

Institution: The University of Wolverhampton
Unit of Assessment: 17 Business and Management
<p>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Since entering RAE1996, Business and Management at Wolverhampton has shown a consistent improvement in its research profile. In 2001, we achieved a modest 3b rating and by REF2014, 29% of our research was rated 3* and 4*. We continued this positive trajectory and, in REF2021, we have quadrupled our research income, trebled the number of PhD completions, and achieved gender parity in the staff submission and research leadership. We have set ourselves stretching targets to continue to improve the quality of our research in a supportive and collaborative environment.</p> <p><u>a) How Research is Structured across the Unit</u></p> <p>Research in the University of Wolverhampton Business School is conducted in the Management Research Centre (MRC), which was founded in 1996. Our vision is aligned with the University's Strategic Plan to change lives through research. Since REF2014, the unit has invested significantly in research capabilities, through the appointment of two professors, the promotion of five staff, investment in Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and growth of research clusters. There are four thematic clusters in the MRC:</p> <p>Corporate Governance and Sustainability (CGS) - Led by Yamak, the research of this group covers cutting-edge issues of governance and sustainability practices to address global challenges. The cluster prioritises multi-disciplinary research and international reach through its links with organisations such as European Academy of Management (EURAM), the Institute of Directors in the UK, Sweden and Denmark, and employer associations in South East Europe.</p> <p>Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (ESM) - Led by Yong Wang, research is conducted on small business (SB), family business (FB), entrepreneurship, marketing for SB, FB digitalisation and strategy, change management and entrepreneurial learning and education, rural entrepreneurship, and green enterprise. The cluster collaborates with the International Family Enterprise Research Academy (IFERA), the African Union, and has international projects with institutions in China and Australia.</p> <p>Human Resource Management and Employee Relations (HRER) - Led by Wen Wang, the cluster pioneers innovative interdisciplinary research in the field of employee relations, leadership behaviours and effectiveness. The cluster collaborates with trade unions including the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union, local governments and the West Midlands Combined Authority, the West Midlands Police and the Black Country Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>International Business and Economics (IBE) - Led by Jackson, the group's research focuses on international business activities, globalisation, Foreign Direct Investment, emerging economies, internationalisation regarding market, entrepreneurship, labour, social and political change, and international information systems. The cluster collaborates with the Economic Intelligence Unit at the Black Country Consortium, the head of which is a Visiting Professor of the MRC.</p> <p>The clusters organise research seminars, writing events, grant development workshops and provide an academic home for the PhD students. This is financially supported through an annual cluster budget using the MRC's QR funds, which also support research time for staff and awards such as the 'Best ECR Paper'. We recently formed a Pedagogy and Practice Group for the support and development of colleagues without Significant Responsibility for Research (SRR). The MRC</p>

collaborates closely with the University's Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT) in relation to research projects on global challenges.

b) Research Objectives Past and Future and Performance

i) Research Strategy

The research strategy of the MRC focuses on research regarding society, organisations, and their management, reflected in the clusters and research agendas of individual staff members. The MRC fully adopts the principles of Responsible Research for Business and Management (RRBM) at all levels to address societal challenges through rigorous research that prioritises interdisciplinarity and embraces the diversity of paradigms and methods needed to collaborate with all stakeholders. We achieve this by developing, supporting and rewarding researchers and by assessing and addressing their needs and aspirations at all levels.

ii) Evaluation of Strategy 2014-2021

Our post-REF2014 research strategy focused on research excellence, building capacity and impact, within the context of the wider University Research Strategy. We have achieved the following:

a) Establishing 'areas of excellence' through research clusters

We have invested in two new Professorial appointments (Yamak and Perchard), and five staff were internally promoted (Wang Y to Professor, Rahimi and Wang W to Readerships, and Anosike and Mbzibain to Associate Professor Knowledge Exchange) in recognition of their research and impact respectively. Alongside six newly recruited early career researchers, the MRC grew the quality and scale of research.

During the REF period (2014-2021), the unit had five authored books, 35 chapters in books, 47 conference contributions, two edited books, and 87 journal articles. Our research focuses especially on gender inequalities (Yamak, Machold, Rahimi); workplace equality (Wang W, Seifert); sustainable governance (Yamak, Mahmood, Godwin); sustainable management of resources (Mbzibain); inclusive and equitable entrepreneurship education (Anosike, Wang Y, Mahmood), digitalisation, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI), smart cities, e-commerce and sharing economy (Rahimi, Yamak, Wang, Y). Our research successes are based on our interdisciplinary approach in areas such as sustainability, natural resource governance and Artificial Intelligence. For example, the Citizen Voice for Change project led by Mbzibain develops novel forest governance mechanisms and processes through involvement of civil society, indigenous people and community organisations in five Congo Basin countries. Rahimi, Yamak and Wang Y work with data scientist Thelwall from the Research Institute for Information and Language Processing on AI, Big Data and social sustainability. This resulted in a jointly edited book and the award of a competitive Horizon2020 project on 'Reshaping labour force participation with Artificial Intelligence' (AI4LABOUR, GBP713,000; 2021-2025).

Clusters have facilitated the development of interdisciplinary research with notable successes in competitive EU and international funding. For example, the Gender-Equal Management Approach (GEMA) project led by Machold and Wang W in conjunction with the employer associations of Slovenia, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Croatia resulted in the publication of a book and a GEMA national event in Croatia. 'Governance and value-creation in SMEs in a service dominant-logic' (GoSMEs, Machold, Yar) was with a score of 98.6% in the top 1% of H2020 MSCA fellowship applications in 2017. Outcomes of a collaborative China-Australia-UK project on family business growth (Wang, Y) are a book chapter and several conference papers (ESM). The older worker retention and workplace climate in the manufacturing sector project (Wang W), funded by EURAM, led to impactful journal articles (HRER).

b) Supporting and growing our research student community

We have exceeded our goal of doubling the number of PhD completions (8 in REF2014 and 25 in REF2021), and now have a population of 31 students compared to 16 in REF2014. Applications to our doctoral programme increased steadily. We receive 100-150 applications per annum, from which we select those PGR candidates who best fit with our research strengths and values. In collaboration with the University's Doctoral College (UDC), we have enhanced the provision of training and development opportunities, including an annual career development week for research students, skills training mapped against the VITAE framework, and joint staff-PhD events such as an annual research conference and writing retreat. Our PGRs are trained at three levels:

MRC PGR Student Training Workshops – Organised by Rahimi and Pheasant-Kelly, these focus on a specific aspect of research, dissemination and the PhD journey and include workshops on literature review, qualitative and quantitative methods, writing for publication, and preparing for the viva.

MRC/Cluster Seminars – These seminars provide an opportunity for PhD students to disseminate their knowledge and research experiences. Further, internationally scholars such as Kotlar and Mitra in ESM and Huse, Zattoni, McKiernan and Clarke in CGS have shared their research projects and experiences.

University Research Training – Students are encouraged to participate in training provided by the UDC, facilitating meetings with researchers outside the MRC. Business is necessarily interdisciplinary, and we encourage PGRs to engage positively with others.

The MRC supports PhD students to attend external conferences and has a budget available for the purpose. We have used the University's QR Global Challenge Research Fund to support five PhD students from developing countries to attend international conferences. In the national Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, PRES2017, the overall satisfaction of Business doctoral students reached an aggregate score of 90%+, exceeding the sector benchmark by 11.7%. This score was the highest in the University and stood firmly in the top quartile of the sector. Our students were happy with the research ambience within the School (90% satisfaction) and the training programme (100% satisfaction). In the 2018 PRES, our PhD student satisfaction continued to take the lead in the University and was ranked as the 3rd in the sector in the nation.

c) Undertaking research regarding society, organisations, and their management

We have involved industrial partners as leads or beneficiaries through our direct funding of industry and EU-funded projects. The MRC works closely with practitioners, national, regional business and organisations (the Aluminium Federation, Barhale, the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Irwin Mitchell, and the Institute of Directors); the public sector (NHS, the Black Country Consortium, the City of Wolverhampton Council, and the West Midlands Combined Authority); and other civic organisations (trade unions, PCS and the YMCA) to inform strategy and policy. For example, the MRC has important and sustained collaboration with unions (Wang W and Seifert) and Aluminium Federation (Perchard). Another successful collaboration is with the Institute of Directors (IoD) regarding board governance (Machold, Yar, Yamak), where we run annual breakfast events, co-organised a conference and contributed to the IoD magazine. We have regional collaborations such as Black Country Consortium that involved honorary appointments (Dwight), collaborate with the West Midlands Combined Authority over its Industrial Strategy (Jackson), and with the Black Country Chamber of Commerce (BCCC) to improve social sustainability, diversity, and inclusion (Yamak, Wang W).

d) Improving research governance

Our research governance structure is embedded at Faculty level via the Faculty Research Committee (FRC), which the MRC head attends. Our review of governance policies has resulted in guidance and training on topics including research integrity, open data and responsible

research. The MRC has established a close relationship with RRBM. Yamak is one of the 70 scholars invited to the RRBM Global Summits and collaborates in promoting its principles, which emphasise relevance via research for society, close interactions with all the stakeholders, focus on rigor, interdisciplinary scope, and openness to different types of paradigms and methods. The principles are communicated across the unit through a seminar programme of talks (from prominent scholars such as McKiernan) and workshops aimed at PhD students and new researchers, to discuss their research plans and use of RRBM principles in their works.

All research projects are also required to have approval from the Faculty Ethics Committee. We have also increased research scrutiny at local levels within the MRC to oversee the quality of research programmes and funding proposals. The head of the MRC also sits on the School's Business Advisory Board and works closely with the Director of Executive Education and Corporate Engagement to enhance research relevance and interactions with practitioners. Yamak attends the University-level Funding Steering Committee.

iii) Strategy 2021-2026

Our research strategy aligns with the University's Vision 2030 and builds on the progress with have made for REF2021. Our focus will be on three areas

a) Research to address global challenges

Building on existing research strengths in governance, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and international business, we will develop research projects that directly tackle global challenges. Aligned with the priorities of the GCRF and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, we will develop research projects on: equality, diversity and inclusion (Wang W, Yamak, Machold, Rahimi, Mahmood); the precariousness of employment and discrimination in the gig economy (Yamak, Rahimi); sustainable governance in international business (Yamak, Mahmood, Godwin); sustainable labour and digitalisation (Yamak, Rahimi, Wang Y, Wang W, Igbinigie, Godwin, Mahmood); equitable entrepreneurship education in developing countries (Anosike, Wang Y, Mahmood); sustainable management of natural resources (Mbzbain); environmental sustainability and family businesses (Wang Y); digitalisation (Wang Y); and sharing economy and smart cities (Rahimi).

b) Excellence in researcher development

We will increase the number of PhD students and completions by 50%. ECR development focuses on their involvement in PhD supervisory teams, externally-funded projects, and an enhanced suite of ECR development opportunities including secondments. Increased professorial capacity will also provide enhanced leadership and mentoring of ECRs to support career progression. Senior researcher development programmes will strengthen the skills and capacity of readers and professors to support others by effective use of resources to support them through regular trainings on our e-learning platform CANVAS.

c) Strengthening excellence in impact

We will strengthen our links with non-academic partners in the UK and overseas to achieve impact and focus initially on two areas:

- Deepening governance ties with the IoD, chambers of commerce, the WMCA and councils, and the West Midlands Engine in line with our place-based agenda, via joint applications for research funding, co-delivery of training and projects; and
- Working with CIDT to leverage its links with organisations such as the World Bank, the UN, the African Union and World Resources Institute to translate our research into practical solutions to sustainability issues.

d) Responsible Research

We have participated in the University's Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charter, and plan to submit a departmental Athena SWAN award in November 2021. We will be involved in national and international initiatives to promote responsible research, including being a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) and the White Paper on Responsible Management Research. The MRC will be more visible in adopting the principles that prioritise research for society. ERCs and PhDs will be more informed about RRBM principles and motivated to shape their research accordingly. Researchers will be encouraged to involve different stakeholders into their research in order to increase relevance and co-authorship with practitioners, and rigour and interdisciplinary work will be further supported via QR funding. As for DORA, researchers in the MRC will be encouraged to produce not only journal articles but also books, book chapters, blogs and articles in practitioner outlets.

c) Research Impact and Impact Case Studies

The MRC actively engages with the University's Impact Strategy. Applied research has been a central plank of the Business and Management research strategy for over 20 years, producing rigorous management research with practical utility aligned with the university's strong position for regional development and collaboration. The strategy focuses on a) co-production of knowledge by means of joint industry-academic projects and co-produced outputs; b) engagement with umbrella organisations such as trade unions, employer representative bodies and supranational bodies (African Union) to strengthen reach; and c) recognition and reward for impact knowledge exchange and impact activities, for example, Anosike's and Mbzibain's promotions recognised their knowledge exchange and impact in Africa in youth employment and forest governance, respectively.

We have included two Impact Case Studies: Changing policies and organisational practice to increase leadership gender diversity and Promoting self-employment in Africa through entrepreneurship education. Their impacts have involved changes to boardroom practices, improvement in mentoring practice leading to promotion of women, and greater numbers of entrepreneurs and start-ups. These were underpinned by approximately GBP1.6 million of collaborative grant funding, co-production of outputs and delivery. Additional impact is also taking shape: the HRER Cluster has produced effects on labour relations and employment conditions, shaped policy debates on public sector pay and conditions, and changed managerial behaviours and workplace practices. Examples include Wang W's work with YMCA on an ageing workforce; Seifert's work on public sector pay and conditions and the employment implications of the Heathrow airport expansion; and Gill-McLure's work has been taken up by local governments to strengthen social dialogue. Anosike, Wang Y, and Mahmood have produced impact regarding commercial benefits for SMEs and entrepreneurs through KTPs and the design and delivery of 15 entrepreneurship curricula in six African countries. In collaboration with IoD, Styrelse Akademien, PWC Stockholm and Deloitte Denmark, Machold and Yar developed a Governance Model Canvas for small and medium-sized enterprises. Finally, Mbzibain's forest governance projects contributed to a new pan-African network of civil society organisations that combat illegal logging, a new satellite based alert system FLEGT WATCH to support independent forest monitoring by communities, and greater recognition for the rights of indigenous peoples in the Central African Republic.

d) Supporting Interdisciplinary Research

MRC research clusters have been inter-disciplinary in nature, bringing together scholars from development studies, economics, finance, history (business, economic and labour), human resource management and industrial relations, organisation studies, political economy, strategy, and tourism management.

The integration of the Business School into the Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Science (FABSS) provided further opportunities for inter-disciplinary work. This was co-ordinated through the Faculty Research Committee, and bi-monthly heads of research meetings, which involved the heads of the main research centres and institutes in the faculty (MRC, Centre for Historical Research, Law Research Centre, CIDT, and the Institute for Community Research). Examples of interdisciplinary working relationships between the MRC, CHR, and CIDT include the faculty PhD development programme, contributions to research centre seminar programmes, research mentoring across disciplinary areas and joint research grants (for example, AHRC grant AH/P007244/1 and ESRC grant ES/S013237/1 were awarded to PI Gildart and CI Perchard and are returned under UoA28 History).

MRC staff have been involved in joint research with the University's interdisciplinary institutes, including work on big data in tourism research (Rahimi in collaboration with Thelwall), and employment in voluntary sector organisations (Wang W in collaboration with Caulfield from the Institute for Community Research and Development). Pedagogic research is under development in collaboration with College of Learning and Teaching (CoLT) and the Education Observatory through a project on addressing the student disruptive behaviour (Rahimi, Mahmood, Williams). Sustainability research with an inter-disciplinary lens has developed in collaboration with different universities such as Southampton, Kadir Has, and Bogazici (Yamak, Godwin, Mahmood). The University's Research Policy Unit (RPU) and Project Support Office (PSO) provide a series of thematic workshops and events to support inter-disciplinary projects and networking of staff.

e) Progress towards an Open Research Environment

The University's Open Access policy has maintained the requirement to deposit outputs in our institutional repository WIRE within three months of acceptance. We undertake, where possible, to go beyond the minimum requirements, for example by making book chapters openly accessible. The outputs from the GEMA project, including the handbook for practitioners, were made openly accessible through the project website. Further work on open data is planned as part of our research strategy Vision 2030.

f) Supporting a Culture of Research Integrity

As signatories to the UK's Concordat to Support Research Integrity, the University is committed to embedding the principles into its policies and practices, including support and development for staff to stay current with national and international best practice. The RPU provides online resources and training events. Ethical approval for staff and research students is managed via the Faculty Ethics Committee, which also regularly reviews ethics processes and development needs. All research is required to get the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee, where Yamak represents the MRC, Oriade represents the Business School, and Rahimi is Post Graduate Research Skills Development Tutor.

2. People

a) Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

Staff development is central to our research strategy, and in recognition of our achievements in promoting staff at all levels, we were, in 2012, first awarded the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research Award, with re-accreditation successfully achieved in 2016. Progress against our targets is actioned and monitored by the Concordat to Support Career Development committee, a sub-committee of the University Research Committee (URC), chaired by the Dean of Research and includes representatives from faculties, HR and careers services (Wang W represents the MRC). In line with University frameworks, all staff have a workload model and annual appraisal to ensure that sufficient time is allocated for research against targets and

necessary support identified, with staff having between 50% and 20% of dedicated research time. All staff new to HE or the University additionally benefit from an allowance of 400 hours over 2 years to facilitate their transition. Staff are recruited to permanent contracts to promote fairness.

Sixteen staff, or 37% of all Business School staff, have significant responsibility for research, an increase of four from REF2014. Staff who do not currently have SRR are encouraged to participate in the Pedagogy and Practice group, and develop a plan should they wish to transition to a research role profile. We also support staff with time and fees to complete PhDs (for example, Adams, Bakare, Croker, Dacre, Khawaja, Williams) to enable them to become independent researchers.

We made concerted efforts to support our ECRs. In addition to the research time and new starter allowance, each ECR is mentored by a senior researcher. We introduced an ECR best publication prize and the upcoming cluster project prize, allocated based on research integrity, knowledge exchange, funding pipelines and initiatives to integrate PGRs and ECRs. Godwin won 2020 best publication prize.

These MRC initiatives are supplemented by support from the University. Annually, the University runs an Early Researcher Award Scheme fellowship programme (ERAS) which awards 10 grants of up to GBP5,000 alongside a tailored mentoring and action learning programme focused on career development. Since 2014, we have won 11 such fellowships (Beltagui, Donegani, Jones, Mahmood, Mbzibain, Oriade, Salia, Stylos, Wang W, Yan, and Godwin), which have resulted in high impact publications (Stylos, Wang W), research funding success (Mbzibain), or strengthened industry links (Jones' work with IoD, or Oriade's work on an impact assessment of Lichfield Cathedral). Resources to support ECRs are made available through our e-learning platform CANVAS. Resulting from the initiatives, the number of ECRs submitting to REF2021 doubled (six staff were ECR in the assessment period), whilst including outputs from ECRs that have since gained promotion elsewhere (Beltagui at Aston, Stylos at Bristol, Rosli at Brunel). This successful mentoring of ECRs acts also as a double-edged sword. Well-trained and supported ECRs are in high demand by other universities, which is the main reason for high turnover at that level.

Staff can seek internal promotion through three routes – research, knowledge exchange (KE or applied research) and learning & teaching with the former 2 having SRR, with criteria for the research and KE routes modelled on DORA best practice. Staff are supported in the process through a mid-career and research leaders development programme that is designed in line with best practice guidance by Vitae and informed by the biennial national Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS). Since 2019, we have a process for confidentially and fairly considering individual circumstances in research evaluations, to encourage historically excluded groups to seek promotion. In the assessment period, three staff were promoted through the research route (Wang Y to Professor and Wang W and Rahimi to Reader), two through the knowledge exchange route (Anosike and Mbzibain), and Jones through learning & teaching. Three professors who retired in the assessment period (Hamlin, Haynes, Seifert) continue to be affiliated as Emeritus professors, providing ongoing mentoring for staff and supervision of PhD students.

To enhance career development, the University also provides secondment opportunities to staff, either internally or externally. In this REF period, Machold has been seconded to the University's Research Policy Unit as Dean of Research (from 2017); Mbzibain has been seconded to CIDT as an expert on Africa; Yar was seconded to Board Governance in Denmark during his MSCA fellowship; and during the AI4LABOUR project, three ECRs, one mid-career researcher and four senior researchers will be seconded to organisations in Turkey and Ireland.

As part of our impact strategy, we stimulate/facilitate exchanges between academia and business, industry or public or third sector bodies, which develop skills other than the traditional research ones. Our successful EU-funded projects have involved industrial partners as leads or co-beneficiaries, for example, sustained collaboration on the GoSMEs project was delivered through breakfast workshops (Machold, Yar, Jones, Yamak) and practitioner conferences, and Mbzibain

delivered at the annual Forest Governance Forum. We have also organised seminars, E-Clinics, Blogs and supporting Podcasts for businesses during the COVID period, run by MRC staff.

b) Research Students

The MRC offers a PhD programme (PT/FT) and the number of enrolled students has almost doubled to 31, compared to 16 in REF2014. Completions have trebled to 25 (from 8 in REF2014). Most students (21) are full-time. 5 students are on university-funded scholarships, including 2 who are RIF-funded. 7 are government-funded (including 1 Nigerian TET-funded student) and 2 hold prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship stipends. Each student has a supervisory team, led by a Director of Studies together with a second supervisor based on complementary subject and or methodological expertise. Mandatory training is required to act as a research supervisor, as is regular CPD via the UDC Research Supervisors' Development Programme.

Each full-time student meets their supervisory team at least monthly (bi-monthly for PT students), and meeting notes and agreed actions are captured via an online student management system (e-vision), which is reviewed periodically by the FRC.

Research students are supported through initiatives by the UDC, as well as Faculty and MRC-specific training and development. UDC provides a comprehensive and holistic generic Postgraduate Researchers' Development Programme (PGRDP) and all MRC research students are members of the UDC. The PGRDP provides face-to-face and online workshops, and resources to support research students are provided through an e-learning platform (CANVAS). The programme is mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, and supervisors agree a personal development plan with their students. The PGRDP is supported and enhanced by Start Right (focusing on early stages of doctoral study), Writing-up and Accessing Professions (focusing on doctoral completion and transition to the world of work), and Prepare to Teach sessions. Students also have access to other university services such as Careers and Employability, Learning Information Services and the Students' Union.

Each faculty has a Postgraduate Research Tutor (PGRT), who looks after the PGRs during their academic life cycle from admission, progression, to examination; a PGR skills development tutor, who develops an annual programme of subject-based research training; and a PGR Support Tutor for pastoral support.

The faculty has an annual PGR development programme, which focus on conducting research, qualitative and quantitative methods, and reviewing and publishing. PGRs attend MRC seminars on grant seeking and publishing, and cluster seminar series and writing retreats, where PGRs can accrue valuable skills and be mentored. The MRC also supports PGRs attending external conferences through conference funds. PGRs also have a dedicated research room in the new Lord Swraj Business School building, which is accessible out-of-hours if requested.

The quality of our training and PGR supervision is evidenced by responses to the national Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). In PRES2017, the MRC exceeded the national subject benchmark by 11%, and we scored highly on quality of supervision (96.25% satisfaction), induction, progression, and assessment (90%), research culture (87.5%), and resources (86.25%). Similarly, we were ranked the 3rd in the country according to the PRES2018 results. Graduates from our PhD programme have progressed careers in academia (for example, Ojebode and Atiase at de Montfort, Mwiya at Copperbelt, Hoppas as Cyprus University of Technology) or outside, for example, Schoenning works for a Norwegian consultancy company and Tsemo set up his own business.

c) Equality and Diversity

We value the benefits that a diverse staff and student population brings to the University and to the MRC, and we therefore work closely with national organisations such as the former Equality Challenge Unit (now Advance HE), Stonewall and local community groups to advance equality and diversity. We have achieved the following:

- The University was awarded an Athena SWAN Bronze award in 2013, and re-accredited in 2019. The Business School is undergoing self-assessment in preparation for a departmental award submission in 2022.
- We received an institutional Race Equality Charter (REC) Bronze award in 2020, and Machold is on the institutional REC delivery group.
- The University was ranked 62 (out of 434 employers) in the 2018 Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index and received the Midlands Stonewall Award 2017. The work was led by the University's LGBT+ network chaired by a former member of staff from the MRC.
- In recognition of our BAME Steps to Leadership Programme, the University was the Winner of the 2017 Guardian Higher Education Award for Equality and Diversity.
- We had two women in business events which was themed around 'Championing Equality and Diversity' and have a hashtag on Twitter #wlvwomeninbusiness to support them.
- We work with IoD to contribute to their annual international women's day event and their magazine.

Recognising that in REF2014 we had gender imbalances in research leadership (only one of five professors was female) and only 33% of submitted staff were women, we developed a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), which focused on actions to enhance support for staff returning from maternity leave, preparing staff for promotions, gender audit of research support (time and resources), and recruitment initiatives (widening the pool of female applicants, gender-balanced appointment panels). We achieved gender parity in research leadership with 2 male and 2 female professors (1 male left a week before census date) and 65% of our staff submitted to REF2021 are female.

Our REF2014 was ethnically diverse with 50% of submitted staff identifying as Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME). However, we lacked BAME staff in leadership positions and in our institutional REC submission. We focused on promotion pathways recognising a wider range of contributions to research. As a result, two BAME staff were promoted to Associate Professor KE, along with Wang W and Wang Y who were promoted through the traditional research route. BAME staff hold leadership roles such as cluster head (three out of four clusters) and the Doctoral Programme head, and 63% of our submitted staff in REF2021 identify as BAME. All female researchers have arrangements for supporting flexible and/or remote working. There is also significant diversity in terms of nationalities and languages spoken in the MRC, including Chinese, Turkish, Persian, Italian, Korean, Urdu, German, Swedish and Yoruba.

Staff and research students who return from periods of leave, including maternity leave, are supported via flexible working hours, mentoring and phased returns. Staff on maternity leave used their Keeping-in-Touch days to maintain involvement in research projects and PhD supervision. There is also a Staff Wellbeing Hub to support mental health and wellbeing. We also work closely with the University's Chaplaincy, whose multi-faith team have supported staff and students with advice, training and a space for mindfulness and contemplation.

3. Income, infrastructure and facilitiesa) Research Funding and Strategies for Generating Research Income

We have built on the progress made in REF2014 in generating research income and have won GBP6,468,000 (compared to GBP1,700,000 in REF2014).

Particular successes included: Mbzibain's EU-funded Citizen Voices for Changes in Forest Governance project (2017-2020, GBP4,000,000) and Wild Life Project (GBP1,970,000); the EU's Justice Department funded Gender-Equal Management Approach Project (2014-2016, Machold and Wang W, GBP301,000); and a Marie-Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship (2017-2019, Machold and Yar GBP171,000). Smaller funds were obtained from learned societies such as EURAM (Wang W), non-EU industrial organisations (Wang Y), and UK charities (Wang W).

Our strategy for research funding was built on three pillars. First, we support ECRs to develop small-scale funded projects to build up a track record of funding and successful project delivery. As part of the ERAS projects, staff received training in bid development. Second, we received support from the University's Brussels office, via training of staff (N2EU programme), coaching in H2020 bid development and forging strategic partnerships with international universities. Finally, our impact strategy and inter-disciplinary approach focused on building strong partnerships with academic and non-academic organisations, which were well-placed to address funder priorities for impactful research. Our Gender Equality Action Plan required the systematic collection, analysis and use of gender data in research bidding and funding, to eliminate biases and barriers in support and access to funding opportunities.

b) Infrastructure Supporting Research and Impact

The organisational infrastructure that supports research and impact in the MRC comprises of three interlinked parts:

- The University's RPU develops, implements, and monitors the University research strategy. It is responsible for research ethics guidance and resources, research governance and policy, reporting of research-related management information, and development and dissemination of institutional research publications and submission to REF. MRC staff actively contribute to the work of the RPU through committees such as the Researcher Development Committee (Wang W) or the funding peer review college (Yamak). The Project Support Office provide pre-and post-award services, and training and advocacy through its Brussels Office. Finally, the MRC have a dedicated impact officer (Wyatt) assigned to support the delivery of our ambitious impact strategy.
- The Faculty has a team of professional service staff supporting research and researchers including a HR Business Partner, a research and business development team, and research administrators.
- The Business School has a Business Advisory Board that provides input to the MRC's research strategy and facilitates collaborations. Members include the Company Secretary of Marston's PLC (a FTSE 250 company headquartered in Wolverhampton), the Chief Executive of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, the Head of Enterprise at City of Wolverhampton Council, the Group Chairman and Managing Director of Hadley Group PLC, as well as several leaders of local colleges and businesses.

The MRC benefits from an GBP18,000,000 investment in a brand-new business school, which provided us with a dedicated PGR room, a boardroom, an executive training floor, computer labs (used for teaching research methods for PGRs) and a bespoke market research/interview facility with state-of-art recording facilities. We also use the University's Science Park to hold meetings, run workshops and breakfast seminars, and events for the annual BCCC Business Festival. We have databases such as FAME, access to all general data analysis software (SPSS, Stata, NVivo), as well as specialised data analysis software by the SAS Institute.

c) Benefits in Kind

We build partnerships which often include contributions in kind and recent highlights include:

- University of Palermo, Italy, on 'Family business database development' (Wang Y) the benefit in kind included accommodation, flight tickets, support for organising workshops and conference registration.
- Machold and Yar – Deloitte Denmark and PWC, IOD UK and Sweden, and the Black Country Chamber. For example, Deloitte and PWC provided conference facilities, administrative staff to organise events, catering, and senior staff time to provide feedback on project design. The benefits in kind often include research equipment and tools and conference registration of the researchers.

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

a) Arrangements and Support for, and Effectiveness of, Research Collaborations, Networks and Partnerships

Our research environment is strengthened by the wide range of national and international collaborations with both academic and non-academic partners, as discussed at 1bi. Staff are encouraged to build research collaborations through explicit recognition of such activities in research workloads and promotions, through support for large-scale collaborative funding bids, and networking events organised by the Brussels Office.

Most staff in the MRC engage in national and international collaborations, commensurate with their level of experience. Our staff have held visiting appointments, for example, Wang Y at Heibei University of Technology; Yamak at Southampton, Brunel and Dauphine Universities; and Machold at Holy Spirit University Kaslik, Lebanon, and d'Annunzio University Chieti-Pescara, which enabled them to forge academic partnerships. Yamak is a scientific advisory council member at Ecole de Management EM Normandie (France), ISTECE Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et Marketing (France) and EURAM; and Anosike advises the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Bayero State University Nigeria.

MRC staff participate in several large-scale transnational collaborative research projects. For example, Yamak is part of an international team led by Judge (USA) and Zattoni (Italy) to investigate governance of IPOs, Machold collaborates with Huse (Norway), Brogi (Italy) and Hansen (Germany) and the IoD on promoting women into boards, and Anosike is part of a GBP1,300,000 consortium involving five African universities, the Ugandan Ministry of Education, and the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda. ECRs are encouraged to form collaborative links. These have resulted in joint publications (for example, Donegani with McKay, Lincoln; Mahmood with Hussain and Matlay, Birmingham City University; Yan with Hall and Turner, Loughborough). Yamak contributes to the development of the RBBM and supports ECRs in that direction. Yamak (six times) and Machold (three times) have had mentoring roles at the EURAM Doctoral Colloquium and EURAM Early Career Colloquium.

b) Relationships with Key Research Users, Beneficiaries or Audiences

Collaborations with research users and beneficiaries have been intrinsic to our research and impact strategy and focused on global challenges as well as addressing our place-based mission. Anosike, in recognition of his work on entrepreneurship, was appointed as the Advisor on the national entrepreneurship education framework of the Federal Ministry of Education Policy and policy advisor on national entrepreneurship HE curriculum in Nigeria. He also acts as adviser to the Legatum Institute, a London-based global think-tank. We have also deepened our links with the Institute of Directors (IoD) through membership by the IoD of our Advisory Board, a mentoring programme for students run with IoD directors as mentors, and an IoD breakfast workshop series by Machold, Jones, Yamak and Yar. We are a strategic partner of the now annual Black Country Business Festival. Machold facilitated the setting up of the City Board, a local place-based

governance mechanism that includes leaders of the local Council, Wolverhampton Business Champions, the Royal Wolverhampton Trust, West Midlands Police, the University, Wolverhampton College and a Voluntary Sector representative. The City Board laid the groundwork for the recent successful bid to the Government's Town's Fund.

Our EU-funded projects have typically involved users as project partners from conception to delivery, for example, the Citizen Voices for Change: Congo Basin Forest Monitoring Process (CV4C) project (Mbzibain) includes the World Resources Institute; Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Norwegian Ministry of Climate Change and Environment. The GEMA project (Machold and Wang W) includes four employers' associations; and Eurocoop, a Slovenian NGO. Yamak has served on the advisory committee of the Turkish Corporate Governance Association where the largest corporations constitute the member base. She has given seminars on Ethics and Responsibility in the finance sector. Yamak and Wang W collaborate with the BCCC to assess the extent of diversity and inclusion in businesses in the Walsall area. Oriade has collaborated with the Lichfield Cathedral by completing a consultancy project on its economic impact. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we launched a Business Support Hub to disseminate our research in the form of live e-clinics, webinars, Vodcasts, podcast and blog posts.

c) Wider Contributions to Economy and Society

We encourage our staff to use their research for societal benefit and to advocate for improvements to economy and society. Mbzibain's work on forest governance resulted in the integration of contemporary forest governance issues in the academic curricula of two Central African Universities; recognition of forest peoples' rights in the national constitution in the Central African Republic (CAR); and helping forest monitoring NGOs to improve their effectiveness in Cameroon. His work stimulated wider policy debates on NGO-state relations in the Congo Basin. Similarly, Anosike's research led to curriculum and policy changes in sub-Saharan Africa benefitting unemployed youths. We have a strong research tradition in employment relations which sought to raise problems of poor pay and conditions. Seifert was a regular contributor to local, national and international media to inform public understanding of industrial action, and Gill McLure and Wang W worked with local governments and voluntary organisations to improve workplace conditions. Machold led the reorganisation of the governance structure of EURAM, including the development of new statutes for the association. Finally, we use our campuses and regional learning centres to deliver public lectures and community engagement events as part of our institutional commitment to raise social mobility and aspirations in the West Midlands. Our annual Crystal Lecture, in collaboration with the Chartered Management Institute, had inspirational speakers such as the Global Head of Sustainability Services at PWC, the Chairman and CEO of Bentley's, and the British Council's Regional Director for the Americas. Each lecture typically attracts over 100 attendees from the local business community.

d) Engaging with Diverse Communities and Publics

The MRC engages with diverse communities and publics through its research. For example, Mbzibain's CV4C project was designed to involve indigenous communities in forest governance programmes in the Congo basin. This helped in not only safeguarding their livelihoods and cultures from threats posed by illegal logging, but also led to greater recognition of their rights in CAR. As part of our research into gender diversity in leadership, we have engaged with sector bodies such as the IoD and chambers to deliver guest lectures, contributions to newsletter and participation in panels to raise awareness and highlight female role models. Our annual International Women's Day events are organised in collaboration with our EDI unit and local businesses, and attended typically by over 50 students and members of the public.

e) Contribution to the Sustainability of the Discipline

Yamak is involved internationally in initiatives to make management research more meaningful and responsible, championed through her leadership roles at EURAM, IFSAM and RRBM. Examples include the 'Grand Challenges Initiative' together with the 'Changing the Rules of the Game' initiative at EURAM, which invite management researchers to promote the relevance and society-focus in management research and resist the "Publish or Perish" culture. Our ECRs are equally involved in raising the profile of management research in the wider research community. For example, Godwin has joined UKRI's ECR panel and Yar set up the Swedish chapter of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie alumni association.

f) Indicators of Wider Influence

i) Journal editorship

Wang Y and Machold have served as editors for *the International Journal of Management Practice* (IJMP) and *the International Journal of Business Governance and Ethics* (IJBGE) respectively. Machold is also a member of the editorial board of Cambridge University Press' Corporate Governance Elements series. A further eight staff are members of editorial boards, including well regarded journals such as *the European Management Review* (Yamak), *Corporate Governance: An International Review* (Machold), and *the Journal of Small Business Management* (Wang Y), with Yamak and Wang Y also performing associate editor duties. Yamak is also an editorial team member of *Society and Business Review*, *Corporate Governance*, and *Research and Development Studies*. Wang Y sits on the editorial Boards of *the Journal of Family Business Strategy*, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, *Journal of Family Business Management* and *International Journal of Management Concepts and Philosophy*. Rahimi is associate editor of *the Journal of Tourism Management Perspectives* and Europe editor for the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*. She is also book review editor for *the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* and the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*. Oriade is the associate editor for the *International Journal of Management Practice*. Seifert is a member of the editorial board of *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations, Theory and Struggle*, and *The World Review of Political Economy*.

ii) Participation on grants committees and refereeing academic publications or research proposals

Wang W is grant reviewer for the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Agence Nationale de la Recherche (France), and the Netherlands Economic Observatory. Machold has served as reviewer for The Knowledge Foundation, Sweden; the European Commission; and Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek - Vlaanderen (FWO), which is a Belgian Public Research Council. Yamak has acted as external assessor to La Sapienza University's Grant Committee in Italy. Machold, Yamak, Wang Y, Wang W, Oriade and Rahimi review articles for journals such as the *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *British Journal of Management*, *Journal of Business Research*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *Industrial Relations Journal*, *Human Relations*, and *Capital and Class*. Yamak, Machold, Rahimi and Seifert also reviews books for Palgrave, Edward Elgar and Cambridge University Press.

iii) Fellowships and Prizes

Wang Y is a Fellow of IFERA, Yamak and Machold are Fellows of EURAM and Anosike is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA). Rahimi received the Valene L. Smith Prize for the best paper at the International Conference of Service Quality in Hospitality and Tourism in Isfahan (2016). Rahimi won Emerald Literati Outstanding Paper award twice (2018). One of her papers became the most read paper in Routledge tourism journals. Wang Y received a Best Conference paper award at the 2015 IFERA Annual Conference, Hamburg/Germany. Yamak received the best trainer award from Turkasset (2015). Anosike received the African Union Excellence Award for

Education Innovation and was part of a team that received The Guardian University Awards for best International Knowledge Exchange project in 2014. Jones was the recipient of the 2020 R. Wayne Pace HRD Book of the Year Award.

iv) Invited keynotes, lectures and/or performances, or conference chair roles

MRC staff delivered over 100 keynote addresses, invited lectures and public lectures, and are active in supporting the management community by taking on conference roles. In the last three years, we have used these platforms to champion responsible research in Business and Management. For example, Yamak delivered keynotes and invited speeches on sustainability and governance in Italy and Turkey, and on the state of management scholarship, delivered in China and at the EURAM annual conference. Wang Y delivered a keynote on opportunities and challenges in publishing family business research, in Australia, and Machold participated in keynote panels on responsible research organised by TBS and IFSAM.

v) Leadership and positions in learned societies and associations

Yamak was elected as the President of the EURAM (2016-2018), where she previously served as a SIG chair and Vice-President for conferences. She continues to be a member of the scientific council of EURAM and serves on the executive committee of the International Federation of Scholarly Associations of Management (IFSAM). Yamak is also a board member at the European Institute of Advanced Studies in Management. Seifert served on the steering committee of the World Association of Political Economy, and the Centre for Labour and Social Studies. Machold was also a former SIG chair at EURAM and served as the Vice-President (Governance) 2014-2020. Wang Y is a board member of IFERA.