

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Leeds</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 34 Communication, cultural and media studies, library and information studies</p>
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p>Communication, cultural and media studies (CCMS) research at Leeds takes place in the School of Media and Communication. While CCMS at Leeds is highly interdisciplinary, its concentration within one School has allowed particularly strong cross-fertilisation of research and ideas. One of the largest UK departments specialising in CCMS, the School has grown and flourished during the REF period, retaining and strengthening its cohesiveness.</p> <p>Before 2014 the unit was the Institute of Communications Studies (established 1989). Since 2016, Media and Communication is one of nine Schools in the newly constituted Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures. Research in the School has been organised into six themes during the REF period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media industries and cultural production (Research Theme 1)</li> <li>• Political communication (RT2)</li> <li>• Visual media and communication (including film and television) (RT3)</li> <li>• Global communication (RT4)</li> <li>• Journalism (RT5)</li> <li>• Digital cultures (RT6)</li> </ul> <p>In 2019, the School added a seventh Research Theme, Gender and media (RT7), building on considerable strength in feminist research.</p> <p>These themes constitute a comprehensive coverage of core international CCMS research issues, concepts and methodologies, combining social science and humanities approaches, and bringing together economic, political, historical, cultural and technological perspectives.</p> <p>Each Research Theme is convened by one or two members of staff. All staff participate in at least one Theme, many participating in more. Research is overseen by a Research Committee which meets ten times per year to steer research strategy and to oversee applications for research leave and funding, both external and internal. The Committee is composed of Director and Deputy Director of Research and Innovation (chaired by the former); Head of Innovation and Impact; Head of School; Postgraduate Research Tutor; the School's Research, Impact and Management Support Officer; and a further representative of academic staff. A 100% FTE administrator supports the work of the Research Committee and of the Research Themes within the School. These research support roles, some newly-created, some enhanced, have allowed us to be extremely active in contributing to research at the highest level internationally.</p> <p><b>1.2 Research and impact strategy</b></p> <p>The major aim of the School's research and impact strategy during the 2014-2020 period, as indicated in REF2014 and developed in response to a changing research environment during the REF period, has been to enhance Leeds as a leading international centre for CCMS research. Core to this strategy has been the establishment, monitoring and delivery of five research objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop significant research strength within and across the School's Research Themes, in a way that is responsive to changes and continuities in the media and their social, economic, political and cultural contexts</li> <li>2. To appoint new and additional staff at all levels of seniority and to expand and support our cohort of PGRs in a way that enhances our profile, further developing a collegial research culture of collaboration and mentorship while embedding a commitment to developing greater diversity and international engagement</li> </ol>

3. To increase research grant income in order to enhance research capacity, to strengthen existing and foster new collaborative research endeavours, and to amplify the international reach of our research
4. To maintain and enhance a research culture where knowledge and ideas are exchanged within and across research groups and interests, benefitting from Faculty structures and University-level themes, and working through extensive networks of international and national research collaboration
5. To develop the public impact of our research in an organic way, by building impact and evidence collection into research plans, consolidating existing and developing new partnerships, and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders on a broad array of public impacts

The School/unit has been successful in meeting these research objectives (ROs):

**RO1:** Quantitative indicators demonstrate an increase in research strength expressed in terms of output. A total of 598 peer-reviewed publications were produced by staff employed by the School during the REF2021 period, compared with 458 during the period covered by REF2014, an increase from 14.31 to 16.6 outputs per member of staff, covering all seven of the Research Themes identified above. This included 29 authored and edited books. The development of our Research Themes demonstrates responsiveness to changes in the field and to our growing staff base.

**RO2:** The School employs 36 FTE staff with research responsibilities, compared with 32 FTE staff at the time of the previous submission. 33 of these staff are currently on permanent contracts. Five are Professors, thirteen Associate Professors/Senior Lecturers and fifteen Lecturers. We have enhanced research excellence by recruiting staff who are leaders in their areas, and sustainability by recruiting, supporting and mentoring a significant number of academics early in their careers. Two appointments have been made via the University's University Academic Fellow scheme, which provides funding and support to Schools to attract future international research leaders via a structured five-year development programme leading to an Associate Professorship. Almost half of research-contracted staff are originally of non-UK nationality, evidence of the internationalism of our research culture. Postgraduate research activity – a vital component of the research culture – has also increased, with **39.5 PhD awards between 2014 and 2019**, compared with 26 PhD awards during the REF2014 period; this also represents a marked increase in PhD awards per research-contracted member of staff, from 0.8 in REF 2014 to 1.1 in the REF2021 period.

**RO 3:** Over £2.8 million of research grants have been awarded in the REF period, a 101% increase on the £1.4 million reported in REF2014. A marked feature of research funding and activity has been its increasing interdisciplinarity, increasing collaboration with other research units within the university, and the scope of national and international collaborations and partnerships (see 4.1). School researchers have secured funding from four UK funding councils (AHRC, ESRC, EPSRC, NERC), the European Union, British Academy and Leverhulme Trust, as well as bodies including the Research England Development Fund, Ministry of Defence and Intellectual Property Office. School staff have worked with a variety of cultural and third sector organisations (see 4.2). In addition, our research has benefitted from internal funding from the University and Faculty. For example, the School has played a pivotal role in, and benefitted significantly from, the cross-disciplinary Sadler Seminar Series, run by the Leeds Arts and Humanities Research Institute (LAHRI), which in 2018-19 ran two series based on research within the School, 'The Performance of Political Feeling' (convened by **Johnson**), and 'The War Veteran in Culture and Society' (convened by **Parry**), and in 2019-20, 'Migration and the City: Imagining and Making Urban Lives' (convened by **Kim** and **Aiello**).

**RO4:** Benefitting from administrative and financial support in the School, Faculty and University, Leeds has hosted a very large number of conferences, symposia and seminars, bringing together academic staff, external stakeholders and postgraduate research students (see 4.3.1). We host 12-15 external speakers annually as part of our School research seminar series and the

many other seminars hosted by research groups. Our research seminar typically achieves audiences of 30 or more, and these events are advertised to the public and across campus, meaning attendance has regularly reached over 75 attendees. This is in addition to the many cross- and inter-disciplinary events that the School has participated in with other Schools and units within the University and beyond. Staff have collaborated with colleagues in 11 Schools across the Humanities, Social and Natural Sciences, working through and with LAHRI, Leeds Social Sciences Institute, Sustainability Research Institute, Interdisciplinary Applied Ethics Centre, and the Centre for Immersive Technologies. Conference attendance is supported strategically through School funds to foster the presentation of our research nationally and internationally, and to enable the development and deepening of research collaborations within and beyond the UK. These funds, as we show below, are generous in the disciplinary context. In addition, continued significant investments in the physical infrastructure of the School of Media and Communication (see 3.3) and relevant University facilities have enhanced our ability to work effectively and collaboratively. We have, for example, hosted 24 visiting fellows in the REF period.

**RO5:** External and internal funding and support has enabled us to pursue a large number of public-facing projects, involving work with more than 80 external organisations in the REF period (see 1.3 & 4.2). These projects span the School's Research Themes, engaging with media and cultural institutions, charities, foundations and policy-makers.

Our future research and impact strategy builds on achievements in the REF period:

- developing further our international strength in the fields constituted by our seven Research Themes, carefully monitoring their vitality and progress
- building on our internationalism to increase the diversity of scholars in the School at all levels
- intensifying our push for research funding, both large and smaller scale, to build capacity, strengthen existing collaborations and foster new relationships and areas of enquiry
- supporting interdisciplinary research initiatives, aligning these with external funding frameworks where appropriate (e.g. international-development focused work and GCRF), and furthering dialogue between excellent communication and media research and other fields
- supporting partnerships, and placing impact at the centre of our research culture
- further enhancing mentoring and support for academic staff, developing targeted support for all career stages

### **1.3: Systems in place to stimulate and facilitate exchange between academic researchers and non-academic groups and users**

The School has clearly and collectively articulated the value of impact for media and communication research, explicitly valuing and fostering work with non-academic partners. Our strategy to make impact an organic part of the research culture (RO5 above) has been facilitated in the following ways:

- Creation of two academic positions supporting impact: Director and Deputy Director of Impact, the former sitting on the School's Research and Impact Committee
- The appointment by the Faculty (see 1.1) of a dedicated Impact Officer and by the School of a Research, Impact and Management Support Officer on a permanent contract, enabling the School to embed impact into research more thoroughly
- A dedication to open access research facilitated at School level by the Research, Impact and Management Support Officer, working collaboratively with both School staff and University Library colleagues to ensure open access compliance by REF standards (currently at 100%) through White Rose Research Online, an open access repository across Leeds, Sheffield and York
- The University Library's Open Research Advisor has organised cross-Faculty public Wikithons, advocated for the publication of data sets, software and code, while the

Library funds open access publication for academic staff (where this is a requirement of UKRI funding), as well as funding open access publication charges for staff and PhD researchers who publish in SAGE, Springer or Wiley journals

- Close collaboration with the University's Cultural Institute, dedicated to enhancing participation and engagement with creative sector partners, including via its competitive IGNITE scheme for supporting engagement activities
- Close collaboration with LAHRI, which brings together arts and humanities research from across the University, including the Sadler Seminar Series, aimed at fostering collaboration across disciplines
- The provision of a dedicated impact fund within the School to the sum of £20,000 per year, administered via the School's Research Committee, to support impact development, such as holding impact-related activities and collecting evidence of impact
- Collaboration with our excellent libraries, including use of a number of important special collections (see 3.3, 4.1, 4.2)

## 2. People

### 2.1: Staffing strategy and staff development

School staffing strategy and our approach to staff development have been guided by ROs 1 & 2 above. Specifically, we have sought to:

- Build further strength in existing areas of research, appointing new staff to enhance existing research and introduce new areas of expertise/provide new forms of research
- Replace retiring or departing Professors, focusing growth on the appointment, mentoring and promotion of early career and mid-career academics
- Provide a rigorous system of support and mentoring for new and established colleagues
- Make equality, diversity and internationalism central to our research culture

The success of this strategy is evident in the appointment of twenty new research-contracted staff during the period (seven to replace retiring or departing research-contracted staff, the rest being new, additional posts, or replacements of retiring or departing teaching-only staff). Ten of these appointments have been women, the rest men. Six of these appointments were made from positions or doctorates in overseas universities. The School has high rates of retention, with only four departures for other universities during the REF period.

Two of the recent research-contracted appointments were at Professor level, intended to enhance existing strengths in RT5 Journalism (Chris **Anderson**), and in RT3 Visual media and communication (Yvonne **Tasker**). These appointments also significantly enhance our capacity in RT6 Digital cultures (**Anderson**) and in our newly-formed RT7 Gender and media (**Tasker**). The School appointed two University Academic Fellows (Heather **Ford**, Todd **Graham**), significantly boosting our research on Digital cultures (RT6), Political communication (RT2) and Journalism (RT5). Four further appointments were at Associate Professor level, building on strengths in Media industries (RT1), Visual media (RT3) and Global communication (RT4), namely Melanie **Bell**, Kris **Erickson**, Beth **Johnson** and Jairo **Lugo-Ocando**. There has also been significant investment in early and mid-career researchers, across the research themes (Chris **Birchall**, Nour **Halabi**, Helen **Kim**, Tracey **Mollet**, Alison **Peirse**, Matthias **Revers**, Tom **Tyler**, and Yuan **Zeng**).

The School benefits from invaluable long-term contributions to the research culture of the School by four major international figures in media and communication research, Emeritus Professor Jay **Blumler** (RT2) and longstanding Visiting Professors John **Corner** (since 2008, RTs 2 and 3) and Sylvia **Harvey** (since 2010, RTs 1 and 3), with William **Dutton** (RTs 2 and 5) from 2018 and

Christine **Gledhill** (RTs 3 and 7) from 2019. All have office space; regularly attend research events and give international keynotes; provide mentoring and advice to colleagues and students; and publish research.

Given the significant investment in new staff, and the marked international character of the School and its research, it is especially vital that Early Career Researchers are provided with robust means of support and mentoring, though much of the support outlined here is also available for newly appointed, more experienced staff. Our overall approach is in line with the **Researcher Development Concordat** and the inclusive, supportive culture it seeks to foster. New members of staff are provided with a thorough process of induction, co-ordinated by the PA to the Head of School and the Management and Administration Support Service team within the School.

The system of support for staff and their research includes mentoring for all research-contracted staff, whereby each member of staff has access to a known and trusted individual who has greater (or different) research experience and is prepared to discuss issues, listen, ask questions, and share experience and contacts. These local support mechanisms are carefully co-ordinated with Faculty level support systems such as LAHRI's grant-writing workshops, and University support systems, such as the Organisational Development and Professional Learning team, who provide courses on practical skills (e.g. Excel and research software), and teaching and research workshops. The Library also provides research support and training, with particular focus on Open Access and digital research skills. The LOGIK Centre, a hub designed to provide training, learning, and wellbeing initiatives for staff at the University also runs frequent support and careers advice. A probation system is operated by the University, and School probationers act as general mentors to new staff. All academic staff below grade 10 have a research mentor. The policy was designed to be consistent with, and exceed, the University's guidelines on 'Good practice in mentoring'.

At School level, in line with our commitment to equality and diversity, a workload system is used to allocate teaching, research and administrative work as fairly as possible across all members of academic staff, ensuring research-contracted staff have 40% of their time for research, scholarship and research-related duties (such as peer review and examining of doctoral dissertations). All researchers including PGRs are encouraged to participate in the School's Research Themes (many participate in more than one). The meetings of these Research Themes, including reading groups, seminars and workshops, provide vital opportunities for discussion of work in progress, of classic and new research contributions, and the identification of emerging research issues and methodologies.

Alongside numerous reading groups and seminars hosted by Research Themes, a regular School research seminar brings leading researchers to the School, and allows Leeds colleagues to present work in progress. These events, and the regular conferences and symposia organised by the School, have allowed the School to build and extend formidable national and international research networks.

Recognising the importance of networks, all research-contracted members of staff are currently allocated £1750 per year for research conference funding and travel, subject to the acceptance of paper proposals. A brief case is made to the Research Committee for amounts over £500. This allocation allows all research-contracted staff, including those on fixed-term research-and-teaching contracts, to participate in conferences, and to build up networks in their areas of research specialism. In the context of COVID-19 and consequent limitations on travel, the School has instituted a well-attended virtual research seminar programme and invited staff to explore alternatives to travel.



While the School allocates research resources in ways that support all staff, internal funding allows monitoring of outcomes. To allow researchers to devote time to advancing and completing major projects, including the writing of bids, the School runs a research leave scheme, which entitles all research-active staff on continuing contracts to leave every seventh semester, subject to approval by the Research Committee, which also considers post-leave progress reports. Coupled with research mentoring, our monitoring processes allow us to identify opportunities for individual researchers. We offer a competitive research support fund, offering grants of up to £1500 to engage a research assistant or invite colleagues from outside the university to work collaboratively on a major research project. The School also supports researchers who are applying for other internal research funding schemes, such as those run by LAHRI, and colleagues are enabled to attend other training or development opportunities available within and beyond the University.

Research-active staff provide an annual analysis of their research achievements, aspirations and needs, feeding into discussions with the Research Director and other colleagues to assist in the co-ordination of support for research, including grant bids. In addition to Faculty-level sessions operated by LAHRI, the School runs grant-writing workshops, and the Deputy Director of Research provides targeted advice on applications and upcoming deadlines specific to the School's research. Since 2018 the School has also been able to compete for funds from the Faculty Research Leave Scheme, which provides further research leave time on top of the School research leave mentioned above. **Bell**, Julie **Firmstone**, Leslie **Meier** and **Peirse** have been awarded funding from this scheme. The Faculty Research Office provides a full support service for making grant applications and maintaining awarded grants. All grant applications are internally peer reviewed within the Faculty, in order to provide guidance for improvement, and to ensure that only high-quality applications are submitted.

## 2.2: Postgraduate research students

Our PGR strategy is shaped by ROs 1 & 2, including our commitment to developing a collegial research culture and responding to emerging research priorities. We have sought to attract the best possible students by offering competitive scholarships, and to provide all PGR students with a rigorous system of support, training and mentorship. A total of 15 School scholarships, matched to RCUK funding, have been provided during the REF period. This support has been enhanced by the regular awards of further scholarships provided by the Faculty, and the successful gaining of 12 UK Research Council awards. One of the hallmarks of this student body is its international nature. There are currently 45.48 registered PGR students (versus 30.5 in 2013). Research topics cover the very wide range of core international media, communication and cultural studies issues indicated by the School's Research Themes, and beyond.

Our thriving PGR community is fully integrated into the School research culture. PGRs are treated as much as possible as academic colleagues, acting as co-convenors of Research Groups, attending and contributing to job presentations, and sharing kitchen/social space with academic staff. They have their own dedicated study area, appropriately equipped with computers, digital satellite television and free printing and copying facilities, in an attractive space in the very centre of the School's building. They have access to generous conference travel funds to the value of £1,500 over the course of their studies. The School's Research Committee makes decisions about the use of this allowance, considering support for research students and staff together. PGR students have secured funding to present their work at 92 conferences since 2014, including 68 overseas conferences: Leeds PGR students have consistently presented at all the conferences held by the main scholarly associations in the field (ICA, IAMCR, and ECREA) during this REF period.

Our impressive completion rates are ensured by a rigorous system of support, centred on a supervisory team, composed of at least two members of academic staff, usually one relatively senior and one relatively early-career colleague, which also allows for research supervision mentoring. A *minimum* of ten supervisory meetings are held each year. The University's system, GRAD (Graduate Record of Achievement and Development), is used to record supervisions,

with space for students and supervisors to reflect on progress. PGR students then discuss this carefully curated feedback with their supervisors and mentors.

Further PGR student training is provided by both the School and the University. The School organises weekly seminars during semesters addressing the full range of social science and historical research methods. These are delivered by School academic staff, allowing PGRs to become familiar with the approaches of a range of academics beyond their supervisory team, and across the School's Research Themes. This is compulsory for first year research students, but all PGRs are welcome to attend. Philosophical and epistemological questions regarding the nature of research are embedded within such methods training, and there is strong emphasis on the need to integrate theory and empirical work. Other issues addressed include interdisciplinarity, the responsibilities of researchers towards their subjects, questions of objectivity and subjectivity, and the social shaping of research. Seminars are held regularly, which allows all academic staff to hear presentations by research students, and to provide constructive feedback. PGR students participate fully in research group meetings, presenting their work, suggesting readings, engaging in debate and discussion, and in some cases acting as co-convenors. An extensive suite of seminars is provided by the University on all aspects of postgraduate research, including the PhD process; managing research projects; presenting, writing and publishing; and academic integrity.

School doctoral training is recognised by the AHRC via the White Rose College of the Arts and Humanities (WRoCAH), which brings together students at the Universities of York, Leeds and Sheffield. Since January 2014, seven awards have been made through this scheme to students based in the School. Two students have benefited from alumni funding. The School is also part of the ESRC White Rose Social Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership (WRDTP) (jointly run by a consortium of the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, Bradford, York, Manchester Metropolitan and Sheffield Hallam), established 2011. WRDTP promotes interdisciplinary supervision and knowledge exchange with academic and non-academic partners, as well as key policy makers within the social sciences. It also provides further training, along with important opportunities for networking and collaboration with academic and PGR colleagues from other universities. Since January 2014, five researchers have been funded through this scheme.

PGRs organise an annual academic conference, with support and mentoring from academics. This allows research students to learn organisational and networking skills, and for those taking part to develop presentation and communication skills. The Research Committee includes the PGR Tutor, ensuring integration of doctoral students into the research infrastructure. A Postgraduate Research Committee meets four times a year, and includes two PGR representatives. To ensure high completion rates, PhD students must pass a rigorous transfer process at the end of their first year before they can proceed to full doctoral registration. Support provided to our students is evidenced by their success in going on to take full-time positions at leading universities across the world, including Stanford, East China Normal, Melbourne, De La Salle University, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, and Bologna.

### **2.3: Equality and diversity**

The School promotes equality and diversity in its research culture through a number of means, overseen by the School's designated Equality and Inclusion lead (currently Deputy Head of School, **Firmstone**). These include several recruitment policies pursued by the University (see REF5a), intended to address barriers to appointment and to try to ensure diversity at all levels. The School has invested significantly in making diversity and equality major focus areas of research, for example by prioritising staff appointments in research areas including gender, migration, ethnicity and class, encompassing the consideration of working conditions in the media, both contemporary and historical.

We work to ensure that principles of equality and diversity underpin our approach to research, with the aim of fostering a culture that prioritises the well-being of staff and research students.

Key examples of this approach are:

- Research expectations for individuals are developed in consultation and supported through mentoring.
- All research-active staff are eligible to take leave from their normal teaching and administrative duties in every seventh semester. Periods of leave for maternity, illness or externally funded research are counted as normal semesters for these purposes.
- Our objective of increasing research income is not linked to targets for individuals but speaks rather to a shared commitment to enhance capacity and foster collaborative research of the highest quality.
- We support staff returning from periods of extended leave (maternity or illness leave or significant leadership roles) via phased return to work, specific needs being identified through discussion with the Head of School.
- In line with University Policy (see REF5a), the School acknowledges the need to facilitate flexible working arrangements to enable all researchers to fulfil their potential and balance their research work and other commitments.<sup>1</sup> Staff have the ability to specify patterns of work that fit around their responsibilities: nine research contracted members of staff have such a plan in place as of 2020.
- In line with University Policy, the School offers opportunities for staff to take career breaks of up to three years. One member of staff (**Taylor**) is currently on career break.
- We aim to minimise the number of staff on fixed-term contracts but, where we have one or two-year positions, these lectureships offer significant time for research (40%) as well as mentoring/grant development support, to enable early-career colleagues to establish themselves as researchers.
- All staff are encouraged to attend relevant conferences. While the award of travel grants for conferences is typically conditional on delivery of a paper or other contribution, the School acknowledges that staff returning from periods of leave, or those whose capacity for research has been curtailed for other reasons (such as significant administrative responsibilities), may be unable to present a paper. In such cases staff are encouraged to apply for funding, stating how conference attendance would benefit the School.
- In recognition of the barriers faced by PGR applicants from countries in the global south, the School has, since 2015, invested in up to two fully-funded international scholarships per year with 8 international students able to take up such scholarships since 2015.

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### 3.1: Income

In line with RO3 and with a goal of facilitating the production of excellent research, the School has designed its structures and systems to support staff in developing and securing funding for individual and collaborative projects. With external funding more than doubling over REF2014 performance, our strategy has been demonstrably successful. Steps taken include the creation of an academic role, with 20% workload allocation, for tracking large grant opportunities, and providing support and advice (now part of the Deputy Director of Research role). Systems of staff mentoring have been developed to emphasise support for staff in mounting their first bids. Developing a tailored, hands-on approach to internal peer review has been beneficial, drawing on School, Faculty and University knowledge of specific funding schemes.

The REF period has seen an increasing use of internal funding from the School, Faculty and University. The School has received £17,684 from LAHRI for collaborative projects across the Faculty/University, and £8,939 from the University's IGNITE scheme to seed larger research and impact projects. For example, IGNITE funding enabled **Parry** to fund initial cataloguing and

<sup>1</sup> [http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/39/work-life\\_balance\\_and\\_flexible\\_working/27/flexible\\_working](http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/39/work-life_balance_and_flexible_working/27/flexible_working)



organise two public engagement workshops at the Imperial War Museum; this fed into securing AHRC funding for 'The Tim Hetherington collection and conflict imagery network' bid, with the IWM as partner (2020-22).

This set of structures and the institutional context for research bidding outlined here has helped lead to the submission of 155 applications for external funding during the REF period, and the granting of 52 awards, a good success rate of 34% within an extremely competitive research environment. This generated research income of £2.8 million during the REF period from a variety of sources, including four of the UK's research councils, the European Commission, the British Academy, the Leverhulme Trust, as well as industry partners such as ITV and local authorities, such as Leeds City Council. We discuss below the ways in which this funding has helped to support and generate significant research outputs and impact.

### 3.2: Organisational infrastructure supporting research and impact

As explained in 1.1, our research environment is structured around seven core Research Themes. These themes enable individuals and groups to pursue their growing collaborations locally, nationally and internationally. Each theme is pursued through a research group, supplemented by cross-theme reading groups, events and activities.

A unified research culture across these themes is facilitated by an emphasis on discussion and collaboration, including at Away Days devoted to research, and regular cross-theme seminars and events. All this is overseen by the Research Committee (see 1.1), and supported by our dedicated 1.0 FTE Management Support Officer (Research). In addition, the School's Research, Impact and Management Support Officer supports impact development and tracking as part of their 0.6FTE role. The Research, Impact and Management Support Officer also sits on the School's Research Committee, which means they are able to provide strategic and subject-specific research support as part of the School's overall research strategy. Both the Management Support Officer (Research) and the Research, Impact and Management Support Officer help coordinate and organise School research events (see 4). Their work is overseen by the School Manager.

We now briefly discuss how each of the research themes has built upon existing strengths, and created new ones, including reference to the research income that has been generated to support research, and the impact activities that have been conducted.

Leeds has become renowned as a centre for research on **media industries and cultural production (RT1)**, including the role of cultural and creative industries in public policy. David **Hesmondhalgh's** international reputation in this area is apparent in his taking up of two significant fellowships during the REF period, one at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania (2016), the other at Microsoft Research New England (2019). **Oakley** is one of the leading global figures in research on cultural policy in relation to the cultural and creative industries, and in research on questions of cultural labour. Among her projects at Leeds were the ESRC-funded Centre for Sustainable Prosperity, 'Improving Cultural Work' and 'Data, Diversity and Inequality in the Creative Industries' (AHRC, 2014-16). **Hesmondhalgh** is co-investigator in an ESRC Research Centre, *Digital Futures at Work*, jointly run from Leeds and Sussex Universities (ESRC, 2019-24), and leads the strand in that project on work in the cultural and creative industries. Drawing on earlier ESRC-funded research, Bethany **Klein**, Giles **Moss** and Lee **Edwards** wrote and published a major monograph on copyright during the REF period, supported by School research leave, and Moss and Edwards have gained further funding (ESRC follow-on project 'Living with(in) copyright', 2018-20) to investigate the way in which people understand and respond to copyright law and practice in everyday life. This strength in copyright research was significantly enhanced by the appointment of **Erickson** in 2017 (see 4.3). In 2019, **Johnson** won funds as part of the RCUK-funded *SIGN* project, led by researchers at York, to undertake work on diversity, equality and inclusion in screen industries in Yorkshire and the Humber from early 2020 onwards. Her collaboratively produced film *Industry Voices* has been designated by AHRC as an example of best practice and will be used by the Social

Mobility Commission. **Johnson** manages a budget of £500k to organise bursaries and placements. **Lee** also won funds to investigate related equality and inclusion challenges.

Leeds has been recognised as a major locus for *political communication* (RT2) research since the 1960s, focusing upon studies of media and democracy. Scholarship at Leeds expands the traditional contours of this approach by undertaking critical research on the boundaries of public action, technologies of collective interaction, and the affective dimensions of hitherto hyper-rationally conceived political events and performances. Notable strands of research include **Coleman** and **Moss**'s research on elections and voting, including research funded by the ESRC on 'Visualising the UK General Election Television Debates 2015', and an independent evaluation of the televised election debate in the same year, funded by ITV; **Parry**'s research on the visibility of protest and activism; **Graham**'s research on the use of digital media in representative democracies, and the intersections between formal politics and popular culture; **Revers**' work on political polarisation in contemporary democracies; and **Voltmer**'s work on democratisation (see below). Meanwhile, **Blumler** and **Corner** continue to make important contributions to this area as Emeritus and Visiting Professors

Leeds has been at the forefront of *global communication* research since the 1990s (initially led by Professor Philip Taylor, who died in 2010). Since 2014, this research area has been led by **Paterson**, who, with colleagues and PGR students, pursued research on media in the 'global south' (especially Africa) and the Middle East, supported by grants, including a GCRF award in collaboration with **Lugo-Ocando**. Also of major importance was the project 'Media, Conflict and Democratisation' (MeCoDEM), led by **Voltmer** from 2014-2017; the project was funded from the EU's Seventh Framework programme, and involved eight partner universities and a significant dimension of public engagement. Investment in international communication research, including in migration, diaspora and media, has led to the recent appointments of **Halabi**, **Kim** and **Zeng**.

The School has made significant investment in *visual media and communication* (RT3) through the appointment during the REF census period of a number of leading film and television scholars (**Bell**, **Johnson**, **Mollet**, **Peirse** and **Tasker**). This theme builds on a rich vein of research on photography and other visual media (**Aiello**, **Jim Brogden**, **Parry** and **Simon Popple**), on archives (**Bell**, **Popple**) and on documentary (**Lee**, **Kate Nash**, **Anna Zoellner**, plus Visiting Professor **Corner**). In 2019, **Aiello** and **Anderson** secured, along with Helen **Kennedy** (now at Sheffield), a major AHRC award to investigate 'Generic Visuals in the News', building on previous funded research projects conducted by **Aiello** and by **Kennedy** at Leeds.

Major investment has been made in *journalism* (RT5) research, with the appointment of **Anderson**, and of **Erickson**, **Graham**, **Revers** and **Zeng**, building on the continuing research of **Firmstone**, co-investigator on an AHRC-funded project, 'Defining Freedom of the Press', led from Sheffield. **Aiello** and **Anderson**'s 2019 'Generic Visuals' AHRC grant reflects the success of this commitment to journalism (as well as to visual communication and digital cultures). **Paterson** has also provided global contexts for journalism research in the School, as part of his GCRF pilot study in rural Kenya, and his AHRC network, 'Development Assistance and independent journalism in Africa and Latin America'.

Research on *digital cultures* (RT6) at Leeds has blossomed during this REF period, following the hosting of the EPSRC's Digital Economy Communities and Culture Network Plus, led by **Thornham** (2011-16), and building on **Kennedy**'s earlier important contributions in the School, including in this REF period **Kennedy**'s funded research on 'Understanding Social Media Monitoring'. Investment here is reflected in the appointments of **Birchall**, **Erickson**, **Jackson** and **Tyler**, who bring practical and research expertise in this area. Also notable was the appointment of **Ford** as University Research Fellow (2015-18), in which time she undertook major collaborative research within the School and internationally, and the appointment of **Anderson**, a world-leading authority on data journalism. **Popple** has led or been co-investigator on a number of funded projects on digital archives, heritage projects, and related community issues, including 'Pararchive' from the AHRC (2013-15) and 'Digital Community Workspaces'

(2017-18). **Jackson** is the Academic Lead in Cultural Engagement for the University's Centre for Immersive Technologies and is co-investigator on 'Virtual Holocaust Memoryscapes' (AHRC/EPSRC), run jointly with Leeds' School of English.

A strategic decision was made in 2019 to develop a research group in **gender and media studies (RT7)**, catalysed by the hiring of leading feminist scholar **Tasker** in 2018, and building on existing strengths and interests in identity and culture, such as the work of **Aiello, Bell, Johnson, Peirse, Thornham** and **Thumim**. **Bell**, appointed in 2016, has conducted research into the neglected role played by women in media production from the 1930s to the 1980s, supported by a major AHRC grant (2014-18, with the grant held at Leeds from 2016-18). **Tasker** is CI on the AHRC project 'Jill Craigie: Film Pioneer' (2018-21), further developing the historical dimensions of feminist scholarship in the School. In 2020, **Thornham** and Joanne **Armitage** were awarded AHRC funding for 'susNET Sustainable Making for Feminist Action', spanning both the Gender and media and Digital cultures RTs.

### 3.3: Operational and scholarly infrastructure

During the REF period the School has invested substantially (£762k) in physical infrastructure. Since 2010, we have been housed in a superbly-renovated building at the heart of the campus. Facilities used for research activities include two seminar rooms, a lecture theatre suitable for visiting lectures, and a meeting room, along with offices, dedicated research student facilities, a TV studio and a cinema, equipped with full DCP projection and Dolby Sound, photography studios, and edit suites. Such facilities have ensured that the School has been able to host a number of important research events (see 4). Renovation of the Mezzanine level of the School's building has allowed the creation of two new offices and four work-station areas for postdoctoral researchers and the School's many visiting scholars. The School's two media technicians facilitate access to video recording facilities, and the archiving of video materials and sound recordings to aid research.

Across the themes discussed in 3.2, School research has involved working with archives, museums and oral histories (individual and institutional), highlighting the multiple ways in which legacies of the past shape the present as well as framing the future. As indicated in REF5a, Leeds has outstanding library provision: three of the four libraries (Brotherton, Edward Boyle, Health Sciences, and, from 2015, Laidlaw) have extensive media and communication holdings. Leeds has one of the most developed library and archives collections in the UK. Among those most directly relevant to our research are the Louis le Prince archive, the *South Bank Show* archives, and the archives of journalist Arthur Ransome, TV producer Andy Lipman, and photographer Godfrey Bingley.

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

RO4 (see 1.2) captures the School's commitment to maintain and enhance a research culture where knowledge and ideas are exchanged both within and across research groups and interests, through extensive networks of international and national research collaboration. This objective has been supported via our systems and structures, which also support non-academic engagement:

- Provision of generous research funding (including for conference travel, network building and piloting of research projects)
- Provision of sabbatical time
- Employment of a full-time Management Support Officer (Research)
- Employment of a 0.6 FTE Research, Impact and Management Support Officer

Faculty and University structures – notably LAHRI and IGNITE – have further enabled staff in the School to develop new collaborations and approaches to impact.

#### 4.1: Research collaborations, networks and partnerships

As a result of the extensive support provided by School, Faculty and University, and our success in gaining external grants (RO3), there has been a step change in the number and quality of research collaborations, networks and partnerships achieved by Leeds media and communication researchers.

A marked feature has been very notable **international collaboration** with other leading researchers, universities and organisations worldwide. Leeds researchers collaborate effectively with leading international research universities and other bodies. During the REF period staff have had affiliations and fellowships at the Universities of Antwerp, Austin (Texas), Karlstad, New School (New York), Pennsylvania, Yale, as well as Mexico's CONACYT and the Peace Research Institute in Oslo. Staff in the school have collaborated with colleagues in institutions across Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North and South America. Some striking examples are:

- 'Media, Conflict and Democratisation' (MeCoDEM) (EU, 2014-2017), led by **Voltmer**, involving Leeds colleagues **Aiello** and **Parry** and two PGRs, was a partnership between Leeds and the following universities: American University in Cairo (Egypt), Belgrade (Serbia), Cape Town (South Africa), Oxford (UK), Hamburg (Germany), Ruhr-University Bochum (Germany) and Stockholm (Sweden). The team also cooperated with the Rift Valley Institute (Kenya), a range of civil society actors and European media assistance organisations.
- **Firmstone** (2015-17) led an interdisciplinary cross-national study of the changing nature of political communication in television news, collaborating with colleagues from Sweden, Greece, France, Italy and the UK.
- **Hesmondhalgh** collaborated with colleagues from Microsoft Research in 2019, investigating the way in which music industry workers use and interpret metrics provided by music streaming platforms, resulting in a journal article.
- **Paterson** led a study of the flow of information about climate in rural Kenya, jointly with UK and University of Nairobi colleagues, completed in summer of 2019, in conjunction with a larger project led by Leeds (Priestley Centre) climate researchers.
- **Aiello** was external expert for 'Visualizing "Diversity" in Higher Education', funded by the Walter Benjamin Kolleg at the University of Bern (2018-19). This project brought together scholars from Gender Studies and Language and Communication, in collaboration with Bern's Office for Gender Equality.

Staff have also undertaken extensive collaboration with UK Universities, including funded research, public facing activities, co-editing and co-authoring across our Research Themes. Working with colleagues at institutions including Aberdeen, Cambridge, Durham, East Anglia, Glasgow, Leicester, LSE, Manchester, Open, Oxford, Oxford Brookes, Royal Holloway, Sheffield, Sussex, Ulster and York, Leeds staff have sought to foster excellent collaborative research in our disciplines.

Besides its internationalism, a marked feature of Leeds' success in forging high-quality networks and partnerships is the high levels of creativity and innovation involved in **collaborations with practitioners, software designers, artists etc.** In addition to the collaborations evidenced in detail through the impact case studies, significant examples include:

- **Coleman** and **Moss**'s work with Anna De Liddo (Knowledge Media Institute, Open University) and other software designers from the Open University in research on televised election debates. The EPSRC-funded 'Visualising the UK General Election 2015 TV Debates' developed software tools to help citizens understand and evaluate leaders' performances. They have further developed one of these tools, a web-based app for capturing the real-time responses of audiences to political performances, subsequently used as part of ITV's coverage of the December 2019 General Election debate.



- **Hesmondhalgh's** role as co-investigator and convenor of the Creative Industries strand in the ESRC Digital Futures at Work Research Centre involves collaborations with various industry bodies, organisations and unions.
- The University's **Centre for Immersive Technologies** (launched 2019) works with partners from the public and private sectors to drive innovation in digital technologies. **Jackson's** research highlighting the uses of 360° photography within Holocaust memorial sites forms part of the Centre's Cultural Engagement strand.
- **Peirse's** HERBARIUM, a collaborative, creative practice exhibition project (funded by IGNITE) in conjunction with the botanical design studio The Plant Room, Leeds Libraries, Leeds Museums and Galleries, and University of Leeds Special Collections, culminated in a month-long exhibition, HERBARIUM, in 2019.
- As part of the MeCoDEM project, **Voltmer, Parry** and **Aiello** worked with political communication scholars on the role of images and expressive practices in both protest and activism and strategic communication, collaboratively producing four short films, using images from Creative Commons sources to visually narrate key democratisation struggles and demands across the project's four countries.

#### 4.2: Engagement and collaboration with users, and contribution to economy and society

Having detailed our strategies to achieve impact, here we provide evidence of how Leeds researchers engaged with users, beneficiaries and audiences, and how this has resulted in contributions to economy and society, beyond the details included in the impact case studies, which feature impact that has derived from research conducted by **Bell**, Jason **Cabañes** and **Popple**. As the case studies and examples in 4.1 suggest, Leeds researchers have effectively worked with external partners to develop research, disseminate outcomes and foster excellent public engagement activities. The following examples, spanning the School's Research Themes, further highlight how staff in the School have used funding, whether secured competitively from external or University schemes, to develop and deliver research which engages with and benefits a range of users.

Two projects involving **Erickson** represent engagement with policy stakeholders on issues of digital copyright. **Erickson** was recipient of a grant from the Wikimedia Free Knowledge initiative to measure the economic value represented by the overall Wikimedia project to European society. The beneficiaries were open collaboration communities who can now better communicate the value of their activities to EU policymakers and present evidence in debates about innovation and intellectual property policy. **Erickson** was also PI on a European Joint Programming Initiative project 2015- 2018, 'Enhancing Access to 20th Century Cultural Heritage through Distributed Orphan Works Clearance' (EnDOW), with collaborators in Italy (Bocconi), the Netherlands (Amsterdam), and the UK (Bournemouth). EnDOW developed a crowdsourcing platform to assist museums and archives across Europe to digitise and share content from their collections. Beneficiaries included museums, archives, libraries and IP policymakers.

**Moss**, in collaboration with **Edwards** (at Leeds to 2017, now LSE), conducts research on the role of public deliberation in media policymaking, focusing on copyright in particular. In 2017, they received AHRC funding to run a large-scale deliberative event on copyright policy with members of the public. In 2019, they were awarded further AHRC funding to complete a follow-on study that will develop the impact of this research. Working with the Intellectual Property Office, Ofcom, and other stakeholders, the follow-on study has examined how consultations on copyright policy can be improved and has developed a new deliberative model that can be used in future consultation processes. Designed to benefit the work of policymakers and regulatory authorities, the project will enable increased public access and better input into future media policymaking, resulting in better informed and more legitimate policy outcomes.

As part of her AHRC-funded 'Women in Film and Television History' project, **Bell** partnered with the Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union (BECTU). The project provided evidence of women's historic economic and creative contribution to Britain's film and television, connecting evidence with present-day media practitioners and, through partnership



with the union, generating pressure for change regarding gender roles and representation. **Bell** also organised a Wikipedia 'edit-a-thon' in conjunction with the University Library's Open Research Team and Dr Richard Nevell, Programme Coordinator at Wikimedia UK, enabling the building/expansion of Wikipedia entries for often overlooked women in media.

**Popple** has been involved in a number of AHRC-funded projects, each breaking down barriers between community groups and scholars. He was PI on 'Digital Community Workspaces: Delivering Impact through Public Library and Archive networks' (2017-19), working with local libraries, community groups and the Science Museum Group. He was also a co-investigator on 'Seismic Cities', working with partners at the Catholic University in Santiago, Chile and local institutions. **Popple** has been instrumental in the design and maintenance of the YARN project, an online archive engagement platform that allows local history and archive groups to share stories and link to controlled institutional collections. They are able to share their own cultural heritage materials with other community groups, libraries, archives and members of the public.

As part of the AHRC/EPSRC funded project 'Virtual Holocaust Memoryscapes', **Jackson** developed three multisensory virtual archives of locations within Germany's Neuengamme and Bergen-Belsen memorial sites. The project, and the virtual archives **Jackson** developed, investigated the potential for immersive technologies to enhance multisensory understanding of historic buildings and sites, in this case those aimed at Holocaust memorialisation. The virtual archives were developed in collaboration with memorial site staff who carefully selected archival materials to enhance visitor understanding. The research provided a new method of exhibition and curation for museum and memorialisation industry professionals. While the benefits of Jackson's research preceded the COVID-19 pandemic, they were particularly apparent during it.

A notable example of engagement with local media organisations was the Leeds News Ecology project, led by **Coleman** and bringing together a team including **Thumim, Birchall, Firmstone, Moss, Parry**, and distinguished Emeritus Professor **Blumler**. The project was funded by a seed grant from eminent journalist John Lloyd, supplemented by funding from the University. The project set out to explore how a city comes to imagine itself, how it tells itself stories, circulates news, creates events, stores its memories and tries to come to terms with difference and diversity. Among the organisations engaged with were senior managers and broadcasters at BBC Yorkshire (Look North and Radio Leeds), ITV Yorkshire, and Leeds City Council.

#### 4.3: Contribution to research base

During the REF period, enabled by the research strategy discussed in this document, researchers at Leeds have made enormous contributions to the international and national research base of the discipline. Elements of this contribution can be summarised quantitatively as follows:

- 16 conferences and symposia organised by/held at Leeds
- 61 invited international keynotes and public talks in 43 different global locations, hosted by 37 universities or professional organisations
- 46 external PhD examinations by staff employed at the census date, 29 UK and 17 overseas
- Significant contributions to 6 major scholarly associations
- 7 full or deputy journal editorships and membership of the editorial board of 30 plus journals

We now detail of some of the most significant of these contributions, showing how our research strategy has allowed us to further internationalise research agendas, within and across our research themes.

**4.3.1.** The systems of administrative support and facilities outlined above have led to a further increase in the **conferences and symposia held at Leeds** during the current REF period. Some significant examples are:

- *Capitalism, Culture and the Media* (2015) convened by **Hesmondhalgh**, was attended by 160 people from 15 countries. Organised in association with the Political Economy Section of IAMCR, the Media Industries Scholarly Interest Group of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS), and the Media Industries and Cultural Production Working Group of ECREA, its attention to the concept of capitalism, in the light of recent developments in social theory, has made the conference a major reference point.
- Leeds hosted the annual Political Studies Association Media and Politics Group conference in December 2019, convened by **Parry**, and attended by 80 people.
- The annual conference of MeCCSA (Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association, the main scholarly association for the field in the UK) was hosted at Leeds in 2017, attended by 250 people. The high-profile keynotes - Shakuntala Banaji (LSE), Paul Gilroy (KCL), Andrew Ross (NYU) and Barbie Zelizer (University of Pennsylvania) - and papers reflected and advanced the contribution of cultural studies to media and communication studies.

The School has been involved in organising numerous other events at Leeds that have played an important role in facilitating the exchange of research, ideas and perspectives, and have often been attended by members of the public as well as academics.

- The Political Communication and Journalism Research Theme has hosted a series of public events on the major democratic issues of the last few years in the UK: a symposium on *News, Debates and Citizens in the 2015 UK General Election*; a similar event after the 2017 UK general election, *A Misjudged Election*; and *So What Was That All About? The UK News Media, the EU and Brexit*, attended by around 100 people, including journalists, civil servants, and local government representatives.
- In 2016-2017 **Paterson** co-convened with Adrian Favell (Sociology, Leeds) a LAHRI seminar series on the representation of migration, in collaboration with the University of Leeds Migration Research Network.
- Since 2006, the School has hosted an Annual Jay Blumler Lecture, in honour of our distinguished Emeritus Professor. Recent lecturers include Ruth Wodak (University of Vienna, 2019), Silvio Waisbord (George Washington University, 2018) and Liesbet van Zoonen (Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2017).
- The Journalism Studies Research Theme organised in 2016 a series of public events featuring journalists, including *New York Times* correspondent Alan Cowell; founder of the new press regulator, Impress, Jonathan Heawood; and senior BBC reporter and data journalist David Rhodes.
- **Anderson** organised the collaborative Leeds-Columbia University journalism research methods summer school (ongoing since 2017), facilitating knowledge exchange on best practice.
- The Visual Media and Communication Research Theme has organised a series of events highlighting social semiotic approaches, including a university-wide public lecture and doctoral workshop with Theo Van Leeuwen and Gunther Kress (co-organised by **Aiello** and Elisabetta Adami from the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies), and a public event on the editorial project *Difference and Globalization*, originating from **Aiello's** EU-funded research.
- **Paterson** has been highly active in organising events on international communication, including a series of AHRC-funded events such as an international symposium at Leeds on the role of development aid in shaping journalism in Africa and Latin America, and a roundtable discussion in 2018, funded by GCRF, the Leeds University Centre for African Studies, and the British Academy, on *Media and Foreign Powers in Africa*, bringing together Africanist scholars and media professionals to discuss the global media representation of foreign involvements in Africa.

**4.3.2. Leeds academics have reviewed for research councils and international funding bodies, demonstrating a commitment to systems that support and sustain research excellence**

in the UK and internationally. These include AHRC (**Bell, Coleman, Hesmondhalgh, Parry, Tasker, Thornham, Tyler**); Austrian Science Foundation (**Paterson**); Baltic Sea Foundation, Sweden (**Voltmer**); Belgian National Research Programme (**Coleman**); ERC (**Aiello, Coleman, Hesmondhalgh, Tasker, Voltmer**); Canada Research Chairs Program (**Klein**); Carnegie Trust (**Bell**); EPSRC (**Birchall, Thornham**); ESRC (**Aiello, Birchall, Coleman, Hesmondhalgh, Johnson, Paterson, Popple, Thornham, Voltmer**); Flanders Research Foundation (**Lee, Paterson, Zoellner**); German Science Foundation (**Voltmer**); Israeli Science Foundation (**Anderson, Coleman, Parry**); National Research Council, South Africa (**Paterson, Voltmer**); National Science Centre Poland (**Tyler**); National Science Foundation (**Anderson**); Norwegian Research Council (**Hesmondhalgh**); Paris Region Fellowship Programme (**Aiello**); Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (**Hesmondhalgh, Meier, Paterson, Tasker**); Swedish Research Council (**Coleman**); Swiss National Foundation (**Aiello**); US-Israel Binational Science Foundation (**Parry**). **Tasker** is a member of the UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships Panel and serves as a REF2021 sub-panel member.

**4.3.3.** Leeds staff have **supported the work of major scholarly associations** during the REF period. In 2018, **Paterson** was elected to lead one of the largest divisions (Global Communication and Social Change) of the *International Communication Association (ICA)*. **Aiello** led the Visual Communication Studies Division 2013-17 and **Hesmondhalgh** was elected an ICA Fellow in 2016. From 2012 to 2015 **Paterson** was one of fifteen elected members (the sole UK elected member) of the governing International Council of the *International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)* while **Zoellner** was elected Co-Chair of the Media Production Working Group in 2019. **Hesmondhalgh** was Founding Chair of the *European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)* Working Group/Section on Media Industries and Cultural Production, 2010 to 2018, overseeing the Group's transition to a full Section in 2015, and leading the selection and organisation of the Section's panels at the 2016 and 2018 ECREA conferences. From 2016, **Aiello** served as an advisory Group Member of the ECREA Working Group, Media and the City, making a substantial contribution to the group's success in achieving full Section status in 2019. In 2019 **Bell** became a Council Member for the International Association for Media and History (IAMHIST), taking a lead in the organisation's scheme offering pump priming funds to ECRs.

Staff in the School have also been active in UK subject associations. **Lax** served on the Executive Board of MeCCSA 2010-18. Since 2019 **Johnson** has Chaired MeCCSA's Women's Media Studies division. **Johnson** also served on the Executive Committee of *British Association for Film, Television and Screen Studies (BAFTSS)* 2012-16. **Halabi** is Vice-Chair of MeCCSA's Race and Postcolonial network.

**4.3.4:** School researchers contribute to journals in the field as **editors, advisory board members and peer reviewers**. Editorships and Deputy editorships in the REF period include *Communications (Voltmer)*, *Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies (Lugo-Ocando)*, *International Journal of Press/Politics (Anderson)*, *Media, War and Conflict (Parry)*, *Early Popular Visual Culture (Popple)*, *European Journal of Communication Research (Voltmer)* and *Studies in Documentary Film (Nash)*.

In disciplinary terms, our contribution as peer reviewers is extensive, encompassing Animal Studies, Area Studies, Celebrity Studies, Cultural Studies, Digital Humanities, Digital Media, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Film/Television Studies, Discourse Studies, Feminist Theory, Game Studies, Gender Studies, Journalism, Performance Studies, Poetics, Political Communication, Political Science, Popular Music, Public Opinion Research, Sociology, Urban Studies, Visual Studies, Work/Employment Studies and Youth/Childhood Studies.

Underlining the School's international reputation and commitment to interdisciplinarity, staff sit on the editorial advisory boards of multiple journals across these disciplines including: *African Journalism Studies*, *Animal Studies Journal*, *Journal of Applied Journalism and Media Studies*, *Central European Journal of Communication*, *Communication Theory*, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, *Cultural Sociology*, *Digital Journalism*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*

*Journal, Etnografia e Ricerca Qualitativa, European Journal of Communication, Feminist Media Studies, Global Diaspora and Media, Information Polity, International Journal of Cultural Studies, International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics, International Journal of Press/Politics, Journal of African Media Studies, Journal of British Cinema and Television, Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, Journal of War and Culture Studies, New Media & Society, Popular Communication, Rock Music Studies, Social Media and Society, Social Semiotics, Sociologica, Television and New Media, TRACE, Visual Communication, Visual Communication Quarterly.*