bowl is across the road from the Sheila Silver Library, which hosts LBU's business and management holdings as well as key collections covering more general theoretical and methodological texts across the social sciences. LBU and LBS maintain subscriptions to leading subject-specific databases, and LBU is a **Eurostat trusted institution**, enabling LBS academics (most recently **Douglas**) to conduct research using EU-collected microdata, one of the most detailed sources of business data currently available. Another key investment focus is the development of the European Governance Review tool within the CGLGR, which has the potential to form the basis of a REF impact case study for the next REF cycle.

An important element of the research infrastructure is the School Research and Enterprise Support Team which supports all research and enterprise activities, from identifying funding opportunities, supporting bids and project delivery, to organising conferences and seminars, supporting doctoral students and liaising with visiting scholars (see staff development Section 2).

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

Our mission to 'engage in applied research that supports future sustainability and business performance' drives the School's research focus and enables us to make explicit contributions to communities of management practitioners (for example accountancy, human resource management), and to the economy and society. This is delivered by LBS's strategic plan and aims to promote research activity focusing on the future and sustainability of business and related organisations within the changing social and economic landscape. We aim to ensure our research has an impact on the Northern economy and its key stakeholders.

##### **4.1 Facilitating and nurturing collaboration**

To support the REF Unit, devolved QR monies have been specifically targeted to support the strategy of internal development of capability and competence within the community of academics. The monies have been specifically allocated to the **Small Bids projects**, **investment in equipment** and in supporting **bursary PhD** positions. This links with LBS's focus on **internal staff development**, rather than recruitment. Also, LBS's strong links with local government and business are aspects of the School's role as a venue for collaborative work involving our academics, and as a facilitator of collaboration between the School, business and its research stakeholders. Much of LBS's project work focuses on bringing together people and organisations who can benefit from each other's expertise **nationally and internationally**. This is sometimes done directly, as in the ongoing **MentorCert** project led by **Devins**. At other times it is fostered indirectly, such as the action research delivered by **Gold** and **Devins** with **12 anchor institutions in the Leeds City Region**. This was funded by the **Joseph Rowntree Foundation** and a cross-organisational Productivity Action Group emerged that enabled the sharing of good practice and also the building of professional networks. Internationally collaborations have developed in COVID-19 themes: including expert advisory roles **COVID-Obsevatory (Tench)** and **Com-Covid** project <https://www.ipra.org/news/itle/itl-404-trust-and-messaging-about-covid-19-experiences-in-uk-italy-and-spain/>).

The research mapping exercise and the Small Bids scheme discussed in Section 2 aim to foster **collaborative and cross-disciplinary work**. The mapping identifies new opportunities for collaboration between colleagues in different disciplinary areas, and the Small Bids provide concrete funding for collaborative projects as proof of concept. All bids submitted to the Small Bids scheme must be collaborative – no solo projects are funded – and involving colleagues from other institutions and fields of specialism are highly encouraged. Current projects involve external academics from **Beijing Institute of Technology** and **Ningbo University** (China) and **Institut Paul Bocuse** (France), while recently completed ones have seen collaboration with the universities of **Castilla-La Mancha** (Spain), **North Dakota** (USA) and **West Attica** (Greece).

#### **4.2 Publication and the wider research environment**

Current LBS staff have published **350 qualifying journal articles**, **40 books** (including edited and co-authored), **8 eligible research reports** during this REF period, across all six subject areas and with all disciplines within LBS represented. A substantial majority of LBS work is collaborative, working with internal research colleagues or teams, or external to the University (e.g. **Tench's** 15-year longitudinal **European Communication Monitor** annual

study of **50 European countries** working with colleagues from Germany, Netherlands, Slovenia and Spain) at all levels or **Diers-Lawson's** work with colleagues from **20 countries** exploring integrated threat and blame attribution for Covid-19 that has already received coverage in major US and New Zealand news outlets. Some of the School's most internationally significant work, such as that of **Tench** on communications competence (**ECOPSI European funded project**), is conducted in collaboration with colleagues from top-ranked international institutions (such as universities of Amsterdam, Leipzig, Ljubljana); other colleagues maintain longstanding collaborative relationships not tied to a single project, e.g. **Morgan's** work with Heikki Patomäki (Helsinki), including high-profile publications and joint editorship of a recent special issue for *Globalizations*.

Moreover, collaboration and co-production is also core to LBS's strategy for developing doctoral students and ECRs as published writers. Senior colleagues including **Tench** (30 journal papers in REF period), **Gold** (19 papers), **Morgan** (38 papers) and **Lodorfos** (15 papers) routinely support their doctoral students by bringing their work to publication or the next level and supporting their development (e.g. **British Academy** grant success for ECR **Topić** via Tench); and several ECRs are represented in this return by collaborations with their supervisors (e.g. **Robertson, O. Jones, Beech**.) These mentoring traits are passed on and an example is **Topić** (Tench's PhD student) who has worked with her Masters and undergraduate students in this REF period to bring outstanding dissertation work into publication (3 journal papers). This is one example of the School's commitment to foster an interest and passion for research amongst students of all levels.

The changes to staffing policy, support and development discussed in Section 2 have also resulted in improved volume and quality of research amongst ECRs. Among the ECRs several are publishing at a significant level including **Chowdhury, Topić, O. Jones**, and **Robertson**, all of whom have publications included in this REF return.

### **Discipline collections**

LBS staff have written monographs and key textbooks (marketing, accounting and finance, human resource management and communication), with work produced in LBS serving as core texts for curricula in the UK and worldwide (**Tench's** *Exploring Public Relations and Communication Management* 5<sup>th</sup> edition 2021 a market leader) and beyond. For example, **Diers-Lawson's** *Crisis Communication: Managing Stakeholder Relationships* (Routledge) has already been adopted as a core text at universities in the UK, Germany, the US, and Portugal. Additionally, **Robinson** and **Sun** edit the Governance Leadership and

Responsibility book series (Palgrave); **Sun** has been editing the book series Critical Studies on Corporate Responsibility, Governance and Sustainability (Emerald), **Tench, Sun** and **Jones** edited two books on CSR communication and European CSR (Emerald); while 2018 saw the publication of the 37<sup>th</sup> annually-revised edition of *Taxation Incorporating the Finance Act*, a key accountancy textbook by **Combs** (with assorted co-authors over the years.) Topic's work has been incorporated into curricula in Croatia, while **Yeomans'** recent monograph has formed the basis of a research resource for MA courses at Quadriga University in Berlin.

### **Editorships**

Colleagues from across all six subject areas sit on **30+ journal editorial boards** ranging from small and highly specialist journals up to major names such as the **Cambridge Journal of Economics (Morgan)**. Journals currently edited by members of LBS include *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage (Raj)*; *Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research (Diers-Lawson)*; *Frontiers in Communication (Diers-Lawson)*; *Real-World Economics Review (Morgan, associate editor)*; *Femspec Journal (Topic)*; *Culture, Media & Film (Topic)*; *Journal of Global Responsibility (Sun and Arrigoni)*, *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications (Sun, associate editor)*; *Corporate Communication (Topic)*. Colleagues also regularly guest-edit and produce special issues, including notably a special issue of *Globalizations* on Brexit (**Morgan**) the thematic collection 'Integrity and its counterfeits: implications for the economy, business and management' *Palgrave (Sun and Robinson)*, and an ongoing relationship with the *Journal of Global Responsibility* (issues guest-edited in period by **Lodorfos, Robinson** and **Wu.**). **Nasir** has been recent guest editor of *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *Resources Policy* and *Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*. **Lodorfos** on 'resilience and competitiveness of SMEs' *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*. **Tench** special issue on COVID-19 communication for the *International Journal of Strategic Communication* and a book for *Routledge* on 'pandemic communications'

Colleagues sit on grant review panels/committees for organisations including the British Council, the European Commission and national-level funding bodies in Poland, Estonia Bulgaria, and Romania.

### **4.3 Conferences and dissemination**

LBS is committed to supporting staff engagement beyond LBU. Over this REF period, staff of all levels of seniority have given more than 140 papers/presentations in a wide variety of

forums. Significant conferences attended over this REF period include the: Academy of Management Conference; British Academy of Management Conference; European Academy of Management Conference; European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA); European Marketing Academy Conference; Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development Conference (CIPD); European Public Relations and Education Association (EUPRERA); International Conference on Human Resource Development Research and Practice (UFHRD); International Communication Association conference (ICA); International Conference on Social Sciences (ICSS); Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association conference (MeCCSA); European Accounting Association Annual Congress; Political Studies Association Conference; Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Conference (ISBE); World Communication Association (WCA); as well as assorted funded seminar venues.

- **O. Jones**' presentation at the 2016 International Conference on Human Resource Development Research and Practice across Europe titled 'A little less conversation, a little more action: Coaching process improvement routines into practice' won the Alan Moon Memorial Prize for best paper - a later published version of which is in this return. Other notable examples of conference participation include:
- In 2015, **Robinson** was the keynote speaker at the European Business Ethics Network Annual Conference, and spoke on 'The moral imagination: Peacebuilding and business ethics'.
- In 2017, LBS hosted the annual conference of the **Network of International Business Schools**, a worldwide association of practice-oriented business schools and departments. The conference drew approximately sixty delegates from 13 countries, and feedback was very positive.
- In 2019, **Diers-Lawson** received a 'Best Paper' award at the World Communication Association for her paper 'Whistleblowers: The Loneliest Stakeholder' which is being published as a chapter in a book in 2020.
- LBS through **Diers-Lawson** hosted the 2019 **International Crisis Communication** Conference, held at LBU, with this success leading to an invitation to host the World Communication Association conference in 2021.
- **Nasir** was part of the Scientific Board coordinating the 2019 **International Congress on Energy, Economics and Security**, held in Istanbul, and received an award recognising his contribution.

#### **4.4 Academic, practitioner and policy-based partnerships and networks**

##### **Professional bodies and practitioner networks**

The various subgroupings within LBS maintain close links with relevant professional bodies and industry organisations, and the School has good relationships with key institutions in the Leeds City Region including local government (e.g. recent work with Leeds, Wakefield and Calderdale Councils and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority), public-sector behemoths such as Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, as well as major local businesses such as Asda (headquartered in Leeds). For example, **Devins** and **Morgan** are participants in the new West Yorkshire '**Place-Based Economic Recovery Network**' (PERN), a multi-university collaborative initiative intended to provide policy expertise for regional economic recovery in cooperation with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and Yorkshire Universities (YU).

**The Retail Institute** maintains collaborative links across LBU with industry partners, public and third-sector organisations, trade organisations (such as **UK Trade & Investment**, the **International Omni Retail Markets Association**, and the **European Flexographic Industry Association**) and other universities including Aston, Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham, East Anglia and Portsmouth. The Institute completed more than 50 projects for clients since 2014 and operates a membership scheme with 22 member companies, including **Procter and Gamble**, **Johnson and Johnson**, **Heinz** and **Nestle**. Networks and collaborations form the basis of regular and frequent workshops and presentations for practitioners. The Institute's work is a vital contribution to LBS's research environment, yet this contribution is largely invisible in the list of outputs because its material output is largely oriented towards project work and industry-facing reports. However, this contribution serves as a conduit for the dissemination of LBS research to an industry audience, and some of the pieces have been turned into journal articles (e.g. **Topić** and **Tench** 2019). Led by Olga Munro, the Retail Institute's work connects LBS academics with industry representatives, enabling both parties to benefit from each other's expertise, building networks and creating conditions for future impacts, such as the collaboration work with Asda on sustainable packaging, which was recently cited in the official Asda submission to a DEFRA consultation on bioplastics.

**The Leadership Centre (TLC)** is LBS's continuing professional development unit, offering off-the-shelf and custom leadership and management programmes to various organisations including **Santander**, **Sky**, **Brewdog** and the **Army**. LBS runs a unique Masters-level programme with the Army aimed at ex-service people looking to use their skills in civilian workplaces. TLC's work feeds into research such as that by Beech on boardroom management and on how veterans experience workplace coaching. Through TLC, LBS also

maintains strong links with important professional bodies, such as the **Institute of Directors** and the Institute for Leadership and Management.

### **Academic partnerships and groups**

The Centre for Governance, Leadership and Global Responsibility (CGLGR) has incorporated the **Corporate Governance and Sustainability International Group**, an international research network with over **3000 member scholars**, consultants and managers worldwide. The network aims to promote international research collaboration, academic exchange and information sharing. The network includes Stanford, La Trobe and Pretoria Universities, the Institute of Directors, the Institute of Leadership and Management and the Chartered Management Institute, the UN Global Compact, the All-Party Parliamentary Committee on CSR, the Armed Forces (Harrogate, York, Sandhurst), West Yorkshire Police and the International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC). The Centre's honorary President is **Prof Judge Mervyn King**, a leading light of the IIRC, with whom CGLGR maintains a close relationship.

Since 2013, led by **Robinson** and **Sun**, the CGLGR has organised and engaged in international and national research projects, participated in the UK and local government's consultations on corporate governance and responsible leadership, and published several journal papers, monographs and edited books. From 2009 through to 2015, Sun co-chaired (with Professors in France and Belgium) an international research project **Finance and Sustainability Programme** (FAS I 2009-2011, FAS II 2012-2015), partnered between several international research organisations, including the **Research Club of French Institute of Directors** (France), the **International Network of Organisations and Sustainable Development** (RIODD), **Corporate Governance and Sustainability Research Group** (UK), the **International Academic Association on Governance** (Italy), the **Finance Observatory** (Switzerland), and the **French Forum for Responsible Investment** (France).

The Centre has recently formed a strategic partnership with **Globethics.net**, a global network of teachers and institutions with the vision to embed ethics in higher education headquartered in Geneva, to collaborate on curriculum and research development. Globethics has provided initial financial support (£30,000) to the Centre.

LBS has created regional business impact with several Degree Apprenticeship programmes under the new apprenticeship levy, overseen by **Welbourn**. Through these, we have built



relationships with organisations such as **JD Wetherspoon** and the **Casual Dining Group** as well as adding another dimension to our existing relationship with Leeds City Council. As well as building networks, the apprenticeship schemes have led to pedagogical innovations and research papers as demonstrated in work by **Reynolds**.

**Tench** (alongside Zerfass, Moreno and other international colleagues) leads the European Communication Monitor (ECM), an annual survey of the public relations profession across Europe (in its 15<sup>th</sup> year). Supported by the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) and the European Association of Communication Directors (EACD), the ECM has surveyed over 45,000 communications professionals from more than 50 countries and is the most comprehensive analysis of communication management worldwide. The key partners are the universities of Leipzig, Amsterdam, Ljubljana and Madrid. In the last REF period this programme has expanded to a worldwide study (**Global Communication Monitor**) with North American, Latin American and Asia Pacific taking the respondents to over 80,000 and 80 countries ([www.communicationmonitor.eu](http://www.communicationmonitor.eu)). **Yeomans** also developed a collaboration with universities in Istanbul and Munich through an Erasmus project initiated under the '**Women in PR in Europe**' project. Members of the team worked with a group of senior government communicators in 2014/15 as part of an action research project for the Government Communication Service. **Tench** has also served as a board member and latterly **President** of EUPRERA over this REF period.

**Wu and Shutt** developed a series of longstanding collaborations with colleagues in China, notably in the Hangzhou region. Hangzhou is twinned with Leeds, and LBS's work has strong local government links. LBS has had a memorandum of understanding with the Zhejiang University of Technology, based in Hangzhou, for 15 years and there are regular exchange visits between the two institutions. Over the past year, Wu has also built a close relationship with Ningbo and Hubei universities, and LBS is currently reviewing a proposal for a joint research centre with Ningbo.

LBS participates fully in the academic ecosystem, with representatives from all six subject groups serving in oversight roles in professional bodies (Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland; Chartered Institute of People Development; Chartered Institute of Marketing; Chartered Management Institute; Chartered Institute of Public Relations etc) and sitting on journal editorial and/or review boards (see earlier). LBS colleagues also act regularly as **external examiners for doctoral vivas**, with approximately **100 examinations** in the

period. Examples of institutions for which LBS has supplied doctoral examiners in this REF period include Aston, Bradford, Cardiff, Chester, Derby, Glasgow Caledonian, Heriot-Watt, Huddersfield, Hull, Liverpool, Leeds, London Metropolitan, Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan, Middlesex, Nottingham Trent, Portsmouth, Queen Margaret, Salford, Sheffield in the UK; and abroad, Dublin Institute of Technology (Ireland), Aarhus (Denmark), Helsinki (Finland) Kozminski (Poland), Vitez (Bosnia), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Pretoria (South Africa), Deakin University and Queensland University of Technology (Australia).

#### **4.5 LBS research and the local region**

LBS hosts the highly successful **Business School Guest Lecture Series**, sponsored by **Yorkshire Bank**. This series provides a valuable addition to the research culture and opportunities for new collaborations, attracting prominent local and national figures drawn from a range of sectors and representing various standpoints. Speakers in a typical year might include **local entrepreneurs, executives of major multinationals**, senior members of **local government** and regional representatives of the **Bank of England**. The series attracts significant local media attention and large audiences and provides opportunities for networking between academics and business people and for demonstrating university engagement with enterprise activity. At a more abstract level, the Guest Lecture Series is an example of how LBS uses institutional resources – its campus, events expertise, sponsor relationships and extensive industry contacts – to benefit both LBU and the wider business community. We provide accessible opportunities to hear high-profile speakers in a well-appointed central venue, and for network-building beyond the institution.

Individual subject groups within LBS organise similar series on a smaller scale, such as the **Marketing Guest Lecture Series**. Many of these events are public and attract sizeable audiences, providing an additional avenue through which students and staff are encouraged to become research-aware in a practical environment.

#### **The next stage**

Since 2014, our research activity in this Unit has been profoundly refashioned regarding, scale, direction and intensity. By restructuring around the **SuBRI institute**, we have provided an outstanding platform and focus for successfully delivering **multi, inter-disciplinary and co-produced research**.

Looking to the next five years' planning, LBS has a clear vision of what it aims to achieve with an **evidence-based focus on applied research**. Given the transformed social and

economic context the world is moving into the LBS mission of supporting sustainable business performance, leadership and responsibility are well-founded. The next steps to build on this mission include continuation of our foundational work on **anchor institutions (Impact Case Study**, based on our foundational work and contribution to the Leeds City Region), the formation of a '**Green Business School**' with plans to evolve and develop the area of **productivity and well-being** to support business evolution and growth both in the region of West Yorkshire and beyond. These initiatives and the research structures already in place will enable the School to be a hub for promoting, generating and inspiring innovative research and scholarly activity which will make a societal difference and deliver the **LBS mission** of supporting *business sustainability*.

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