

<b>Institution: The University of Wolverhampton</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 20 - Social Work and Social Policy</b>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p>The Institute for Community Research and Development (ICRD) was established in 2017 to undertake applied research that drives policy development, delivers effective community-based transformational projects, and promotes social mobility. The University of Wolverhampton recognised a need in the locality and region and therefore decided to direct significant investment with a particular ambition to use research to improve the lives and life chances of people in the Black Country and wider West Midlands. Working collaboratively with local communities, ICRD uses interdisciplinary expertise to affect positive change in local communities, increase knowledge, and shape local and national policy. ICRD works to improve the lives of individuals in the region, and works with our partnership networks to champion change.</p> <p><u>a) How Research is Structured across the Unit</u></p> <p>Underpinning the creation of ICRD were two faculty-based research groups: the Social Welfare Research Group and the Centre for Applied Social Research. The work of these groups supported staff development towards the creation of ICRD and the current REF. In addition, investments in research in the Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT) have brought a stronger international development element to the overall research and impact strategy.</p> <p>Research for this Unit of Assessment (UoA) is drawn together under ICRD, whose primary membership within the University comes from colleagues across social policy, sociology, social work, social protection, and social care. ICRD is one of three cross-faculty, multidisciplinary research institutes at the University of Wolverhampton.</p> <p><u>i) Structure and staffing</u></p> <p>The University provided investment of GBP969,000 to develop research in this UoA and realise our ambitions. We appointed six new, full-time, core members of research and support staff to ICRD between 2017 and 2019: Director/Chair (Caulfield), Deputy Director (Rees), two Research Fellows (Hopley, née Massie; Sojka), one Research Associate (Jolly, promoted in 2020 to Research Fellow), and one dedicated Administrator. A new research Professor (Slater) was appointed to CIDT in 2017 to work collaboratively with ICRD. Eleven existing members of staff and one further new staff member, as well as a number of internal and external associates, joined ICRD. As part of the official launch, we invested in three PhD studentships and now a community of eight new Postgraduate Research (PGR) students are working within ICRD.</p> <p>ICRD's researchers are aligned to thematic groups that aid sustainability through collaboration and dialogue between researchers in ICRD and internal and external beneficiaries, and promote interdisciplinary working. The three distinct research groups within ICRD are: a) criminal justice and violence reduction, led by Caulfield; b) immigration and migration, led by Jolly and Sojka; and c) inequality and social analysis, led by Rees.</p> <p><u>ia) Criminal Justice and Violence Reduction</u></p> <p>Projects involving Criminal Justice and violence reduction are at the forefront of ICRD's work, including: the evaluation of the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit (WMVRU); Understanding Youth Violence and Knife Crime in Walsall; measuring the impact of Youth Offending Service programmes; an evaluation of the Girls Allowed Project – a partnership project to support girls at risk from gang-related activity; and the Safer Cell Furniture evaluation for the Ministry of Justice. We work across the West Midlands region and nationally, helping organisations to understand and improve the impact they have on harm and crime reduction. Research from this thematic area</p>

has had significant impact on practice in criminal justice and violence reduction across the region. For example, in direct response to research recommendations made by the ICRD team, a local Youth Offending Service has changed and developed their offer for young people in contact with their service (see impact case study 'The Impact of the Arts in Criminal Justice'). Findings from the evaluation of the WMVRU, led by ICRD, have directly influenced the WMVRU's commissioning decisions.

#### ib) Immigration and Migration

Our work in this area has a particular focus on the needs of migrants and local authority responses. Externally funded projects to date include: Local Authority responses to people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) during the pandemic; research on London's children and young people who are not British Citizens, funded by the Mayor of London; an evaluation of the West Midlands Children's Services Controlling Migration Fund Programme for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. Research from this thematic area has received national recognition, underpinning the following call in the Department for Work and Pensions report 'DWP's response to the coronavirus outbreak': *"The Government should publish or at least clarify existing guidance for local authorities on what support they can provide for people with NRPF, including...whether measures such as the hardship fund are classed as public funds or not."* ([Hansard 684](#)). At an international level, our new Basic Assistance in Crises programme (see section 1b) explores options for supporting displaced people through social assistance programmes.

#### ic) Inequality and Social Analysis

Our work in this area focuses on understanding the dynamics of inequality and activity to address it, and particularly the role of civil society and the voluntary and community sector in tackling disadvantage, with a focus on co-production and peer-led work. Externally-funded projects to date include: research on behalf of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to evidence the innovation and enterprise shown by the West Midlands civil society and social economy in response to COVID-19; UKRI-funded CAPTURE: Community Action-research Partnership, Training, University Research and Engagement; State of the Voluntary Sector Surveys in Walsall (2019) and Wolverhampton (2021); and Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group Social Prescribing Evaluation. Research in this area has, in autumn 2020, led the WMCA to call for GBP11 million from the government to sustain the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations that support the most vulnerable in communities.

### b) Research Objectives Past and Future and Performance

This is the first Social Work and Social Policy REF submission from the University of Wolverhampton. We have invested to build upon our social and community research to do more, and do better, for our communities, our region, and beyond. We had very clear objectives for the launch and development of ICRD and have made excellent strategic use of the funding to build a profile and reputation, attract external funding for high impact projects, and build towards sustainability. The work focuses on high impact research and evaluation across the West Midlands region, nationally, and internationally.

#### i) Develop research outputs in line with the requirements for REF2020

Staff were asked to self-select publications for consideration for inclusion in the REF submission. The 17 staff (15.3 FTE) in this UoA put forward 63 publications, from which 38 were selected for submission through internal review. As part of our on-going development and to support staff with individual circumstances, we have implemented subject-level peer review, writing workshops, and team writing projects.

## ii) Increase annual income generation values derived from research and development activities

As outlined in section 3) below, we have achieved a meaningful rise in external income recorded against REF UoA20 since the inception of ICRD from GBP3,780 in 16/17 (pre-ICRD); to GBP211,859 in 19/20. A further GBP1 million, part of the larger GBP9.9m project, was due to be reported in this UoA in 19/20, but - although the award was initially announced in March 2020 - the Foreign, Common, and Development Office (FCDO) programme 'Basic Assistance in Crises' (BASIC) research component was delayed by a combination of COVID-19 and the portfolio review that took place in Department for International Development as it transitioned into the new FCDO. The work began in October 2020 and will be reported in the next REF period. At the time of writing, we have secured GBP1,557,197 in external income in 20/21.

The increase in external income has enabled us to deliver research that has a direct impact on the communities and organisations we work with. For example, during 19/20 we delivered several projects involving peer and community researchers. We received funding from UKRI to recruit and train community researchers in a deprived area of Wolverhampton; we recruited and trained peer researchers to interview women involved in sex work in Walsall and Wolverhampton; and, in a third project, we employed trained community researchers to explore place-based violence reduction activity across the West Midlands. At an international level, in 2018, we worked in partnership with the World Bank in Nepal, delivering research on experiences of receiving social protection in situations of earthquake, flood and other emergencies. We address our future plans for income generation in section 3) below.

In terms of our sustainability as a new Unit, the strong reputation we have built means that commissioners and funders at national, regional, and local level now approach us regularly with offers of work and invitations to tender. The success of our work is evidenced through regular requests for follow-on research. We are striking a balance between these approaches/applications for local, high-impact work and applications for large-scale UKRI funding. Our strategic aim is to build upon the findings that emerge through our local and regional work and to develop these nationally and internationally in collaboration with external partners nationally and internationally. To this end, several large-scale bids have recently been developed and submitted to UKRI and other large-scale research funders such as the NIHR.

## iii) Focus on the social and economic needs of the local, regional and national areas in which ICRD operates and use this focus to build the Institute's reputation as a leading academic centre within the sector

ICRD makes a direct and significant contribution to the University's aims to transform lives through research, and make impact regionally, nationally, and internationally. Our ethos is that we work *with* and *for* our local communities and partnership working is fundamental to this. The time and energy we dedicate to building relationships and networks has resulted in strategic local and regional roles (see sections 4b & c) but perhaps more important has been our project partnerships. For example, in 2019-20 we secured joint external funding with these community partners:

- Birmingham Voluntary Sector Council;
- City of Wolverhampton Council;
- Creative Black Country;
- Project 17; and
- Migrants' Rights Network.

Nurturing and developing our partnerships is a core principle within our strategic plan as we acknowledge how crucial this is to creating meaningful change in the communities with which we work.

iv) Engage in research and knowledge transfer activities that inform, underpin and enrich the teaching and learning curricula provided by the faculties aligned to ICRD

We have successfully embedded best practice and research excellence into teaching provision and curricula. Research in the UoA has informed teaching on taught programmes in Social Work, Social Care, Sociology, Criminology, and Social Policy through additions to reading lists, weekly seminars, and lectures. We have facilitated volunteer and placement opportunities for undergraduate students with our external partners. Staff contribute to Doctoral College training and other researcher development activities across the University and PGRs have undertaken paid Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant and lecturing work within the University. Continuing to offer these paid opportunities for PGRs forms part of our future planning.

v) Develop an inclusive research culture and gender-balanced teams, which stimulates successful collaborative partnerships for REF and non-REF related research

Nine of the 17 staff submitted to this UoA are female and of the seven new staff appointments five are female (Caulfield: Chair/Director; Slater: Professor of International Development; Arnull: Director of Social Work and Social Care; Hopley: Research Fellow; Sojka: Research Fellow). All are supported to enhance the visibility of women as research leaders/developing research leaders within and outside of the University. Examples of this can be found in section 2c). Continuing to support and champion our female staff is a key part of the strategic development of ICRD, investing time and resources to ensure we continue to raise the profile and visibility of women as research leaders.

vi) Increase the number of PGRs enrolled on to appropriate academic programmes

We funded three PhD studentships as part of the launch of ICRD in 2018 and now a community of eight new PGRs are working within ICRD. We plan to offer rolling PhD studentships. As our reputation continues to develop, we are receiving more expressions of interest from potential PGRs, often seeking to join us from practitioner backgrounds.

### c) Impact from the research and the link to Impact Case Studies

ICRD's core values mean that everything we do is measured against the value it will bring to the communities with whom we work. Wolverhampton and the surrounding Black Country face disadvantage and health and social inequalities. There are severe pockets of deprivation and 19% of people living in the Black Country are in the 10% most deprived areas (Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2019). The improvement of the lives and life chances of people in our region is central to our work and underpins everything we do. Also central is an appreciation of the rich and vital work of communities and community organisations working in the Black Country and the region. Our official launch event in 2018 foregrounded our relationships with local organisations and three of our local partners spoke at the event: Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum; Birmingham Youth Offending service; and the Heart of England Community Foundation.

The impact engendered by the work we do is dependent upon strong relationships. We regularly run events aimed directly at engaging external partners with research. For example, in December 2019 we hosted a stakeholder workshop to discuss the interim findings of the evaluation of 'Changing Lives' Iris Project and coproduce recommendations and an action plan to support the lives of people involved in sex work, survival sex and/or at risk of sexual exploitation in Walsall and Wolverhampton. This involved an invited group of key local stakeholders from the Police, Public Health, the NHS, voluntary and community sector partners, with each partner taking responsibility for key areas of the action plan. Nationally, an example is the online, accessible workshops we ran in 2020 with practitioners working with individuals with NRPF during the pandemic. The event engaged 78 social work practitioners and managers from local authorities and the voluntary sector across the UK. Internationally our work on the application of social protection by international development policy-makers and practitioners has created impact by

embedding social protection within policy and practice elements of disaster risk management beyond response (specifically mitigation, preparedness and recovery); and broadening the policy and practice focus to crises beyond 'natural' disasters such as insecurity, conflict and forced displacement.

Our approach to impact is centred on working *with* our communities and partners, and this underpins our two impact case studies. For example, in Immigration, Bordering and Recourse to Public Funds, the research was conducted collaboratively with practitioner and advocacy organisations, ensuring impact on the lives of individuals working directly with those partner organisations and an impact on policy. Similarly, The Impact of the Arts in Criminal Justice, has achieved impact by working directly with agencies and organisations of the criminal justice system and engaging with advocacy organisations.

We have developed a new, innovative strand of our work, embedding impact into our research methodologies and project delivery by training and employing peer and community researchers. We are working closely with the USE-IT project, and Birmingham Voluntary Sector Council, whose community researchers are being paid to develop and deliver work in our violence reduction work. We have trained peer researchers through our work with Changing Lives who work with women involved in sex work in the local area. Changing Lives have recognised the value of this work in ensuring the voice of all women is heard and have embedded this as a core part of their future work-plan. We also received funding from UKRI in 2019 for the CAPTURE project to develop our own community research training in Wolverhampton. This work allows us to reach groups we might otherwise struggle to access or engage; provides training, development, and employment opportunities for individuals in deprived communities; helps ensure our work has real impact by grounding what we do in the reality of people's lives; and directly benefits partner organisations who can utilise this expertise in their project proposals and ongoing programmes.

As an example, Newhampton Arts Centre in Wolverhampton will involve peer researchers in a new research project funded by Esmée Fairbairn Trust, commencing in 2021. This kind of highly applied, co-designed and co-produced research enables us to plan for impact at every stage of the research process.

#### d) Supporting Interdisciplinary Research

ICRD was set up to understand and tackle complex social issues by harnessing insights from interdisciplinary working and we are an interdisciplinary team of researchers from across the social sciences. We facilitate broader interdisciplinary work through our thematic research groups (see above), where researchers from the social sciences come together with researchers from the arts and physical sciences.

We have actively developed an interdisciplinary research culture. For example, our ICRD Research Café runs every two months and brings together researchers from across the University in a collegiate and empowering space to discuss and develop ideas, skills and networks, promoting a sense of belonging for researchers with common interests. Research Cafés to date have focused on developing writing plans; peer-review/writing support groups; exploring opportunities to join existing research projects; making the most of allocated research hours; and creating research impact. We also often invite guest speakers from across the University and externally to share their research findings and practices.

We have some excellent examples of success in working collaboratively across disciplines. Recent (2020) examples of interdisciplinary proposal writing include: a proposal to the UKRI Covid-19 programme with Gosling (History); a proposal to the Lord Paul Fellowship scheme with Donegani (Business); and a proposal to the Health Foundation with Jutlla (Health). Furthermore, evidence of success of our interdisciplinary approach can be found in the impressive number of outputs published by staff in the UoA in 2019/2020 with staff across the University: Chen (Epidemiology); McDaniel (Policing); Adams-Quackenbush (Psychology); McFeeters



(Psychology); Mahoney (Lifelong Learning); Devi-McGleish (Criminology); Clifford (Health Sciences); Jopling (Education). This underlines how interdisciplinarity runs through the core of ICRD.

#### e) Progressing towards an Open Research Environment

The University's Open Access policy requires the deposit of outputs in our institutional repository WIRE within three months of acceptance. In ICRD, the outputs are deposited in WIRE through an effective collaboration between the authors. Library services are very proactive in helping maximise the dissemination of our research outputs. Staff are required and supported to have an ORCID account and are strongly encouraged to add publications to appropriate academic websites such as ResearchGate. All ICRD funded projects result in summary reports, many of which are published by the funding/commissioning agencies. Where public-facing publication is permitted, the reports are placed on WIRE and the ICRD webpages and proactively shared through the ICRD blog and social media accounts.

We also run an ICRD blog, which highlights issues from across our research portfolio, giving a voice to our researchers, our partners, and our PGRs. Launched in 2018, the blog has had 8,082 views (January 2021). Two of our posts have been selected by Medium's editorial team for additional promotion (Medium is a host platform where editorial teams review stories published on the platform, selecting those that exhibit a high level of quality for additional distribution).

#### f) Supporting a Culture of Research Integrity

Our research adheres to the University of Wolverhampton *Handbook for Ethical Approval and Practice Procedures*. All research projects are required to pass through a Faculty ethics committee where they undergo double blind peer review. Staff also undertake mandatory e-Learning modules every two years on topics including information security, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and unconscious bias. We are also supported by the University's Research Policy Unit, who have developed the 'Code of Good Research Practice' to articulate the importance of integrity and rigour in all research conducted at, and in partnership with, the University.

Research integrity and ethics are discussed as appropriate through weekly informal team catch-up meetings and during monthly meetings to ensure we uphold the aforementioned principles. Hopley sits on the University Ethics Committee. Many staff are members of professional bodies (for example, the British Psychological Society and the Social Policy Association) that require adherence to professional ethics and standards, often with specific reference to vulnerable groups. We also promote research integrity through the training, development, and support we offer to peer and community researchers, with programmes including specific content on ethics and research integrity.

## **2. People**

The UoA consists of 17 staff from social policy, sociology, social work, social protection, and social care, who come together under ICRD.

#### a) Staffing Strategy and Staff Development

##### i) Staff Development Strategy

Staff development is central to ICRD's activity and evidenced by our investment in new senior staff (Annull, Caulfield, Rees, Slater) to provide mentoring and development for early- and mid-career researchers. Progress against our targets is actioned and monitored by the University's Researcher Development Concordat Working Group, a sub-committee of the University Research

Committee, which is chaired by the Dean of Research and includes representatives from faculties and research institutes (a balanced mix of early-, mid-career and senior research staff), HR and careers services. Sojka's membership of this Group ensures that the voices and experiences of researchers in UoA20 are heard. For example, Sojka gave direct input into an action plan on supporting staff on research-only contracts, including plans to reduce further fixed term contracts, develop a career pathway for researchers, and set out a sabbatical policy.

ii) The unit's staffing and recruitment policy

As identified in section 1i), we used University RIF funding to appoint staff that filled gaps in research leadership and to strengthen our thematic groups. We have supported the development of existing mid-career researchers through mentoring and funding dedicated research time and/or Research Assistant (RA) support. We have supported eight UoA20 staff with research time and RA support. Research only staff are supported by RAs on a project-by-project basis. Stone, for example, has received RA support and has been promoted from Senior Lecturer to Reader.

iii) Support for ECRs

Our ECRs are supported through mentoring, support for networking, skills development, and conference activities. They are supported to engage with the University's Early Career Development programme and targeted funding. For example, Jolly has received funding through a University Lord Paul Early Career Fellowship and has been promoted from Research Associate to Research Fellow. The Fellowship scheme also provides a dedicated senior mentor for the project from outside the subject area. This is in addition to the mentoring provided to ECRs within the UoA. The ECR Development Programme provides 30 workshops and drop-in sessions to support ECRs with the preparation, delivery and dissemination of research. These are themed into three areas: Preparation for your research project; Conducting your research project; and Disseminating your research (including Impact). All ICRD ECRs staff have attended the workshops.

iv) Supporting and enabling staff to achieve impact from their research

As outlined above, the Researcher Development Programme offers researchers with the opportunities to build on and enhance their research profile regarding research impact. We support staff with impact through staff development, dedicated time, and an increasing range of opportunities for inclusion in joint projects led by the core ICRD research team ICRD. For example, the WMCA civil society response to Covid-19 (Booth) and Out of Area Housing Report (Iafrafi) are leading to significant direct local and regional societal impact, and strengthening collaborative infrastructure internally and externally.

b) Research Students

We have developed a research culture into which PGRs are fully integrated and prepared for further research activity. All PGRs have a supervisory team, led by a Director of Studies together with a second supervisor chosen for their complementary supervisory expertise and contextual research and methodological skills. Mandatory training is required to take on the role of a research supervisor, as is regular CPD via the Research Supervisors' Development Programme. The Doctoral College actively encourages the participation of PGRs in the development of our research culture through Doctoral College Masterclasses, the Annual Research Conference and Researchers' Week. The Postgraduate Researchers' Development Programme (PGRDP) provides face-to-face and online workshops. It is mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. The Programme is delivered throughout the academic year via six themed units including: the transition to research degrees and personal research skills, foundations for research at PhD level, dissemination skills and broader career development.

The PGRDP is supported and enhanced by additional initiatives that include 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. Annually, we run a PGR Employability Conference, including workshops on preparing applications and mock interviews.

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 Faculty Research Committee. All PGRs go through an Annual Progress Review (APR). At the APR, two staff members from the faculty will meet with the PGR, discuss their research and progress with their personal development plan, and make a judgement about their progress. If necessary, they can be put at 'proceed with caution', which involves the development of an action plan. Each faculty has a dedicated PGR skills development tutor, plus pastoral and training support tutors.

PGRs are fully integrated into the ICRD Research Café events as well as other ad hoc research presentations and seminars, and socially via monthly staff-PGR lunches. As noted in section 1), PGR students are provided with Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant and Lecturing opportunities. PGRs receive an induction with ICRD and we recognise that it is important to offer PGR-only events to help students develop a sense of cohort and belongingness. PGRs have access to a range of events, workshops and training promoted through the Research Student Almanac, including the Doctoral College training and skills programme, 2/3 day-long Symposia organised by the Doctoral College, and regular social events throughout the year to encourage PGRs from different disciplines to meet and get to know each other and to discuss their research and exchange ideas and best practice. Where appropriate, these events are live streamed so that PGRs who are studying at a distance can access the events remotely. The outbreak of COVID-19 has meant that live streaming has been adopted as standard and the Doctoral College hosts additional weekly online 'hangouts'.

Our PGRs are central to our research community and we work hard to provide opportunities for formal and informal collaboration through a vibrant research culture. Our PGRs are encouraged to participate in the internal and outward facing culture of ICRD. Other notable examples in addition to those listed above include PGR students (for example, Stanyer & Quinn-Walker) contributing to the vibrant ICRD blog.

### c) Equality and Diversity

We value the benefits that a diverse staff and student population brings to the University and to ICRD. The University has achieved:

- An Athena SWAN Bronze award since 2013;
- Race Equality Charter awarded in 2020;
- Ranked 62 (out of 434 employers) in the 2018 Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index;
- Winner of the 2017 Guardian Higher Education Award for Equality and Diversity (in recognition of our BAME Steps to Leadership Programme); and
- Midlands Stonewall Award 2017.

As set out in Section 1) above, over half of the staff in the unit are female, as are the two professors. All are supported to enhance the visibility of women as research leaders/developing research leaders within and outside of the University. For example, all lead externally-funded projects; contribute to researcher development sessions; hold University-level committee memberships; and are supported to present their work in external research, policy, and practice forums. Caulfield is a regular contributor to the DC's public Christmas Lecture performance, which we use to promote women in research to schools in our communities. Across the subject, colleagues work collaboratively on externally-funded research projects, supported by experienced researchers, which has enhanced their profiles and developed them as researchers. This has



involved experience in delivering projects (design, data collection, and analysis), contributing to report writing, and presenting findings. This approach has resulted in collaborative publications between five of the female staff in the UoA (Booth, Caulfield, Hopley, Morgan, A., Sojka). Additionally, we have developed collaborative bids with female researchers from across the University. Examples include two bids to the NIHR with two female colleagues from health sciences (Gutteridge, Walker) and one with pharmacy (Morrissey); two bids to local and regional bodies with female colleagues from psychology (Adams-Quackenbush).

Staff who return from career breaks are supported in a number of ways. For example, Hopley is in 2020-21 on parental leave, but keeping engaged through keeping-in-touch days. Hopley has negotiated these days, keeping up-to-date on projects but also identifying training with which she wishes to engage. For staff and PGRs who are returning from periods of leave, support is available via flexible working hours, mentoring and phased returns. We also have a comprehensive Staff Wellbeing Hub and a number of active staff networks. Wolverhampton was one of the first UK Universities to offer degrees in deaf studies and British Sign Language (BSL) interpreting. Stone researches on the 'voice' of deaf people, and he and the BSL team regularly provide interpreting at research events.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### a) Research Funding and Strategies for Generating Research Income

A central part of the University strategy in investing in ICRD was to enhance the capacity for securing research income, to sustain the research area in the longer term. The University, through their strategic Research Investment Funding, invested GBP633,000 in ICRD and GBP336,000 in related research in CIDT between 2017 and 2020.

The investment in research staff and students, as detailed in section 1), has led in enhanced research impact, reputation, and generated income. This strategy has been successful with commissioners and funders at national, regional and local level approaching us regularly with offers of work/ and invitations to tender. For example, in 2020 we received direct commissions from the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, the Offices of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Sandwell Youth Offending Service, London College of Fashion, and Lloyds Bank Foundation. We are striking a balance between these approaches for local and regional, high-impact work with applications for large-scale funding with our external partners. Our strategic aim is to keep building upon the findings that emerge through our local and regional work and to apply, develop and test these nationally and internationally. To this end, we have developed several large scale bids to UKRI and other large-scale research funders such as the NIHR. For example, at time of writing, we have a project worth GBP945,000 under review with the AHRC.

The success of the investment in ICRD can be evidenced through the increase in external income, both for research and for impact, generated in this UoA since the investment in ICRD from GBP3,780 in 16/17 (pre-ICRD); to GBP211,859 in 19/20. As noted above in Section 1), a further GBP1 million was to have been reported in this UoA in 19/20, but due to FCDO delays will be reported in the next REF period.

Time spent developing a reputation and building networks has quickly moved ICRD to a sustainable position and at the start of 2020/21, ICRD has secured the following projects, in addition to the GBP1 million project noted above:

- WM Violence Reduction Unit: GBP198,000
- WMCA Social Economy: GBP38,000
- London College of Fashion: GBP10,000
- West Midlands Police: GBP12,000
- Lloyds Bank Foundation: GBP6,000
- Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust: GBP10,000

- Birmingham City Council: GBP36,000
- What Works for Children's Social Care: GBP260,000

In 2020/21 we are also receiving support through internal funding from the QR Strategic Priorities Funding (GBP44,000), the QR-GCRF block grant for DAC country research (GBP45,000), and a Lord Paul Fellowship for an early career researcher (GBP10,000). These create a strong basis for the financial sustainability of our research and impact strategies. ICRD's ongoing plans with this internal support involve continuing to sustain our networks and presence, as it is clear that our approach in this respect works.

#### b) Organisational Infrastructure Supporting Research and Impact

##### i) Organisational infrastructure supporting research and impact

Research support services are provided as follows: (1) The Project Support Office (PSO) comprises two teams, pre-award and post-award. (2) The Research Policy Unit (RPU) provides University-wide research policies and support. (3) The Doctoral College supports PGR students. (4) Faculty Finance teams ensure post-award administration and reporting on grants and work with Central Finance and the PSO project monitoring officers to compile financial expenditure statements and reports. (5) Faculty Research and Enterprise Teams coordinate pre- and post-award functions at Faculty level. (6) The Human Resources Department ensure that all HR policies, processes and procedures are adhered to in respect of research proposals and grants and contracts. ICRD also benefitted from a research administrator who supported setting up of our events, social media channels and digital presence.

##### ii) Operational and scholarly infrastructure supporting research and impact

The key ways this support manifests for ICRD is as follows:

- The RPU develops, implements, and monitors the University research strategy. It is responsible for research ethics, research governance, policy, management and reporting of research-related management information, and development and dissemination of institutional research publications and submission to REF. ICRD staff collaborate with the RPU through different committees, including the University Research Committee (Caulfield); University Ethics Committee (Hopley); Faculty Research Committee (Booth); Doctoral College Advisory Board (Rees); Researcher Development Concordat Sub-Committee (Sojka).
- Impact is supported by the Impact Team in the Research Policy Unit. ICRD has an assigned member of the team who works with us on REF impact, impact in developing award proposals, and impact in policy and practice engagement.
- The PSO supports research income through the pre-award and post-award teams. ICRD staff receive support from the PSO regarding funding requirements, writing and reviewing proposals, liaising with finance, and providing training. The post-award team assists successfully funded projects to ensure compliance and assist with project management.
- ICRD is supported through the Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Sciences with a dedicated Research and Impact Development Manager and a Business Development Manager assigned to the Institute to support with identifying opportunities, liaising with funders, and preparing bids and tenders. ICRD also had a full-time administrator who supports all aspects of our work.
- Facilities also support our research environment. We have dedicated PGR rooms, bookable rooms equipped with recording facilities for conducting interviews, project meeting rooms, computer labs, plus access to data analysis software including SPSS, Stata, and NVivo.

c) Equality and Diversity

ICRD is fully committed to the advancement of equality across all protected characteristics reflected by our policies and governance, and also through challenging historical patterns and practices. From its foundation, ICRD was established with the intention of promoting equality as an outcome, through embedding the promotion of justice and equality of opportunity and outcomes as an underlying ethos. Working with partners across society, and at a variety of scales and in different fields of social activity, we undertake research that scrutinises and tackles the root causes of disparities, both at the point of access and in terms of outcomes, within society. A good example of this is ICRD's continued focus on research with marginalised communities such as asylum seekers and refugees, women involved in sex work, and victims of domestic violence. ICRD thus contributes to the University's aim of achieving greater diversity (defined broadly to include elements of human difference, including gender, race and ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, disability and class) throughout its work. Similarly, ICRD embeds inclusion as a practice, for instance in seeking a wide range of stakeholders with diverse perspectives, and working co-productively and respectfully to make sure views are heard and incorporated further in our practice. As highlighted in 1c), some of our projects involve the training and employment of peer and community researchers, a model that we intend to continue to grow. We build funding for our research collaborators into all projects to ensure equitable partnerships.

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

ICRD members have successful and sustainable collaborations across academia and society, particularly with national academic partners and local and regional civil society and public sector partners. Our research contributes to a number of disciplines, the research-base, and society.

a) Relationships with Key Research Users, Beneficiaries or Audiences

Partnership working is fundamental to ICRD. Our ethos is that we work *with* and *for* our local communities, and that can only be achieved in partnership. As noted earlier in this document, we have dedicated significant time and energy to building relationships and networks. This has resulted in strategic regional roles (for example, Caulfield's role on the WMCA Public Service Reform Board); local level influence (for example, Hopley's engagement with public and voluntary sector stakeholders in Walsall and Wolverhampton on social prescribing work); and multi-level influence (for example, Rees's collaboration with national organisations Clinks, and local voluntary sector infrastructure bodies). Perhaps more important have been our project partnerships. Some of our key partnerships are noted in section 1biii).

Community involvement is substantial and runs through every element of ICRD's work. For example, information on the CAPTURE project (section 1c) and the recent research on behalf of the WMCA evidence the innovation and enterprise shown by the West Midlands' civil society and social economy in response to COVID-19. This work involved close involvement with community partners from right across the region. The response and engagement was high, which is testament to our relationships across the region, and the recommendations co-produced with partners in an innovative online working group. The findings and recommendations are co-promoted with the WMCA and shared with politicians and government leaders throughout the West Midlands and nationally. The outcomes of the work are feeding into strategic decision making at a regional level, which will have a direct impact on the communities with whom we work.

ICRD has an excellent network of external collaborators and partners locally, nationally, and internationally, as documented above. Internationally, an example is Jolly's visit to the West Bank in 2020 organised by the Palestine-UK Social Work Network to experience social work practice in Palestine, and to network with social workers and social development professionals from the Palestinian Union of Social Workers and Psychologists. During the trip, knowledge and expertise for the benefit of social work practice in Palestine was shared, and opportunities to use UK social work knowledge to improve practice and training in Palestine were explored. At an international

level, we deliver applied and action research in partnerships with international agencies including the World Bank, UN World Food Programme, Asian Development Bank and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

We support colleagues to invest time in their networks and collaborations, providing time and travel funding to realise their ambitions. We also encourage colleagues to share their expertise with organisations whose work aligns with ICRD's ethics. For example, work with City of Wolverhampton Council, and Newhampton Arts Centre in the city, has led us to use our expertise and infrastructure to support their funding applications. Through volunteer and Trustee positions, researchers contribute their expertise to a wide range of charities including Birch, Good Vibrations, Jigsaw Events, Birmingham Community Housing Network, and Learning Disability England.

#### b) Wider Contributions to Economy and Society

Our work reflects the University's commitment 'providing learning research and engagement opportunities which target the economic and social needs of the areas in which we operate' and 'transform lives through research' (University of Wolverhampton Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Pillars 2 and 3). Our contributions to society and the economy are significant and embedded within each of our three thematic research areas: Criminal Justice and Violence Reduction; Immigration and Migration; and Inequality and Social Analysis. As detailed throughout this document, our research has a direct impact on:

- The experience of service users: for example, training and employing peer and community researchers (Section 1c); using research findings to change organisational practice (the Impact of the Arts in Criminal Justice Impact Case Study);
- Informing regional commissioning decisions: for example, findings from the evaluation of the WMVRU have directly influenced the WMVRU's commissioning decisions across the region (section 1a); and
- Changing international policy: findings from our research have been used to inform changes in both the policies and practices of international development and humanitarian agencies including the Department for International Development, the UN World Food Programme, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the EU's Director General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Operations.

#### c) Engaging with Diverse Communities and Publics

ICRD researchers have a wide range of research interests in applied social policy, including in criminal justice and prisons, mental health and the role of the voluntary sector, innovations in social prescribing, engaging in co-productive work with those with experience of mental health crisis, women involved in sex work and the homeless, deaf 'voices', and the dynamics of migrants' experiences of inequality. ICRD researchers work closely with three Westminster government departments (MoJ, DCMS, MHCLG), the WMCA, 15 local authorities (particularly in the West Midlands), the WMVRU, five key national and local voluntary sector umbrella bodies and foundations, international development and humanitarian agencies, and upwards of 30 small and medium-sized charities and community organisations, both through direct commissions, and in advisory roles. We have strong relationships with these organisations and part of our activity sees us shape research approaches and policy towards social and health inequalities and to bring diverse communities into research processes to help them shape the agenda. As a result, a crucial strand of much of our work has been working in partnership with, and directly embedding the principle of co-production of research with communities. It means working alongside citizens and communities as equals and sharing skills, and the partner organisations we work with typically also share this approach.

Other strategic, invited external roles:

- Board member, Southwest Correctional Arts Network, USA
- Member of the Scientific Board for 'Investigating the social construction of deskilling among 'new' EU migrants in Vienna' founded by Austrian Science Fund (FWF), Department of Sociology - University of Vienna, and run by Professor Elizabeth Scheibelhofer.
- Research representative, Ministry of Justice Arts in Criminal Justice Forum
- Board member: WMCA Public Service Reform Board
- Panel member: Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner academic advisory panel
- Invited member: Inclusion Europe task force on European standards
- BSL interpreting for the BBC

#### d) Contribution to the Sustainability of the Discipline

Core to the foundation of ICRD has been the desire to contribute to the sustainability of our combined discipline/s, support for and exemplars of interdisciplinary research, and responsiveness to national and international priorities and initiatives. We collaborate with external academic partners and, for example, have submitted proposals with the following institutions in the past two years: University of Birmingham, Bath Spa University, Central St. Martin's, Manchester Metropolitan University, Liverpool John Moores University, University of Worcester, Staffordshire University, the Open University, Coventry University, Birmingham City University, the Open University, Lund University, Gallaudet University, and Sheffield Hallam University. We actively contribute to the development of our disciplines both within and external to the University. Internally, this includes contributions to faculty and research group seminars, the University research conference, online seminars, blog posts. Externally, we are active within our disciplinary networks as highlighted below.

#### e) Indicators of Wider Influence

##### i) Journal editorship

Rees co-edits *Voluntary Sector Review*. He is also co-editor of *Social Policy Review (SPR)* (2017-2021). Jolly is co-editor of *SPR* between 2020 and 2024. He was on the editorial board of *Journal of Social Policy* between 2014 and 2018. Jolly is a member of the Editorial Board of *Journal of Evidence Based Social Work* and *Research on Social Work Practice*, and Editorial board member of *Refugee Review*. Caulfield is a member of the Editorial board of the *Journal of Criminal Psychology*, as well as of *Forensic Update* and the *Journal of Applied Arts and Health*. Arnall is on the Editorial Board of *Feminist Criminology* (since 2020); the *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* (since 2019); and the *Journal of Criminology and Social Integration* (since 2015). Partridge is an Editorial Board member for the *Journal of New Writing in Health and Social Care*. Stone is Associate Editor of *Interpreting: International Journal of Research and Practice in Interpreting*. Simpson is the book review editor for *Social Work Education*, and is also on the Editorial Board.

##### ii) Participation on grants committees

Iafrati judges the Social Policy Association's Opportunity Grant programme; he is also a reviewer for the ESRC (large grants, programme). Rees judges the opportunity grants programme for Voluntary Sector Studies Network. Stone is a member of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) Research Committee, including annual research grant committee; he is also a reviewer for ESRC. Arnall chaired the panel for the Racial Justice Stipend Awards, Division of Women and Crime (2020); also co-chairing the Feminist Criminology Awards 2019-2021, and Co-Chair of the Siegel Awards, 2019-2021.



## iii) Fellowships

Tilly held an ERAS fellowship and grant (GBP5,000 from University of Wolverhampton, 2017-18). Jolly holds a Lord Paul Fellowship from the University of Wolverhampton in 2020. Arnall was Global Scholar at the Institute for Research on Women, Rutgers University, USA, Spring Semester 2016.

## iv) Membership of national and international committees

Iafrati is Vice Chair of the Social Policy Association. He commissioned the SPA's race and ethnicity review. Slater is a council member of the UK Development Studies Association. Caulfield is an invited member of the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance research group (2010-present). Simpson is a member of the Joint University Council for Social Work Education Committee and also a member of its International Sub-committee. Arnall was Elected Vice Chair of Division of Women and Crime, American Society of Criminology, November 2018, Becoming Chair for 2019-21. She is also an Appointed Academic Advisor to the Youth Justice Board of the UK. Rees is on the Project Advisory Group of the major NIHR project Commissioning, co-commissioning and being commissioned: The third sector in health and social care (2020-23); and the Advisory Panel of the Power to Change project on Market Development (2019-21).

## v) Invited keynotes and conference chair roles

Caulfield delivered an invited keynote 'Research and evaluation in UK criminal justice', California Arts in Corrections conference, June 2019. Partridge was keynote speaker to Tongji Medical College, Huazhong University of science and Technology China. Jolly was an invited speaker to London Strategic Migration Partnership, March 2020. Connor's invited keynote - Leadership Across the West Midlands - Whose Responsible? Wicked Problems and Agendas for Change in Education, was presented at the School Leadership Conference, University of Wolverhampton, 2020. Rees was the invited keynote speaker at Maynooth University International Symposium on commissioning and marketisation, September 2019, and invited speaker on 'Challenging Leadership' at TSRC Conference, Birmingham, February 2019. Slater was an invited discussant and provided the closing comments at the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum 2018. Arnall was Chair of the Empowering Girls and Women Experiencing Violence in the Family, United Nations 63rd Commission on the Status of Women, New York, USA, March 2019; she was also invited Keynote Speaker at the Nottingham Contemporary Study Sessions, Nottingham, UK, November 2018.

## vi) Refereeing academic publications or research proposals

We regularly review for: for *Journal of Social Policy*, *Journal of European Social Policy*, *Policy and Politics*, *Voluntary Sector Review*, *Vol-untas*, *British Journal of Learning Disability*, *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, *Refugee Review*, *World Development*, *Journal of International Development*, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Development Policy Review*, *Food Policy*, *Climate and Development*, *Medical Humanities*, *Sign Language Studies*, *International Journal of Prisoner Health*, *Applied Linguistics Review*, and *Social Work Education* among others.

Rees regularly reviews book proposals for Bristol University Press, and research proposals for the Health Foundation, UK, and the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. Sojka reviews for the National Science Centre, Poland. Partridge is an external peer reviewer for the NIHR. Stone, Caulfield, and several others have recently reviewed monograph proposals for Cambridge University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, and Routledge.