

**Institution: London School of Economics and Political Science**

**Unit of Assessment: 34: Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management**

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

### **Unit context and Structure**

The Department of Media and Communications conducts critical, empirical and engaged research into the crucial role of media and communications in contemporary society. Consistent with the LSE 2030 Strategy, our aim is to conduct research and achieve impacts of the highest international standard. We bring to multiple agendas a deep understanding of changes in the media and communication environment which shape and are shaped by complex socio-technical, political-economic, cultural and historical developments.

We are committed to conducting high quality, robust and independent empirical research and intellectually ambitious, theoretically grounded critical analysis. We sustain a distinctive, interdisciplinary, thriving and inclusive departmental research environment, working with other LSE departments and external institutions. Our *research culture* is enriched by the diverse activities of all Department staff, researchers, students and visiting fellows. Collectively our research generates significant intervention in policy and practice with impacts on public debate, policy, industry and third sector agendas and practice.

In the QS World University Rankings by subject for Communication and Media Studies in 2020 we ranked first in the UK, and third internationally after the University of Amsterdam and University of Southern California and ahead of Stanford University, the University of Texas at Austin and University of Pennsylvania. Our position as one of the world's leading Departments in our field has been achieved by sustaining a cohesive small-to-medium size faculty with an engaged and collaborative research culture.

### **Research and Impact Strategy – 2014-2020**

A clearly articulated strategy for research and impact contributes to the vitality and sustainability of the Department. Our strategy is subject to formal annual and quinquennial reviews by LSE – the latter involving external advisors. Our REF2014 submission strategy was developed as the result of ambitious, but realistic collective decisions. Our strategic objectives for research and impact were:

- to become a medium-sized department in LSE, growing from 15 to 20+ FTE permanent full-time faculty – achieved in 2019;
- to enhance the range and depth of our research coverage – achieved with seven strategic appointments since 2014 and revisions to and expansion of our research themes;
- to increase our external research fundraising success; despite highly competitive conditions, our strong research environment has resulted in a gradual and sustained improvement in our overall funding;
- to extend the visibility/reach of our research and increase our capacity to maximise research impact in policy-relevant areas where we have major strengths – exemplified by three impact case study submissions among other impacts;

- to ensure strong and enduring impact through robust mentoring and review practices, allocating Knowledge Exchange and Impact (KEI) funding from School and Department resources to faculty and research students to support impact, and contributing to School-wide impact related initiatives – achieved by POLIS, the Media Policy Project (MPP) and a new Department Media@LSE hub and the various successes of individual faculty, researchers and research students.

In a media and communications field characterised by extremely fast-moving multi-dimensional change, our *research strategy* was, and remains, to stay broad and timely in addressing the challenges posed by the evolving digital landscape and world events which emphasise the crucial role of online activity in people's lives. The Department's work is anchored in intersecting themes encompassing fundamental aspects of media and communication in society. Our diverse interdisciplinary and disciplinary expertise (cultural studies, history and feminist studies, linguistics, politics, sociology, social psychology, science and technology studies, and science, technology and innovation studies) enables us to draw upon, and contribute to, multiple disciplinary agendas across the social sciences and beyond.

### **Research Themes**

Four overarching, non-exclusive research themes inform the Department's intellectual agenda and efforts to respond to social problems. All staff and visitors affiliate with one or more of these and affiliations change as projects and interests evolve. Cross-cutting ethical concerns with the norms of democracy, equality and inclusiveness, quality of life and recognition of 'the other' infuse and link these themes. Our sustained effort to construct research agendas that concern the global North and South reflects our commitment to decolonise our scholarship and teaching.

The research themes are reviewed and revised at our inclusive annual Away Days to ensure they reflect and inspire faculty commitment to within- and cross-theme debate, research and novel methods (e.g. 'data walks' employed in urban spaces) and impact. We aim to maximise our contributions in these targeted areas while responding to societal developments without trying to encompass everything in the media and communications field. The four themes are:

**Media Culture and Identities:** How do media and communication shape narratives, identities and lived experience? Research focuses on the symbolic power of media and audience practices and examines how they support or constrain identities, cultures and solidarities and how distributions of media and communication resources condition voice, violence and systems of inequality.

**Media Participation and Politics:** What role do media and communication play in political socialisation, mobilisation and protest around the world? Research examines the political agency of citizens, civic engagement in conventional politics and activism, and the way participation is shaped by media and communication and other resources.

**Communication Histories and Futures:** How do media and communication mediate history, collective memory and narratives about the future? Research addresses the history and imaginaries of media and communication technologies and institutions in national, regional and global contexts, and how their origins and histories are connected to broader social change processes.

**Communication, Technology, Rights and Justice:** What rights and justice issues are significant for media and communication developments? What policy and regulatory responses are needed? Research focuses on privacy, political mobilisation and marginalisation, and governance issues related to the media and datafication practices and their consequences.

**Impacts, Users and Beneficiaries**

The Department's research underpins our aim to *significantly impact policies and practices* in areas where we have major strengths by informing and influencing evidence-based policy and practice. The *most significant users and beneficiaries of our research* are public policy organisations (UK and overseas local and national government departments and regulators, regional bodies including the EU and intergovernmental agencies), third-sector and advocacy organisations concerned with social justice, industry bodies concerned with the strategic communications and journalistic professions, and information and communication technology companies (see Section 4). We pay particular attention to delivering benefits for vulnerable and marginalised communities, e.g. Livingstone's Global Kids Online research, Helsper's digital exclusion in Latin America research, and Gangadharan's and Banaji's work on disadvantaged groups in New York and India, respectively.

We are committed to fostering a research environment that values outreach and positively impacts activities, throughout rather than only at the conclusion of research projects. We take full advantage of LSE's KEI training (see REF5a) and celebrate our impact achievements at Department Research Committee meetings. Our Career Development Review process recognises impact, and achievements are highlighted in our monthly Research Newsletter circulated internally and externally using Media@LSE email lists and social media (see Sections 2 and 4). LSE has recognised our achievements, e.g. the LSE 2019 prize for a publicly accessible research poster on 'Understanding Automated Decisions' awarded to Powell. We have introduced termly 'impact lunches' to discuss and share experience and progress, including sessions for research students led by LSE experts on achieving impact.

**Pathways to Impact**

Impact involves applied research and collaborative and participatory methodologies with contributions from relevant stakeholders and the wider public to the research design and engagement strategies. Faculty were invited to offer *impact case studies*. Many nascent ideas were mentored, individually and collectively, before the final selection was made. The consequence was a rich choice for REF 2021 as well as support for future impact case studies and a better understanding of the value and nature of research impact. Our selected ICSs involve sustained engagement with target communities over long periods. Consistent with our ambition to influence stakeholders and achieve positive change for beneficiaries including adults and children, Livingstone's ICS1 *Realising Children's Rights in a Digital World* influenced UNICEF, an organisation with huge global reach and authority; Helsper's ICS2 *From Skills to Outcomes: Improving digital inequalities metrics, policy and interventions* led to an international shift towards measurement of socio-economic outcomes resulting from online participation; and Tambini's ICS3 *Regulating Media Power in Democracies* influenced legislation and the regulation of online digital platforms in the UK and Europe.

**POLIS**, our journalism and society think tank, provides numerous opportunities for impact through its forum for public debate on key news journalism issues. The **Media Policy Project (MPP)** and our **Media@LSE** strategic initiative have enhanced our impact through engagement with research beneficiaries including policymakers, the third sector and businesses across the issues addressed by our research themes (see Section 4).

**Integrity of Research and Impact Strategy**

We are committed to ethical conduct in line with field-relevant Ethical Research codes and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles and practices set out in REF5a. This commitment is enacted individually and collectively through regular discussion of and sensitivity to equity and social justice issues arising from our research. The Department's Research Committee, research student supervisors and a research administrator work to ensure that research and impact-related practices achieve the highest ethical standards.

### **Open Access Publishing and Open Data Culture**

The Department strongly supports both in its research on copyright issues and data archives (Cammaerts, Edwards, Mansell, Meng, Plantin). Our outputs are 100% compliant. We meet sponsors' requirements for access to large datasets. Our work is available on *LSE Research Online*: 76% of 2,355 outputs (including blogs) are open access (downloadable); 78% are full text (August 2013 to 19 June 2020). Monthly downloads increased from 6,777 in August 2013 to 32,325 in May 2020 with 1.8m over the period. Livingstone and Sefton-Green's, *The Class: Living and Learning the Digital Age* (NYU Press) is open access. We use research funds to support 'gold' access when feasible.

The visibility achieved by our blogs – Media@LSE, Parenting for a Digital Future and POLIS - promotes open access reports and findings, e.g. *My Data and Privacy Online: A Toolkit for Young People* –Livingstone; *Facelook* – Georgiou, *Our Data Bodies* – Gangadharan; *Data Walking* – Powell. We support the LSE's library open access and data management initiatives and its *Love Data* and *Open Access* weeks. Open access toolkits are archived on Zenodo (e.g., *City of Refuge Toolkit* – Georgiou; a *Digital Defense Playbook* in use in the US and Europe – Gangadharan; EU data on young people's citizenship – Cammaerts, Banaji). The UK Data Archive has been used for analysis of UK general election campaigns – Anstead.

### **Strategic Aims and Goals – 2021-2026**

The Department's commitment to undertake world-leading, original and influential social science-based research, provides an excellent research-led education for PhD students and committed and impactful engagement with national and international debates will remain at the core of our research and impact strategy. In the next five years, we aim:

- to pursue growth to 24 full-time permanent faculty;
- to sustain the provision of an inclusive and equitable environment for faculty, research students, researchers and research visitors;
- to deepen our expertise in current research themes, while being open to exploration of new topics; extending and strengthening our links with other LSE departments, enhancing collaboration with external researchers and working to raise external funding;
- to consolidate and expand the Media@LSE hub as an effective platform to reach the broader research community while retaining flexibility to introduce new initiatives to extend our impact and build on areas of strength;
- to continue to invest in training and activities to support engagement and impact with public, private and third sector beneficiaries of our research, build capacity of early career researchers and continue efforts to secure KEI funding.

Implementation of this strategy will be guided by our Research Committee, chaired by Georgiou, promoting an environment conducive to world-leading research and significant and far-reaching impact. We invested in the MPP until 2019, focusing on impact in the media and

communications policy and regulatory arena. In response to the Department's growth, success in attracting KEI funding and wide range of research topics with potential for future impact (notably regarding research on inequalities, social inclusion, education and digital literacy in the global North and South), in 2019 we integrated the MPP's activities and its highly visible blog in the new **Media@LSE research and impact hub**. Our plans for the hub echo LSE's 2030 Strategy to ensure our research contributes to the 'betterment of society'.

The Department will ensure its research and KEI funding resources support existing and newly emerging research and impact. **Media@LSE** will host a rolling programme of internal and external engagement events, promote social media outreach, facilitate individual and collective research and impact funding bids, and organise annual cross-Departmental projects – e.g., in 2019/20 *Media City London* focused on gentrification, gender and advertising practices, London's digital landscape and 5G network controversies. In 2020/21 the project theme is *COVID-19: A Communication Crisis – Ethics, Privacy, Inequalities*. These build on the success of our Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) supported *Truth, Trust and Technology Commission* (2019) (see Section 4) as well as on earlier cross-Department projects, e.g., *Mediation of Migration* (2017), media representation across Europe (Chouliaraki, Georgiou (2017)) and *Journalistic Representations of Jeremy Corbyn in the British Press* (Cammaerts (2016)). All these projects involve research students and academic staff.

During the pandemic we experienced a hiring freeze, but fortunately no redundancies. We have sought to support those faced with new demands outside the workplace by varying workloads and adjusting as far as is feasible. The Department is strongly positioned to adapt as necessary in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to assure all our staff's well-being and build upon its research and impact achievements in line with our forward strategy.

## Section 2. People

### Staffing

The Department has **21** REF-eligible faculty. The research community includes six research assistants (1 pre-doctoral, 5 post-doctoral fellows), two LSE Fellows with teaching and research responsibilities, and a Policy Officer. The Department includes a Distinguished Policy Fellow and a Professor in Practice: both have teaching and impact responsibilities and are funded by the Department budget consistent with our firm commitment to impact. We have one graduate intern and seven (6.6 FTE) professional support staff. Five (3F, 2M) post-doctoral fellowships were funded by the ESRC, EC Marie Curie scheme, Royal Society Newton International Fellowships and LSE Scholars-at-Risk Programme.

The Department hosted **156** Visiting Fellows over the census period (scholars, media industry experts, Ofcom staff, consultants). Visiting Fellow appointments are made through a competitive LSE process and are unpaid. These included six Visiting Professors 4% (John Hartley, Andreas Hepp, Jim MacNamara, Andrea Press, Marc Raboy, Philip Schlesinger); 74% Visiting Fellows, 22% Senior Visiting Fellows. In July 2020, the Department hosted 34 Fellows from 13 countries, more than half identifying as female.

### Recruitment

In accordance with LSE's guidance on equality, diversity and inclusion, we build on current Department strengths and recruit to respond to changing priorities and ensure fair treatment of all applicants (see REF5a). Faculty and post-doctoral fellow posts are advertised externally to ensure openness and attract the best applicants. There is continuity of employment for permanent faculty. LSE Fellows with teaching obligations (2-3 annually) are employed for 3



years. In 2020/21, permanent faculty delivered 88% of our teaching, a balance similar to previous years. Project-based fellow reappointments are subject to external funding and LSE's employment policy. We advertise for administrative staff internally (externally if no internal applicants) and provide continuity of employment.

*REF-eligible recruitment* grew to 2019, followed by a period of stability. In 2014, the Department had 15 full-time faculty and recruited to achieve 21 *REF-eligible faculty*. Two are early career researchers; we have no part-time REF-eligible staff. As of July 2020, the demographic profile was six Assistant, five Associate and 10 Full Professors; 17 White and four BAME; and 16 female and five male, from 14 countries.

### **Career Development and Evaluation**

We ensure these processes are robust, consistently applied, practical and welcomed by all colleagues and include comprehensive support for all staff throughout their careers. All faculty elected to transfer to LSE's New Academic Career structure in 2013; post-doctoral fellows are on the New Research Staff Career path introduced in 2015, which enables career progression. Faculty and fellow inductions encourage new staff to engage actively in life at LSE and introduce them to LSE Codes of Conduct (see REF5a).

### **Probation**

For Assistant Professors this involves an Interim Review after three years and a Major Review after eight years which has been brought forward and can be extended by LSE for one year (for parenting and now automatically for Covid-19 reasons). It leads to a permanent contract following review by LSE's Promotions Committee. The Department reduces teaching/marking loads of pre-Major Review staff by 20% to facilitate their development.

### **Career Progression**

All non-full professorial staff are assigned a mentor in line with the Department's robust *mentoring system*. Mentor meetings are at least termly. They encompass advice (e.g. reading/feedback on draft papers and grant proposals, discussion of EDI issues, advice on publication strategies and achieving impact). To support their professional and intellectual growth, pre-Interim Review Assistant Professors are encouraged to be second PhD supervisors.

### **Appraisal and Training**

Assistant and Associate Professors have an annual Career Development Review, conducted by the Head of Department (or her delegate), to advise on progress (e.g. publishing strategies, funding, teaching buyouts for large bid writing, EDI considerations). This identifies *training needs*, e.g. language or career management and leadership courses, from which many faculty have benefited. LSE's Eden Centre for Educational Enhancement offers courses for skill development. The Research and Innovation Division supports bids for external funds. Faculty who receive LSE's KEI Fund support attend one or more meetings with the KEI Integrated Service to discuss their application to maximise potential impacts of planned engagement activities. Full Professors may request or be invited for a Review; from age 62, faculty are encouraged to discuss future retirement plans.

### **Promotion and Evaluation**

Full Professors meet annually to review other faculty and post-doctoral fellows to consider possible promotions. Promotion is based on research and teaching excellence, citizenship and

consideration of impact activities, this last to ensure we meet our commitment to achieving healthy and lasting impacts. During the census period, there were 10 internal promotions, five to Associate (4F, 1M) and five to Full Professor (4F, 1M) resulting in a distribution of 19% Assistant, 29% Associate and 52% Full Professor in August 2020, just beyond the census date. The Head of Department, informed by former Heads, recommends contribution pay awards. LSE's Senior Management Committee evaluates the Department Head's leadership. A subset of the Full Professors assesses the Head's research, teaching and impact.

### **Support for Research and Impact**

Full-time faculty are entitled to *sabbatical leave*, releasing them from teaching and administrative duties (one term after every eight, with an additional entitlement of up to three terms for staff with certain senior management responsibilities). Entitlements are respected. In the REF period, all faculty due sabbatical leave used it (58% of 43 sabbatical leave terms were taken by non-Full Professors, the rest by Full Professors). There is provision for *research leave and teaching and associated duty buyouts*, generally up to a maximum equivalent to 40% of the normal load in any five years. The timing of sabbaticals and research leave/buyouts is approved by the Head of Department with occasional postponements to accommodate teaching needs. No postponements were due to the Covid-19 crisis. *Secondments* to Microsoft Research New England provide a pathway for knowledge exchange and impact (Banet-Weiser, Couldry, Livingstone, Plantin).

### **Researcher Career Development**

Post-doctoral fellows are closely integrated into the Department consistent with LSE's support for research careers and the Research Development Concordat (see REF5a). Training opportunities available to faculty are open to all Fellows. Each is assigned a mentor and receives an annual Career Development Review (exceeding LSE's requirements). Training needs are agreed, and expectations for promotion are discussed. Fellows are full members of the Department's Research Committee, and we seek to integrate early career research assistants through their work with Principal Investigators (PIs) and inclusion in all Department events.

### **Research Students**

#### ***Attracting and Educating Outstanding Doctoral Students***

Cutting edge research training is provided through our PhD Programme, overseen by its Director (Chouliaraki). The minimum entry requirement is high and the minimum English language requirement (IELTS 7.0 overall; minimum 7.0 writing and reading, 6.5 for other elements) ensures students are well-positioned to take advantage of the training. The annual intake target is six to 10 students. Our **recruitment strategy** results in strong demand for places; 2019/20 recorded 115 applications, 15 offers and six acceptances.

In 2019/20, there were 41 FTE PhD students (38 full-time, 6 part-time), an increase of 11 over 2012/13, and we host several visiting research students annually. Students come from 27 countries (27F, 17M; 39% declaring a BAME background). The PhD programme receives LSE four-year scholarships with a generous annual stipend of £18,000 plus full fees. From 2020 entry, the Department is responsible for nominating candidates for an annual allocation of three LSE PhD Studentships. One or two ESRC scholarships are attracted each year. Most of the remaining students receive other external funding. In the census period, support from LSE, other studentships and various stipends totalled £2.7m, including LSE's Student Support Fund and Postgraduate Travel Fund, the latter including £125,495 for conference attendance and

fieldwork. The Department allocates £4,000 annually for student activities and student-led events such as PhD writing retreats.

Over the past five years, the average four-year submission rate was 72% (compared to 67% across LSE). Of 36 graduating students, 26 took up academic posts in the UK (12% above the average for Social Sciences graduates in the UK) and overseas including Leverhulme and ESRC postdoc positions at King's College London, Cambridge and Birmingham. Other graduating students chose professional paths in journalism, global governance, media monitoring or science or communication technology services.

### ***Supervision and Training***

To ensure students are well prepared to attain research excellence and to respond to the demands of future careers as academics or in other professions, all students attend a weekly seminar in years 1 and 2 (50 hrs annually). This introduces intellectual debates and discusses work-in-progress. They also attend a compulsory qualitative and quantitative methods course. Supervisors offer guidance on elective courses delivered by the Department and across LSE. Advanced, staff-taught Doctoral Skills Development Workshops focus on publication strategies, conference presentation and job interviews. The *supervision structure* consists of the Thesis Committee (Chair, main and second supervisors) which acts, also, as an evaluation and monitoring panel. Supervision is at least three times a term in the first year and twice a term (once a term for part-time students) thereafter, in line with LSE regulations. Assessments, a PhD online log recording student and supervisor comments on supervisory meetings, and an end-of year student progress report, considered by an Annual PhD Board attended by all supervisors, ensure that *monitoring and support mechanisms* take EDI considerations into account (see below) and are geared to successful completion.

### ***Integration into Research Culture and Training***

The Department includes a Doctoral Research Studio and provides many opportunities to socialise with faculty. The Department is not involved in undergraduate teaching. Students acquire *teaching experience* as Graduate Teaching Assistants for MSc course seminars or teach Summer School courses or undergraduates in other departments. Twelve students (half during 2018/19) have completed training to Associate (8) or Career Track Associate (4) Advanced HE Fellowship level offered by the LSE PhD Academy. Supervision is arranged at appropriate times, especially for part-time students with other workloads. *Students acquire research experience* through a transparent assistantship appointment process. LSE's PhD Academy offers one-to-one pastoral support and workshops (attended by eight students). Foreign language training is available (taken up by nine students), and support is provided for non-native English speakers. LSE Careers offers other training and consultation (an average of six events annually for our students). The LSE Library, specialist media subject librarian and the Department of Methodology's specialised methods training provide additional support.

### ***Opportunities for Intellectual Engagement and Debate***

Student-led weekly 'knowledge exchanges' complement a peer mentoring system and many social events, informal research groups, a two-day Masterclass, a student-led PhD Symposium and participation in the Department's seminar series. *Integration within networks in the media and communications and related fields* occurs through the London Doctoral Network, BRESTOLON network (Catholic University of Portugal and Bremen, Goldsmiths, LSE and Southern Stockholm universities), International Political Sociology Seminar series and participation at conferences. Students serve as interns, facilitating contacts with Ofcom, media companies, third sector organisations and government departments and creating the potential



for knowledge exchange and impact opportunities. They also *contribute directly to our impact agenda*, e.g. Glatt's research on creative online labour experiences featured in an LSE impact report to the ESRC.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the Department**

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are fundamental to the Department's ethos and LSE. We implement EDI measures through ensuring that staff and students develop and sustain rewarding and impactful research, giving particular attention to gender, 'race'/ethnicity and family/carer responsibilities. We ensure EDI principles are embedded in recruitment and progression practices, develop awareness of EDI-related barriers, work hard to make enough time available for research, and ensure career development opportunities are promoted and facilitated.

*Recruitment panels* balance gender, ethnicity and seniority. All staff are invited to review and comment on longlists before recruitment shortlists are drawn up. Candidates present to the whole Department and staff input is integral to the decision-making process. These measures protect EDI by ensuring that a small group of selectors does not dominate recruitment decisions. When needed, support for progression (e.g. additional mentoring, reading drafts, advice on publication trajectories/funding applications) to overcome EDI barriers, is available. EDI training is mandatory for new staff, and existing staff are also encouraged to undertake LSE's training: 100% of our REF-eligible staff have completed the online Equality and Diversity Awareness module, and most have attended Unconscious Bias training in addition.

*Flexible working policies* apply to staff returning after parental leave or periods of reduced hours for other reasons. Staff taking 18 weeks or more of family leave are entitled to one term of research leave; one faculty member has benefited from this. From the time of appointment, generous sick leave provisions apply. The burden that EDI barriers can place on staff was addressed in a 2015 Departmental Work-Life Balance Consultation. This resulted in a range of interventions including minimum mentoring expectations; voluntary and funded one-to-one coaching for early career staff; reduced email traffic and response time expectations; 'Research Fridays' (no meetings scheduled); and formal meeting timings consistent with caring responsibilities. These measures protect research and private time of all staff. We have sought to respect all our staff and students' requirements during the Covid-19 pandemic. We are supporting LSE to produce EDI sensitive policies for the 2020/21 academic year.

*Senior administrative roles* (e.g., Deputy Head) rotate to distribute the management burden fairly and attract a 20% reduced teaching load to assure equality of research opportunity. Workloads are managed to ensure equitable annual teaching contact hour distribution (norm 110 hours annually) and enable teaching buyouts to facilitate research and impact activities. Department Head *succession planning* (50% teaching load and 4-year term) is undertaken by the Head in consultation with the Department and a recommendation to LSE's Director.

The Department fully supports LSE's *EDI and Athena Swan commitments* (see REF5a) and proactively encourages staff to progress EDI issues across LSE, e.g. in the LSE Gender Equality Forum (Mansell, Livingstone), Race Equality Staff Working Group (Banaji, Gangadharan), Athena Swan Committee (Mansell, Orgad), LSE Pay Equity Review Working Group (Mansell), LSE Adviser to Female Students (Orgad, Meng), and leadership roles in the UCU Branch (Banaji) including Equality & Diversity representative. EDI and the commitment to address and audit internal progress towards reducing inequalities and barriers figure as a standing item in all Department meetings.

The PhD programme aims to *nurture EDI values among its research students*. Anti-bullying and harassment awareness seminars were introduced to maintain a safe and dialogic doctoral environment. Students are granted interruptions and supported by supervisors with return plans in cases of illness or parental leave. The Department's Research Committee and Staff-Student Liaison Committee have student representation. Our processes and curricula are updated frequently in response to student feedback.

### **Departmental REF2021 Process**

The Departmental Statement on REF policies and practice was discussed at and ratified by the Research Committee and full Department meetings. Outputs were independently reviewed by two of the Department's faculty, including one Full Professor and one member of the Department REF panel. Outputs receiving divergent internal grades and a sample of all outputs were also graded by experienced external reviewers identified to the Department. The review process was confidential throughout, and reviewer gradings were 'blind'. Qualitative feedback summaries and consensus output grades were offered confidentially to individuals by the Department REF coordinators and any concerns discussed with the Head of Department. The review of outputs and ICSs was seen as an opportunity to provide confidential and constructive feedback and support to colleagues; all REF processes operated entirely separately from career review and promotion. *Final output selection* was overseen by a Department REF Panel representing all seniority levels, with a view to achieving a fair and equitable representation, informed by LSE's REF 2021 Code of Practice on equality monitoring with respect to seniority, ethnicity and gender (see REF5a).

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

### **Investment in Research and Impact**

The Department secured **£3.8m** HESA-reported income from 31 successful grant applications (a good 28% success rate) during the census period. A further **£1.2m** of non-HESA research income was secured from 41 consultancy and expert evidence projects (small to £203K). The LSE Research Infrastructure and Investment Fund allocated 40% of net overhead income to the Department – **£121K** in the census period. An internal bid process, overseen by the Department's Research Committee, resulted in £104K committed to a Research Catalyst (seed) Fund. Successful bids to the Research Infrastructure Support Fund and LSE's Research Seed Fund resulted in, respectively, £25K and £67K for specific projects. LSE's *Research Incentives Policy* (see REF5a) supports flexibility, autonomy and creativity of individual research decisions. PIs choose how to use their overhead fund share, which creates an incentive to submit bids and enhances the potential for impact on external communities.

LSE Summer School teaching generated **£241K** to support Department research and impact activities. Our impact agenda benefited from in-kind sponsorships through POLIS which attracted professional journalists to work in the Department. This contributed to knowledge exchange and impact within the media industry. Two full-time professional service staff were allocated to support research and impact activities. LSE provided £970/head annually to faculty in 2019/20 (£1,420 for Assistant Professors) for conference participation and research-related costs.

LSE's *Knowledge, Exchange and Impact* (KEI) Fund contributed **£880K** to impact support (including HEIF) and £20K in KEI discretionary awards during the census period. The ICSs benefited from this KEI funding to finance evaluation of impacts (ICS1), increase online published research (ICS2), and enhance the Department's impact work including ICS3 (see

ICSs and Section 4). LSE *REF Support Funds* – £60K – supported impact activities and blogs, impact evaluation, teaching buyouts to conduct fieldwork and output editing costs.

### **Major and Prestigious Competitively Awarded Research Grants**

REF4a-reported funding includes 10 grants valued at £100K to £351K (e.g. Constructing Active Citizenship with European Youth – Banaji (EC); Urban Politics and the Digitally Mediated Lives of London's Young People – Georgiou (EC); EU Kids Online III – Livingstone (EC); Global Kids Online – Livingstone (UNICEF); Values and Ethics in Innovation for Responsible Technology – Powell (EC); Mediating Semi-Authoritarianism – Rantanen (EC). Livingstone, Helsper and Georgiou secured £413K (£30K at the end of the census period) as part of a £3.2m EC consortium grant for the ySKILLS project and €1.7m for an EC project, Children Online: Research and Evidence (£140K to LSE).

A further 24 REF4a-reported projects received £30K to £99K (e.g. Improving Deliberation, Improving Copyright – Edwards (AHRC), Our Data Bodies: Human Rights and Data Justice (New America Foundation) and Justice, Equity and Technology – Gangadharan (Open Society Foundation); the Price of Connection – Couldry (John Templeton Foundation); Personalised Media and Participatory Culture – Banaji (Emirates Foundation). Other funding sources included the Australian Research Council, UK Information Commissioner's Office and the EC to support Livingstone's research on children, risk, privacy and digital literacy. Our diverse HESA funding base includes the British Academy, ESRC, EPSRC, Noble Foundation, Overseas Development Institute, Research Council of Norway, Nuffield Foundation, Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange and corporate funders IF Ltd, Abbey/Grupo Santander, Microsoft and Google.

### **High-quality Research and Pathways to Impact**

Our research and KEI funding base and operational infrastructure, including support from LSE's Research and Innovation Division (see REF5a), allow us to prioritise *building relationships with external organisations* and achieving impacts. This in turn stimulates internal research discussions. Our investments in POLIS, the MPP and the **Media@LSE hub** position us to influence government policy, company and third sector practice, and engage with wider publics to enable numerous pathways to impact (see Section 4). LSE KEI project and discretionary funding was used to support flexible development and delivery of impact activities: 72% of £880K (see above) supported MPP activities and administration to 2019; the remainder was allocated to faculty at all career stages and used to prepare the ICSs and support other impact initiatives. With the launch of Media@LSE in November 2019, REF funds have supported our Policy Officer (Goodman) who assists faculty with impact-related activities.

### **Operational and Scholarly Infrastructure Supporting Research and Impact**

The most significant LSE support is the maintenance of the staff-student ratio at 1:14 to allow quality time for research and impact. All our work is guided by LSE's Research Conduct and Ethics codes (see REF5a). Our conduct, internally and externally, is discussed frequently at Department and Research Committee meetings, including concerning EDI considerations, with confidential support offered, when needed, by the Head of Department, mentors, supervisors or LSE's EDI and counselling infrastructure.

LSE's operational infrastructure supports our research and impact (see REF5a for facilities and services). The Department's relocation in 2015 to refurbished premises, including Departmental seminar and networking spaces, improved our flexibility to host academic and impact events, co-locating faculty and research students (with dedicated space). Visiting Fellows have a reserved,

centrally located physical hub in the Department which maximises their involvement in Department conversations and activities. The LSE Library holdings fully support the Department's needs, and a dedicated and responsive Librarian provides monthly updates on acquisitions and subject-related reports.

The *Department's Research Committee* provides a scholarly infrastructure ensuring regular review of research opportunities, emphasising intellectually-demanding questions and problems and gaps in the existing research base. The Committee contributes significantly to the co-ordination of discussions about research aspirations, initiation of within and cross-Department projects, oversight of the Policy Officer's and our LSE-funded intern's work, and ensuring the availability of administrative support for research and impact activities. Research Committee responsibilities include creating incentives to submit research proposals and enhancing impact by proactively inviting bids for funds (with a Head of Department discretionary fund) by faculty and research students, e.g., supporting reading networks and bid writing workshops. The Research Committee Chair hosts discussions about emerging research themes, priorities and current research activities, facilitates discussion of Media@LSE cross-Department research, and monitors disbursement of funds to ensure equity and access among faculty and research students. Early-stage career faculty are especially encouraged to apply for these funds and LSE seed funding.

Formal, informal and collegial engagement in developing the Department's research agenda is ensured through a programme of diverse events. Fortnightly lunchtime 'research dialogue' seminars (some 150 in the census period) provide opportunities to discuss research in an informal setting, pairing internal and external speakers to facilitate research exchanges. Annual Away Days are very well attended and enable collaborative development of our research strategy and impact work. Informal Department Reading Groups enhance opportunities for discussion. Visiting Fellows contribute peer-reviewed Media@LSE working papers, lead their own network and research seminar series, and participate in Department events including the Research Dialogue seminar series, *ad hoc* seminars and social occasions where research students benefit from discussions with visitors who generously share their expertise.

*Interdisciplinary dialogue* is fostered by our research infrastructure and strong links to LSE institutes (e.g., International Inequalities Institute) and departments where our members serve in advisory capacities (Chouliaraki, Couldry, Gangadharan, Helsper), the LSE Commission on Gender, Inequality and Power (Couldry, Orgad) and LSE's Data Science planning committee (Couldry, Mansell, Powell). LSE support for *formal partnerships* and *regular exchanges* with Fudan University, the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Northwestern University (3 years) contributes to a lively research environment.

### **Extensive Use of Digital Media**

The reach of our impact has been extended through the use of *social media* including the @MediaLSE Twitter feed (20.4K followers) and MPP's Twitter followers (9,301 at November 2019 when the MPP was integrated with @MediaLSE). The Department recorded 1,675 Instagram followers and 141 YouTube subscribers (started in February 2020) in July 2020. The *Global Kids Online* project YouTube channel posted 45 videos attracting 7,116 views and 109.6hrs of viewing. POLIS's Twitter feed had 9.4K followers, 2,967 subscribers to its electronic newsletter - an open rate of 25% (industry avg. 18%), 3,147 Facebook followers and 789 Instagram followers. Individual staff have over 76K Twitter followers with feeds often retweeted on @MediaLSE and @LSENews (103K followers).

The *POLIS*, *Media@LSE* and *Parenting for a Digital Future* blogs are used extensively, and we proactively invite posts. The census period saw **1,759** blog posts on the Department's blogs:



*MPP plus Media @LSE* 48%, *POLIS* 32%, *Parenting for a Digital Future* 20%. These blog posts generated a total of **2.1m** page views by **1.2m** unique users. In June 2020, the *Media @LSE* blog was averaging around 11K visits per month. Members of the Department are active contributors to our blogs - 20 staff authored a total of **487 blog posts**: *MPP plus Media @LSE* blog 31%; *POLIS* blog 35%, *Parenting for a Digital Future* 11%, external blogs 14% (e.g. The Ada Lovelace Institute, The Conversation, World Economic Forum, Open Democracy and Utopia-China) and 9% for other LSE blogs (e.g. British Politics and Policy, American Politics and Policy, South Asia, India, Latin American and Caribbean, Brexit, LSE Impact), illustrating the diverse audiences we aim to address.

*Media interviews, audiovisual streaming technologies, email and online working papers extend our influence.* REF-eligible staff participated in at least **360 media interviews** with many additional interviews involving POLIS Director, Beckett and Distinguished Policy Fellow, Tambini. We authored 38 *opinion pieces* for news outlets in 10 countries or regions, and Banet-Weiser writes a regular column for the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. Banaji, Gangadharan and Livingstone presented TED Talks, and our work appeared in 82 internally or externally produced videos and podcasts. A *Mailchimp* list (7,517 including *Parenting for the Digital Future*) includes contacts and networks of members of the Department. It is used to issue invitations to events and to circulate our monthly Research Newsletter. The Department's peer-reviewed *Media @LSE Working Paper Series* (editor Cammaerts) published 34 papers in the census period.

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

##### **Contributions to the Research Base**

Our contributions are indicated by awards and prizes, by the multiple academic roles in which we support developments in the field of media and communications and by our numerous networks and partnerships.

##### ***Recognition and Prizes***

Livingstone received four and Couldry two honorary doctorates. Livingstone was elected Fellow of the British Academy. Couldry and Livingstone were elected members of the Academia Europaea and Livingstone received the 2019 Academia Europaea Erasmus Medal. Livingstone was awarded an OBE for services to children and child internet safety and received the British Psychological Society Award for Distinguished Contributions to Social Psychology. Livingstone and Mansell were elected Fellows of the Academy of Social Sciences.

We were honoured to receive recognition from professional associations: ICA outstanding book awards – Banet-Weiser and Chouliaraki; the German Media and Communications Association outstanding book award – Couldry; and awards for papers or projects – Cammaerts, Chouliaraki, Dosekun, Edwards, Georgiou, Powell, Orgad. Livingstone received the ICA Senior Scholar Award – Children, Adolescents and Media Division, and the Spanish Communication Association Homage (Gold Award). Mansell received the IAMCR Distinguished Contribution Award and the ICA C. Edwin Baker Award for Advancement of Scholarship on Media, Markets and Democracy. Couldry was appointed Coordinating Lead Author for the 2018 International Panel on Social Progress Report. Mansell was nominated to give the prestigious 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Böhm-Bawerk Lecture at Innsbruck University. We were awarded two honorary professorships/fellowships – Chouliaraki, Willems, and received 46 visiting and associate professor invitations from 15 countries.

##### ***Contributions to the Field of Media and Communications***



We sought to *deepen and extend the knowledge base* through 20 monographs, 15 (co)edited books, handbooks or encyclopaedias, 179 book chapters and 236 peer-reviewed papers, 57% (135) often co-authored with overseas and non-LSE UK colleagues. Two books, three edited books, 28 book chapters, and 47 peer-reviewed papers were by assistant professors. An analysis of some of our published works (2014/20) indicates a citation rate of 14.2 per publication, twice the average for the UK media and communications field. We are cited beyond our field, e.g., by computing science, education, health science and psychology scholars. Our PhD students additionally authored 1 book, 65 peer-reviewed articles and 22 book chapters.

We delivered 200 invited *academic keynotes and public lectures* in the UK and overseas. We served as *overall conference chairs* and organisers of 32 large conferences or pre/post conference events, and organised 18 workshops at the LSE and internationally. We *contributed to leading academic professional associations*, serving on ICA's Nominating Committee and the Society of Cinema and Media Studies' Lifetime Achievement Award Committee – Banet-Weiser, ICA's Outstanding Book Award and Journalism Studies Outstanding Article Award committees – Chouliaraki, Professional Standards Taskforce – Livingstone, and Secretary of the PR Division – Edwards, and on the American Studies Association Executive Committee – Banet-Weiser. Livingstone founded and chaired ECREA's Temporary Working Group, Children, Youth and Media (now a Section) and Chouliaraki chaired its Temporary Working Group on Mediated Suffering Studies. Cammaerts was Vice-Chair of IAMCR's Communication Policy & Technology Section, Mansell chairs IAMCR's Clearinghouse for Public Statements and is Secretary of the Research Conference on Communications, Information and Internet Policy (TPRC).

We contributed to *peer review in our own and adjacent fields*. Livingstone served as a REF2014 sub-panel member; Mansell is a REF2021 sub-panel member. We have been journal editors or co-editors (Banet-Weiser, Edwards, Helsper) or associate editors of 16 journals, including the ICA journals *Communication Theory*, *Communication*, *Culture and Critique*, and *Journal of Communication*. We referee for over 100 journals and serve on numerous UK and international grant evaluation committees and overseas university scientific evaluation panels.

Efforts to *shape research agendas* involve representation on the US National Science Foundation's Council for Big Data, Ethics and Society (Gangadharan), Standing Selection Committee of the Canadian Networks of Centres of Excellence (Mansell) and membership of the EC Horizon 2020 Expert Advisory Group – Europe in a changing world (Livingstone). We provided *leadership in developing research methodologies* in the social sciences (Orgad, Powell, Helsper) and *cross-disciplinary research* (e.g. Banaji's research on young people's citizenship in the EU; Couldry, Gangadharan, Mansell, Mulvin, Plantin and Powell variously on data, rights, ethics and artificial intelligence).

### ***Academic Research Collaborations and International Networks and Partnerships***

These include collaborations with colleagues in the UK, Europe and around the world, e.g. CREATE network – Edwards; Data Justice Network, Cardiff – Gangadharan; Network of Excellence in Internet Science – Powell; and those in Chile, South Africa and the US. We participated in **18 UK and international research and policy-oriented networks**, e.g. Connected Learning Research Network (MacArthur Foundation), Global Commission on Internet Governance (Chatham House and Centre for International Governance Innovation–CIGI) and Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence network (ODI/DFID) – Livingstone, as well as Powell's leadership of JUST AI (Joining Up Society and Technology in AI), a network of researchers and practitioners through the Ada Lovelace Institute in partnership with AHRC (see also ICSs).

**Contributions to the Economy and Society**

Our evidence-based research addresses global and local societal issues and problems, from migration to political instability, and the impacts of rising inequality associated with the 'data economy', bringing a critical social science perspective to various research council priorities and UK Government 'Grand Challenges'. The strength of these contributions is indicated by the great importance we assign to ensuring our research contributes to the economy and society based on research into how media and communications are implicated in social, political, cultural and social problems of concern in the global North and South.

***Engagement with Key Research Users, Beneficiaries and Audiences***

Department staff gave **102** non-academic keynote speeches or invited talks in numerous countries: 28% public sector (Cabinet Office, Intellectual Property Office, Ofcom, Council of Europe, EC Directorates-General, European Parliament, Mission Société Numérique, Municipality of Bologna, National Statistical and Geographical Institute Mexico, ITU, UNESCO, UNCSTD, UNICEF); 20% third sector (e.g. Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders, Hay Literary Festival, National Theatre, Oxfam, Migration Matters-UK) and 52% at business events (e.g. Bloomberg, JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs, PR at CommsCon18, World Economic Forum, journalists' meetings).

We *reached out to wider publics* through **26** speaker events in the high profile *LSE Public Lecture Series* (and accompanying podcasts), also hosting and participating in **44** additional Department-sponsored events featuring leading academics (e.g. Julie Cohen, Henry Jenkins, Angela McRobbie, Baroness O'Neill, Frank Pasquale, José van Dijck, Robin Wagner-Pacifici), government representatives (e.g. Damian Collins MP, Walter Merricks-Chief Financial Ombudsman Service) and media and other industry speakers (Lionel Barber, Baroness de Rothschild, Evan Davis, Paul Mason, Sir Alan Moses, former IPSO Chair and then Chief Executive of Ofcom, Sharon White). We organised or participated in **12** panels for the annual *LSE Festival* (Banet-Weiser, Beckett, Chouliaraki, Gangadharan, Georgiou, Helsper, Powell). POLIS hosted five Journalism and Society Conferences (500+ attendees) and **32** smaller events with external participants. Tambini organised six Oxford Media Conventions (300+). The MPP organised **29** high profile expert workshops in the UK and overseas on topics ranging from press regulation to digital intermediaries and media pluralism.

***Responsiveness to Public, Private and Third Sector Concerns***

We authored **123** *evidence-based reports or policy briefing papers* prepared for externally or internally funded research projects, including 13 MPP reports, e.g. *Fake news: Public policy responses* (9,700+ downloads), *Families and Screen Time* (18,000+ downloads) and *The New Political Campaigning* (5,800+ downloads), and four POLIS reports (e.g. *New Powers, New Responsibilities: A Global Survey of Journalism and Artificial Intelligence* which brought together 71 news organisations in 32 countries – 3,672 downloads, 12,799 page views; and *Fanning the Flames: Reporting Terror in a Networked World* hosted at Tow Centre for Digital Journalism, 8,889 page views). These informed UK and overseas government departments, parliamentary committees, government agencies/commissions including the EC, third sector organisations, specialist institutes and think tanks in the UK and abroad, and the private sector. MPP and POLIS showcased Department research at venues such as the Perugia Journalism Festival and the World Economic Forum.

Members of the Department influenced policy agendas through **43** instances of *oral testimony or written evidence* in response to parliamentary inquiries, government consultations and requests for comment from the EC or United Nations agencies, e.g. on the future of internet regulation,

strategies for addressing misinformation, rights and protections for children online, electoral campaigning transparency and gender and equality issues. For example, Tambini submitted evidence on the future of public service broadcasting, the BBC Charter Renewal, media ownership, platform regulation, hate crime and press regulation in the Leveson inquiry. Edwards' research on copyright policy has developed a more sustainable and inclusive consultation model for debate on this issue involving citizens, industry and policymakers.

*Formal expert appointments* help to increase our research impacts. Livingstone was appointed *special advisor* to House of Lords Select Committee on Communications Inquiry into Children and the Internet and Beckett to the House of Commons Select Committee for Culture, Media and Sport on Broadcasting. We served in 35 trustee, expert advisory board, council member or formal advisor roles in the public sector (17), industry (4) and third sector organisations (14) in the UK and Europe (Anstead, Chouliaraki, Livingstone, Orgad, Tambini).

We achieved impact through *advice and consultancy*: 140 consultancies for third sector organisations or think tanks (41%), UK government departments or regional or intergovernmental organisations (36%), and industry (23%) on topics such as digital platform regulation, digital inclusion, human rights and data control and strategic communications, e.g. training for Weber Shandwick and Manifest (strategic communication companies) about treating branding as a social and cultural function-Edwards. Tambini acted as consultant to *Medien Anstalt Berlin-Brandenburg* (Statutory Media Regulator) devising a new policy framework to apply media pluralism to digital platforms.

### ***Effectiveness of Strategy to Create Pathways to Impact***

Our ICSs exemplify this: ICS1 – increasing global understanding and action to realise children's rights to online opportunities and protection from harm; ICS2 – shaping frameworks to design and evaluate digital inclusion policies to address inequalities; and ICS3 – standards and legislation to constrain media power while respecting media freedom.

Other Department research with substantial and emerging impact, supported by internal and external funding, addresses current research priorities and demonstrates the reach and significance of impacts beyond the ICSs.

The *Digital Makings of the City of Refuge* project investigated responses to refugee arrivals, and engaged with newcomers and third sector actors with a small London-based NGO, leading to an LSE Symposium on *Migration and the Digital City* to address mobility issues and the autonomy of human beings in the digital age and citizenship. This resulted in an opportunity to inform Tate Modern's city of refuge digital archive planning (Georgiou). Research on *Mediated Humanitarian Knowledge* helped to shape NGO humanitarian appeal campaigns (Orgad). Research on young people and EU citizenship attracted the attention of policymakers and the wider public (Cammaerts, Banaji) and invitations to prepare a report on *UK Youth Perspectives and Priorities for Brexit Negotiations* with a foreword by Labour and Conservative MPs and to speak to the All Party Parliamentary Group for a Better Brexit (Banaji).

Our research on gender, identity and media culture has informed policy and corporate practice. *Heading Home* investigated why women give up successful professional careers to become 'stay at home' mothers, eliciting invitations to address the Cabinet Office and Bloomberg with Baroness Ariane de Rothschild participating in LSE discussion (Orgad). Banet-Weiser's research on advertising, online platforms' not-for-profit and commercial campaigns, popular feminism and misogyny, published in *Empowered*, led to 45 invitations to address academic and non-academic groups in the UK and overseas and to influence media practice. Dosekun's recent

research on *African Luxury: Aesthetics and Politics* is already influencing visual and material consumption cultures in the African continent.

The LSE HEIF-supported Truth, Trust and Technology Commission produced the *Tackling the Information Crisis* report (2,163 downloads), responding to concerns in the UK about the power and absence of accountability of digital platforms (Anstead, Beckett, Couldry, Livingstone-Chair, Mansell, Tambini and Murray – Law, with MPs and industry participants). Our recommendations about UK platform regulation received substantial coverage in *The Guardian*, *Times*, *Telegraph*, the *Press Gazette* and *Wired*. Aimed at fighting misinformation and protecting citizens' (including children's) democratic rights, they were reflected in the Government's 2019 *Online Harms White Paper*. Research on *WhatsApp Vigilantes* addressed issues of online harms associated with misinformation, attracting substantial media coverage in India, the US, the UK and beyond with results that influenced the company's content moderation policies (Banaji, Bhat – PhD student).

Research on data privacy and ethics, and the roles of artificial intelligence and algorithms, has informed the design of options to make real-time artificial intelligence automated decisions in the insurance sector (IF Ltd) more transparent (Powell). Digital privacy and data literacy research influenced the City of New York's recognition of internet users' privacy rights in its digital inclusion strategy, affecting 22m people and led to data privacy training for over 500 library professionals (Gangadharan). Our work on the media, democracy and politics informed a report on *Televised Debates in Parliamentary Democracies* in the run up to the 2015 UK election influencing the format of the only television campaign debate (Anstead). Al-Ghazzi (serving as lead researcher for UNESCO's 2018 *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Report*) influenced understanding of media freedoms in the Arab region. Research on the *Future of News Agencies in Europe* resulted in Agence France-Presse's Regional Director for Europe and Google's Director of Strategic Relations for News & Publishers participating in an LSE-hosted debate on platforms' financial obligations to news publishers (Rantanen with Kelly, Bhat and Stupart – PhD students).

### **Summary**

Our ambition is to produce world-leading research that pioneers intellectual, critical and empirical insights that draw on and influence multiple disciplines and perspectives relevant to media and communications, while also achieving significant impacts on public debates and policy. As well as seeking to enable all faculty, research staff and PhD students to meet individual and collective research and impact goals, and often working collaboratively within LSE and internationally, the Department continues to prioritise initiatives that strengthen our equity, diversity and inclusion commitments. In all of this, we rely on the exceptional support provided by our professional support staff and by the excellent resources and effective infrastructure supported by the School.