

Sussex Research Culture and Research Impact Awards

2024

3
Welcome

4 - 14
Research Culture Awards

15 - 24
Research Impact Awards

25 - 26
Emerging Researchers

WELCOME

I am delighted to share the shortlists for the 2024 Sussex Research Culture and Impact Awards.

At the University of Sussex a key part of our strategy is our commitment to conducting world-leading research that leads to real change and makes a difference to people's lives.

In conducting that research we want to nurture an environment that enables excellent and innovative research practice. We want all members of the research community to thrive, whatever career stage or role, so that they can achieve their potential and do their best work here.

These awards recognise, reward, and celebrate the work of colleagues across the University and highlight our commitment to enabling everyone working on research at Sussex to flourish.

Research at the University of Sussex creates a wide range of impacts across society, the economy, culture, technology, health, and the environment. This event is not only about recognising the winning entries, because it gives a heightened profile to the wide range of this excellent research at Sussex and the culture that enables it, highlighting how collaboration and mutual support is at the heart of all that we do, as well as openness, inclusion and integrity.

This programme describes some of this inspiring work.

I hope that you will join me in congratulating the winners and everyone engaged in producing and supporting excellent research and impact across the University of Sussex.

PROFESSOR KEITH JONES
PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND INNOVATION)

RESEARCH CULTURE

Research Culture Awards

Excellent research and impact is a product of a research community thriving in a positive research culture.

Our aim is to enhance our Research Culture at Sussex to be collaborative, open, inclusive, and thus to ensure that all our people are able to flourish, and to empower them to achieve their best work.

Through the Research Culture Awards we recognise and celebrate the very best contributions to our community and to our culture.

We recognise leadership by academics, Early Career Researchers and professional services staff that creates a collegiate research environment, with a focus on those who support the wellbeing and development of others, create or support inclusive teamwork and inspire others.

The Interdisciplinary Collaboration award recognises researchers conducting innovative research, synthesising theory and methodology from multiple disciplines of study, especially work at the interface between science, social sciences and humanities.

Awards also recognise those finding effective ways to make Sussex a more equal, diverse and inclusive place to do research (EDI in Research) and a more open place to do research (Openness in Research), celebrating initiatives that increase the transparency, inclusivity, collegiality, reproducibility and efficiency of research processes.

Finally, Sussex's core values of kindness, integrity, inclusion and collaboration all underpin good ethical practice and facilitate excellent research. This year we have introduced Ethics awards for staff and postgraduate researchers to recognise those who have demonstrated outstanding ethical practice or engagement in their work.

Interdisciplinary Research Collaboration Award

Creative Practice for Transformative Futures – from art to science to policy, influencing the UN and commended for collaboration

Professor Ann Light (Engineering and Informatics)

The CreaTures Framework is an award-winning resource developed for creative practitioners, policy-makers/funders, and researchers interested in linking creative practice, eco-social change, and transformative futures. The project/framework challenges conventional crisis communication by offering hopeful futures, working directly with artists and designers, and involving scientists, social scientists, arts and humanities scholars to critically explore the science, design and implementation of climate adaptation and mitigation policies. It offers a "Dimensions" tool for reflective evaluation of creative practices, drawing on anthropology, human geography, political science, sustainability and complex systems science and analysing 140 creative projects with economists and sustainability scientists.



Developing Energy Demand Research Centre (EDRC), an interdisciplinary £15m UKRI-funded centre across 13 universities

Professor Mari Martiskainen (University of Sussex Business School)

Prof Mari Martiskainen (Sussex) and Prof Sara Walker (Birmingham) were selected as UKRI Energy Demand Research Champions in 2022, and invited to develop a bid for a new, £15m Energy Demand Research Centre (EDRC), funded by UKRI. Prof Martiskainen, as PI, led the centre proposal development together with Sussex professional services staff member Ryan Giddings, and Prof Walker and her team. The proposal development included stakeholder engagement via a survey, three deliberative workshops, interviews, and an open call for co-investigators. This resulted in an interdisciplinary centre proposal that included shared values, vision, mission, Theory of Change and main research themes. The centre funding was secured through UKRI's peer review process, with EDRC starting in July 2023 as UKRI's main investment in energy demand research in the UK.



Implementing the Rights of Nature, the rights of the Andean bear and the rights of local communities to land titles in the Ecuadorian Andes

Dr Joanna Smallwood (Law, Politics and Sociology)

The project team encompasses research experts from Sussex in law, ecology, anthropology and geography and we work closely together in a truly integrated and collaborative way along with our NGO partner in Ecuador, the Cambugan Foundation (<https://www.cambugan.org/>). So far, we have conducted 2 field trips to the Ecuadorian Andes where we are researching and facilitating the land title process and the development of land management plans for forest restoration with local communities and have begun to collect data on the human-wildlife conflict with the endangered

Andean bear. On both trips, we met with the 5 local communities individually and facilitated two workshops bringing all the communities together to facilitate land titles and this has led to the progression of applications for land titles. We have met with representatives from municipal, local and parish governments regarding the land titling scheme and the Rights of Nature. Our meetings with the relevant Municipal government departments has led to an agreement of cooperation between them to progress the granting of land titles. We have met and are collaborating with Ecuadorian academics and a judge working on the interface of property rights, the rights of nature and the rights of animals and are developing a partnership between the Ecuadorian University law students and the University of Sussex Environmental Justice Law Clinic (<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/law/clinical-legal-education>) and exploring the possibility of strategic litigation.

Games and Storytelling for Sustainable Futures

Dr Jo Walton (Media, Arts and Humanities)

Games and Storytelling for Sustainable Futures consists of a series of past, ongoing, and planned projects at the intersection of game design and sustainability / climate. Games can create "soft spaces" in which participants can explore different versions of themselves, and innovative approaches to trade-offs, impasses, and polarised perspectives. Traditionally, serious game design has often focused on simulations with a relatively 'closed' set of outcomes. This research is seeking to do something different, combining scientific rigour, pedagogical expertise, and the more free and open approaches of tabletop roleplaying games.



Openness in Research Award

Improving and certifying the reproducibility of to-be-published psychology research papers

Dr Reny Baykova (Psychology)

Research findings are relevant only if they are reproducible – rerunning the same analysis on the same dataset should yield the same numerical results, figures, and inferential conclusions. Last year I helped set up, and now lead, a new reproducibility certification scheme for researchers in the School of Psychology. This is one of the first schemes of its kind in the UK. Through this scheme I have helped researchers identify and remedy a variety of errors which would have otherwise made it, unnoticed, into published papers and the wider scientific sphere.



Make reproducible science accessible! Building software to facilitate open research and lead by example with fully transparent studies

Dr Dominique Makowski (Psychology)

My own PhD's advancement was often hindered by a lack of availability of materials, data and tools, increasing frustration and the effort required to make "good" science. This motivated me 1) to create and make available the tools and programs I was developing (in particular, R and Python packages for data processing) and 2) to lead by example by insisting (at the cost of ruffling institutional feathers) to make my own research output open, transparent and accessible. This effort and dedication has continued during my postdoc and since I joined Sussex as a lecturer, with an impactful contribution to open science promotion.

Bringing Large Hadron Collider Data to the World

Dr Kate Shaw (Mathematical and Physical Sciences)

Dr Shaw has pioneered the ATLAS Open Data project to bring proton-proton collision data to the world. Since 2014 Shaw has led the team at ATLAS to process and deliver real data along with simulation of standard Model and Beyond the Standard Model Physics over an interactive educational website. Along with the data being used by 10,000 students worldwide, Shaw has led teams to deliver directly to local schools in Sussex, and online and in person to students in Bhutan.

Research Leadership Award

The Writing Lab team has created a supportive and inclusive space for members of LPS to develop individual or group writing projects, with tangible outcomes

Dr Sabina Avdagic, Dr Tanya Palmer, Dr Lucy Welsh (Law, Politics and Sociology)

The Writing Lab initiative, developed by Dr Sabina Avdagic, Dr Tanya Palmer, Dr Lucy Welsh and Dr Helena Howe, and supported by Helen Gaterell offers the research community in LPS a dedicated space and time for writing. Faculty and PGRs are invited to attend two full mornings every week. Sessions are facilitated with opportunities for discussion and goal-setting, plus reflection and problem-solving, which are built around periods of quiet concentration. Writing is often a solitary endeavour, which can make some feel isolated or overwhelmed – the Writing Lab supports the wellbeing of all writers by offering a platform to discuss obstacles and write together. To be more inclusive, writers can attend online. By introducing this initiative and providing dedicated and comfortable space in the Freeman Centre, the team has created a collegiate research environment in LPS. Inviting anyone, regardless of career stage, promotes inclusive teams and is hugely beneficial for building the capability of Early Career Researchers. The work of inspiring others and working collaboratively has led to tangible outcomes. It is a model of collegiality and mutual support.



Developing and strengthening the MPS research community
Dr Christopher Brown (Mathematical and Physical Sciences)

For the last three years I have worked to strengthen the research culture and community within the school of mathematical and physical sciences (MPS) in many ways including conferences, charity sports events, and outreach; culminating in the MPS Post & Undergraduate (PUG) talk series. These talks provide an inclusive, accessible, and collegiate environment for early career researchers to give talks, develop presentation and communication skills, mentor junior research colleagues, and give an opportunity to broaden collaborations within MPS. They encourage undergraduates to immerse themselves in MPS research activities, integrating research into their education, and showcasing research careers. The PUG talks have been very successful so far, with engagement across all MPS research disciplines, achieving a real sense of enhanced research culture and community building. For the last three years I have worked to strengthen the research culture and community within the school of mathematical and physical sciences (MPS) in many ways including conferences, charity sports events, and outreach; culminating in the MPS Post & Undergraduate (PUG) talk series. These talks provide an inclusive, accessible, and collegiate environment for early career researchers to give talks, develop presentation and communication skills, mentor junior research colleagues, and give an opportunity to broaden collaborations within MPS. They encourage undergraduates to immerse themselves in MPS research activities, integrating research into their education, and showcasing research careers. The PUG talks have been very successful so far, with engagement across all MPS research disciplines, achieving a real sense of enhanced research culture and community building.

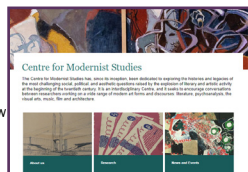
research careers. The PUG talks have been very successful so far, with engagement across all MPS research disciplines, achieving a real sense of enhanced research culture and community building. For the last three years I have worked to strengthen the research culture and community within the school of mathematical and physical sciences (MPS) in many ways including conferences, charity sports events, and outreach; culminating in the MPS Post & Undergraduate (PUG) talk series. These talks provide an inclusive, accessible, and collegiate environment for early career researchers to give talks, develop presentation and communication skills, mentor junior research colleagues, and give an opportunity to broaden collaborations within MPS. They encourage undergraduates to immerse themselves in MPS research activities, integrating research into their education, and showcasing research careers. The PUG talks have been very successful so far, with engagement across all MPS research disciplines, achieving a real sense of enhanced research culture and community building.

Building an inclusive research culture in Global Studies: Sussex University BAME and Women's Coaching and Network
Professor Divya P. Tolia-Kelly (Global Studies)

Space of Inclusion and Support in GS I have successfully developed, trained and convened the BAME Women's Coaching and Mentoring Network in Global Studies since 2021. We have coached over 40 members of staff within the university including those with issues around gender, homophobia, trans-identity, BAME institutional violences, self-esteem, career progression, and aggressions in the teaching space. It is a network of coaches and mentors who are sensitised to the needs of staff in Higher Education experiencing structural and environmental stresses (including for e.g. over issues of race, gender, sexuality, health and ethnicity). We are open for ALL and remain an independent (outside of HR and SMT) support network for staff that are particularly vulnerable to prejudicial micro-aggressions in the day-to-day work and wider social environment. It is premised on the idea of building and sustaining a culture of support, development and research success for BAME staff, women, and any other colleagues facing oppressive and exclusionary cultures of academic life.

The Centre for Modernist Studies' 'Artist in the Archives' scheme
Dr Helen Tyson and Dr Hope Wolf (Media, Arts and Humanities)

In 2023, the Centre for Modernist Studies launched an 'Artist in the Archives' scheme. The aim of this initiative is to invite artists, writers, poets, and other creatives to work with the Centre for Modernist Studies to create new artworks engaging with modernist experiments from the past in new and exciting ways. It is also an opportunity to work with archives, collections or histories relevant to modernism in the Sussex region.



Early Career Research Leadership Award

Established a lasting interdisciplinary reading group, securing funding and involvement from early-career economists and lawyers
Ioannis Papadakis (University of Sussex Business School)

Ioannis Papadakis founded an interdisciplinary reading group, bringing together early-career economists and lawyers. He has secured funding multiple times and fostered a vibrant community where participants actively engage in discussions and knowledge-sharing. By covering expenses like catering and travel and creating learning opportunities, he ensured the group's sustainability and ongoing growth. Papadakis created a space where early career researchers from different fields come together to collaborate, explore topics, and build connections, enabling professional development and intellectual enrichment.



Co-founder of Animal Behaviour Live, an international platform promoting sustainable and inclusive events for free
Dr Natacha Rossi (Life Sciences)

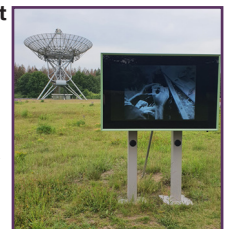
In 2020, I co-founded Animal Behaviour Live (ABL), uniting global animal behaviour researchers to challenge academic norms. ABL, streamed exclusively on YouTube, hosts sustainable, inclusive events like annual conferences and monthly seminars. At Sussex, our fourth conference drew 1,030 attendees, with 29% from Asia, South America, and Africa. In 2023, I spearheaded roundtable discussions on academia's inclusivity, addressing barriers like ethnicity and gender with international experts. ABL's growth is evident, expanding from three to 21 volunteers, with five under my leadership for the roundtable series. Through ABL, we foster critical discourse and advocate for diversity in academia.

Intergalactic research culture: flattening hierarchies with science fiction
Dr Faiz Sheikh (Global Studies)

The International Relations reads Star Trek seminar series has created an open and fun research culture, bringing together undergraduates, postgraduates, junior and senior faculty from across Global Studies. During the seminar we watch specially chosen episodes of Star Trek: The Next Generation (1987-1994), matching research interests with episode themes. For Star Trek and International Relations novices alike, the seminar creates a low-pressure environment to learn more about the work going on in the department and get to know each other. It has allowed relationships to form across the hierarchies of the institution, helping create a more collaborative and inclusive space.

Attracting a 4 million Euro grant to establish a 5-year Digital Memory Lab at Sussex
Dr Victoria Grace Walden (Media, Arts and Humanities)

Launching in April 2024, the Landecker Digital Memory Lab: Connective Holocaust Memory is the culmination of 4 years of work. Starting with re-thinking how to do impactful engagement during the Pandemic, I launched www.digitalholocaustmemory.com hosting a research blog and online discussions with global heritage professionals and academics, which built a mailing list of more than 1,000 people. This developed into a series of edited collections and funded fieldwork to record interviews with those involved in the creation of digital Holocaust memory projects in Europe, the US and Australia, and a series of participatory workshops involving representatives from 69 organisations across 16 countries, and included transnational organisations such as the UNESCO, the European Commission, and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. The Lab is a flagship project of the Alfred Landecker Foundation, who have invested more than 4 million Euros in this work. This is the biggest investment in digital Holocaust memory research in the world.



Professional Services Research Culture Leadership Award

Leading strategic and supportive initiatives to improve MAH research culture and collaboration

Medeni Fordham (Media, Arts and Humanities)

I am committed to championing a sustainable approach to research leadership that prioritises inclusivity, mentorship, and staff well-being. I have consistently advocated for the importance of partnership working between PS and academic roles, and working together to enhance the quality and outcomes of research, in a collaborative (and not just administrative) capacity. I lead a 12-person team in the School of Media, Arts and Humanities, where team members work closely with academic research leadership and faculty, to deliver guidance and processes that foster and normalise more collegiate, collaborative and aspirational activity amongst MAH's research community.



Supporting the shift to an open research culture across the University

Bethany Logan (Library)

As the Library's first Research & Open Scholarship Senior Manager I led the design and delivery of Library services to support the research community, embedding the principles of Open Research and Scholarship in policy, practice, and culture across the University. I delivered a number of innovative open publishing projects that, in my new role as Associate Director, I have the capacity to develop further through the creation of an open access library press.

Making a positive difference, bringing research cultural shift, introduced an all inclusive array of research workshops and events, increased Open Access compliance, created a vibrant impact culture

Dr Deeptima Massey (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

I have been playing an important leadership role in creating a healthy, inclusive and vibrant research culture at BSMS ensuring all researchers across all career stages (PhD to Professors) can thrive, delivering the University's core values of kindness, integrity, inclusion, collaboration and courage to support a broad portfolio of research activities at BSMS and promoting a "one team" culture.

Grant Idea pitch sessions: facilitating early peer review to improve research and funding applications quality

Dr Yolanda Pena-Oliver (Research and Innovation Services)

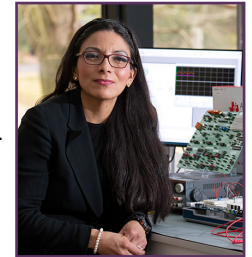
In the School of Psychology, we have been running regular Grant Idea pitch sessions, to facilitate early peer feedback on research proposals, at idea conception, which allows academics to bounce ideas and receive constructive criticism and advice in an informal setting. This helps to shape the proposal accordingly, to maximise chances of success when applying for research funding applications. The sessions run every three months and are open to all the research community in Psychology, especially Early Career Researchers.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award

ECR Women's pilot: Growing leadership in women early career researchers

Dr Elizabeth Rendon-Morales (Engineering and Informatics)

Dr. Rendon-Morales is an engineer, a researcher and a senior lecturer who has more than twenty years of experience from both academia and industry. She best knows the structural and relational barriers that women face in engineering and research and because of that she campaigns to support the growth, visibility and development of women in STEM. She has been acknowledged for her technical prowess and for her advocacy to support under-represented groups.



Ensuring Sussex staff are able to thrive through all stages of the Menopause

Lisette Whittaker (Human Resources)

Designing and delivering Menopause workplace interventions and support that will help to ensure that all staff are able to continue to work at Sussex and live Sussex's values.



Ethical Research Award

We need to remember talk more often, and in better ways, about both regulatory and relational ethics

Dr Gem Aellah (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

I am a social anthropologist interested in thinking about what it means to understand health research ethics as embedded in, rather than something separate from, the multiple ethical dilemmas, power differences and inequalities in everyday life. Especially when working in global partnerships. I am committed to be part of helping facilitate more talk, reflection on and articulation about what this means for both the regulatory and relational ethics that govern and inform our work as a university. I have been involved in running workshops to facilitate this, in my reviewing for RGEC and in carrying this ethos to my own research and publications.



Sharing ethical participatory research practices via a community autism network
Prof Nicola Yuill (Psychology) and Dr Jacqui Shepherd (Education and Social Work)

The applicants set up the Autism Community Research Network Sussex (ACoRNS) in 2021 to 'develop, research, understand, and share good practice in services used by autistic children and their families', building a collaborative partnership between universities, practitioners, families, children and young people. Our neurodiverse steering group of 10 local stakeholders across education, health and social care hold us to account. We illustrate our emerging ethical approaches with two examples: (1) an online event, Autistic Voices, with 3 autistic speakers resulting in an ethics application (ER/JSXX) enabling them to co-author a publication sharing their identifiable personal experiences of education. (2) the ESRC-funded Our Stories project co-developing new visual consent/assent procedures (e.g. ER/SH656) for active participation by autistic children with learning disabilities. (<https://www.acorns-sussex.org.uk/people/>)



Dr Alison Lacey

From recruitment to the archive: innovations in ethical research practice with seldom-heard families
Dr Alison Lacey and Dr May Nasrawy (Education and Social Work)

We are part of a research team that recently completed an ESRC-funded scoping study exploring possibilities of how to include seldom heard voices in large-scale datasets using qualitative longitudinal approaches (QLR). Linked to a proposed new UK birth cohort study, the project focuses on two identified seldom-heard groups (refugee/migrant families and families with experience of statutory child welfare services). Our final report includes several areas of ethical innovation with potential significant implications for qualitative and mixed-methods research.

PGR Ethical Research Award

Discovering Ethical Practices Within Youth Research Beyond Guidelines
Joshua Francis (Psychology)

My overall research area is body image within young people, especially how moving from primary school to secondary school can impact their body image, as well as wellbeing. The combination of the young age of the population and sensitive nature of the topic have made conducting research difficult. In addition, a shift in the mindset of how we treat young samples (as per the UN recommendations). However, following best practices, and sincerely interacting with the population sample from the foundations of my research, give me confidence in my projects. As well as ensure the integrity of my research, and protect the population.

Close to My Heart: PGR Perspectives – a space to speak from the heart and connect
Tiffany Murphy (Media, Arts and Humanities)

This year, I organised Close to My Heart: PGR Perspectives, a symposium that invited postgraduate researchers at Sussex to reflect on their doctoral experience through a personal lens. Featuring a diverse range of presentations from postgraduate researchers across the University, Close to My Heart was a collaborative space for researchers at Sussex to explore some of the ethical challenges we face in our research, such as positionality, the role of lived experience, and tensions around 'closeness'. Recognising how the PhD process can be isolating, and how traditional research events can leave little room for meaningful connection, Close to My Heart forged a space to connect with ourselves and each other.



Special Research Leadership Award

Dr Sabina Avdagic (Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange, School of Law, Politics and Sociology)

An opportunity to posthumously recognise and celebrate the contribution that Dr Sabina Avdagic made to the School of Law, Politics and Sociology in her role as Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange (DRaKE). This is a unanimous nomination from the Department of Politics.



The School of Law, Politics and Sociology would like to submit Dr Sabina Avdagic for the Research Leadership Award. Sabina passed away suddenly in January 2024, leaving a huge hole in the fabric of the School and University. The loss of Sabina threw into sharp focus her many contributions to the research culture in LPS. During her time as DRaKE, she came to define research in the School, through her clear research strategy, and the sheer force of her personality. As a result of her leadership, we continue to operate systems and structures of support that she established. Some examples include a Research Common Room, created by Sabina in the Freeman building as an attractive space for discussion and collaboration to take place, plus more structured research bid clinics and draft grant feedback sessions to bolster internal peer review processes. Through these, she shaped the working relationship between Professional Services, the Research Development Office and senior LPS management, ensuring a trusted, smooth link-up between School and central services. She is deeply missed by everyone who knew her and worked with her.



Research Impact Awards

Research impact is the change that research makes beyond academia. The University of Sussex Research Impact Awards recognise, reward and celebrate the real-world impact from research across all disciplines and career levels.

Emerging from research that influences areas such as policy, business and innovation, social care, conservation and climate policy, and public health (to name a few), impact can be achieved in many different settings. The breadth of categories for these awards seeks to recognise the wide-ranging impacts that research at Sussex achieves.

The Outstanding Public or Media Engagement award also recognises the different ways Sussex researchers have reached out to the public directly, and worked with different organisations, groups and communities to ensure that their research is helping to tackle the challenges they face.

The Champion awards reward the contributions of academic and Professional Services staff in supporting their School's community, culture and capability to achieve research impact.

The shortlisted applications reflect the diversity of research at Sussex and the varied ways that our research leads to real change and makes a difference to people's lives.

Outstanding Early Career Impact

Fundraising (multiple charities); knowledge dissemination (media); addressing real-world issues (Syria); engaging with non-academic communities (artists)

Dr Feras Alkabani (Media, Arts and Humanities)

I've curated and translated a selection of Arabic medieval poems for Carole Bennett's exhibitions, including Reflections of the Silk Road, (Royal Pavilion; 21-22 March 2023); all proceeds (over £15,000) were in aid of DePaul International. I've co-founded the Syrian Academics and Researchers' Network (SARN) in the UK – the first of its type (September 2023) and secured AHRC funds as PI (November 2023) for its research activities (April 2024 – September 2025). I've collaborated with Damascus-based artists to publish an illustrated children's story (September 2023) and contributed to 2 documentaries on T.E. Lawrence and Orientalism (October 2023 – January 2024).



Deployment of machine learning and AI to assess the commensurability of corporate climate disclosures with performance

Dr Kyle S. Herman (Science Policy Research Unit)

The EU, the UK, and the US have recently ramped up regulations on corporate climate disclosure. The main impetus is to help firms align their climate disclosure with climate performance. Nevertheless, these regulations normally involve disclosure through reports—which are mainly not quantitative but rather qualitative data. In recent publications, and in an ERC grant that is now in the second round, I develop tools and frameworks to solve this puzzle.

Transforming Global Health: iPSC Innovations and Capacity Building in African Biomedical Research

Dr Mahmoud Bukar Maina (Life Sciences)

My research has pioneered the use of induced Pluripotent Stem Cells (iPSCs) from indigenous Africans, opening new pathways to advancing global understanding of dementia. This spurred global engagements, including a talk at the United Nations General Assembly Science Summit. To support my work locally, I secured support from the Yobe State Government (YBSG) to establish a state-of-the-art Biomedical Science Research and Training Centre (BioRTC) in Nigeria and the Northern Nigeria Dementia Group. These have enhanced local research capabilities (150+ scientists trained at BioRTC since 2021) and forged numerous strategic partnerships, including an MoU between YBSG and the University of Sussex.



Commercial impact or outstanding engagement with a commercial partner

CheatGPT? Creating ethical use of generative text AI in the UK communications sectors

Dr Tanya Kant (Media, Arts and Humanities)

Text-generating AI tool ChatGPT and its competitors have made waves for their abilities to instantly create human-like text. My collaboration with Brighton-based PR firm Magenta Associates aims to empower workers in small-to-medium creative industries businesses to talk about and use AI text tools ethically, productively and with creative confidence. The project has mapped the terrain of UK AI policy and unveiled the realities of using generative text AI in the UK PR / Communications sector. By project completion we will have established a network of 1,000 content writers and employers in the industry, creating impact through policy and workplace change in AI writing practices throughout the sector.



A research-led support program for employers trialling a 4 day working week

Dr Charlotte Rae (Psychology)

A research-led support program for employers trialling a 4 day working week. The '4 day working week' is gaining popularity amongst businesses who want to improve staff wellbeing and workplace performance. However, many organisations who would like to trial a 4 day week aren't sure how to do so. The Sussex 4 Day Week project uses findings from psychological research to support employers with trialling a 4 day working week. We have helped 14 employers to implement a 4 day week trial, by redesigning the work, delivering productivity training, and measuring the impact on staff and on the business. After taking part



in the project, 80% of employers kept their new working hours.

Impact through interdisciplinary work

Transforming Approaches to 'Oracy' in UK Schools Through Interdisciplinary Research

Dr Tom F. Wright (Media, Arts and Humanities)

Speaking Citizens is a team of historians, linguists, social scientists and Classicists, exploring new approaches to 'oracy' (speaking and listening) in UK state schools. Our new evidence base is enabling teachers, policymakers, charities, and exam boards to see oral communication as more about preparation for citizenship than mere employability 'skills.' We are part of a movement that has convinced the Labour Party to embrace oracy as a key education policy, and we have changed teaching in over 60 UK schools through CPD training. Our approach is clear model of problem-focused interdisciplinary research, bringing insights from multiple disciplines to bear in impactful knowledge exchange.



Social or cultural impact

Changing local history teaching in schools in Bolton, Greater Manchester

Professor Hester Barron (Media, Arts and Humanities)

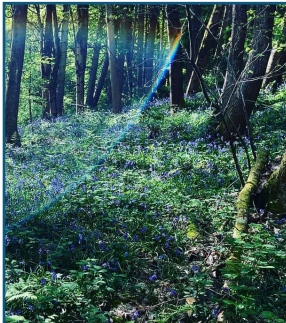
Inspired by essays written by schoolchildren in 1930s Bolton, now archived at The Keep in Sussex, this public history project works alongside local heritage stakeholders in Greater Manchester to engage children from deprived communities in innovative co-created learning experiences. Using the words, images and stories of children living in their streets and communities nearly a century ago, the project brings the past to life for today's primary and secondary-age children. A range of different activities encourage imaginative and empathetic responses, helping children gain greater understanding and appreciation of the history of their local area, and their place within it.



Driving inclusion for the sight impaired in heritage and outdoor sectors: community, policy and practice

Dr Karis Jade Petty (Global Studies)

Dr Petty's research examines experiences of nature amongst the sight impaired. This has involved creating a new walking programme providing sighted guiding for the sight impaired around Brighton and Hove. From this project, she co-produced guidance to support the creation of further programmes for the national Walking for Health network with Bristol University, the Ramblers, and British Blind Sport. Her most recent project explores the potential of participatory arts to drive inclusion in the outdoor and heritage sector for sight impaired visitors, which is now being explored through a funded pilot programme at Wakehurst Kew Gardens.



Improving the lives of children with misophonia

Professor Jools Simner (Psychology)

To improve the lives of children with misophonia (a sound-sensitivity disorder), I achieved the following impact: (a) instigated a nationwide change in examination policy for GCSEs, A-levels, Scottish Highers etc., such that the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) now recognises and supports the 60,000 children with misophonia who take exams yearly (b) with my team, created a virtual support-hub for misophonia families, now being actively recommended by GPs (c) hosted a symposium with WestSussex.gov for 200 child-facing professionals, to provide better school-support for children with misophonia (d) created the first diagnostics for childhood misophonia, now administered via our open-access testing portal by thousands worldwide including clinical professionals (e) opened scores of new conversations on misophonia between parents and teachers via my purpose-built "misophonia-dialogues" web-application.



Impact on public policy

Improving event safety and civil contingencies planning through crowd psychology

Professor John Drury (Psychology)

My research on crowd psychology has changed policy and guidance in UK government departments, changed crowd safety management practices around the world, and made people safer. My model of crowd behaviour in emergencies has become the leading and dominant approach in policy and practice, supplanting popular views such as 'mass panic'. Based on my work, policy and practice has shifted from withholding information from the public to sharing information with the public. The dominant approach is now to treat the public as a partner, not an obstacle. My work provides the psychology needed for the UK policy of community resilience.



Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Claims of Asylum in Europe: improving understanding and enhancing rights

Professor Nuno Ferreira & Dr Moira Dustin (Law, Politics and Sociology)

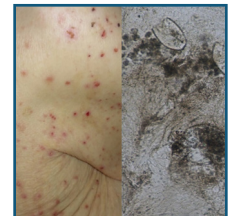


SOGICA (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Claims of Asylum) was a four-year project (2016-2020) that created new understanding, raised awareness and impacted the work of courts, public agencies and NGOs through our findings and recommendations to improve the experiences of SOGI refugees. Beneficiaries of the research have included the Canadian Federal Court, UK parliament, European Union institutions, UNHCR and NGOs globally, who have used our research directly to decide on asylum claims, reform policies, produce strategies, and develop guidance for authorities. This has resulted in additional protection and rights-compliance in current policies and decisions, benefiting countries in Europe and beyond.

Improving treatment and outbreak management of scabies in care homes and other institutions

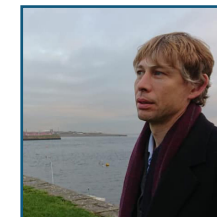
Mr Jo Middleton (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

Scabies outbreaks in care homes, refugee settings, and other institutions are a major public health burden. As a result of University of Sussex research and advocacy, in 2023 UK government published the first ever national scabies outbreak guidance, and in 2024 approved the licensing of oral ivermectin for scabies treatment.



Shaping Policy and Public Perception Concerning the Use of Air-Cushioned Whips in Horseracing

Professor Mahon O'Brien (Media, Arts and Humanities)



I have engaged effectively with the BHA executive, stakeholders, and the Horse Welfare Board, helping to shape current policy concerning the use of the air-cushioned whip (aka Pro-Cush). Some of my research on this issue was published in a high-profile sports policy journal in 2021 leading to widespread discussion. The BHA's Whip Consultation group listed my article in the reference section of their published report in 2022 and agreed with some of my key recommendations.

Impact on health or wellbeing

Goodbye Breasts! A practice research project creating conversations about breast cancer, recovery and the creative arts

Professor Joanna Callaghan (Media, Arts and Humanities)

Goodbye Breasts! is a creative health project that explores breast cancer and recovery through a personal story led by Joanna Callaghan. It involves an interactive touring exhibition, a documentary, creative workshops and a digital campaign to explore women's experiences of breast cancer, mastectomy and faulty genes. Its four societal impact aims are to encourage positive conversations around breasts and breast health; raise awareness of early detection of breast cancer; increase understanding of faulty genes; and highlight the role of arts in health and wellbeing. It has over 40 stakeholders including medical professionals, charities, universities, and creative arts and cultural organisations.



Outstanding public or media engagement

Hull/Ravenser Odd: twin cities, sunken pasts - exhibition, schools project, public events

Dr Emily Robinson (Law, Politics and Sociology)

A collaborative public project, recovering the forgotten history of a short-lived medieval island. Ravenser Odd emerged at the mouth of the Humber in the 1230s and became a Royal Borough in 1299, on the same day as its neighbour, Hull. While Hull survived and prospered, Ravenser Odd was soon washed away by storms; its story sinking with it. This forgotten environmental history has been retold through a three-month exhibition, including documents loaned from The National Archives, and a gallery of Lost Objects created by children in three local schools; a programme of public events; and a specially commissioned comic book.



Engaging the disengaged: A novel hepatitis C community service for vulnerable adults
Professor Sumita Verma (with Margaret O'Sullivan, Ahmed Hashim and Adele Mourad) (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

Our novel community liver model for the homeless/people who use drugs has led to increased access to and treatment for hepatitis C virus (HCV); and improved patients' HCV care experience/understanding of HCV/quality of life. Our model has been adopted nationally /endorsed by national liver bodies/charities and internationally by the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention as a good practice model. We have won multiple awards with multiple national/international

presentations and high impact publications. This work is a major player in our national goal to achieve HCV elimination by 2030 and was submitted as a REF ICS in 2021.



My Dead Body: breaking down boundaries, and delivering health education to millions
Professor Claire Smith (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

The documentary 'My Dead Body' focused on the rare cancer of the first consented publicly dissected donor Toni Crews. 1.5 million viewers, and a considerable number of media and social media activities highlighted the public's interest in the documentary; showing admiration and gratitude for Toni, the value of education, and that while the documentary was uncomfortable to watch, it had value in reminding viewers of life, their bodies, and their purpose. Nominated for BAFTAs, Royal Television Society, and Greirson Awards the Anatomy

team have demonstrated outstanding public engagement to promote health-conscious life choices and improve understanding of the human body.

Academic impact champion

Leading School-wide transformative change in impact strategy, literacy, activity, and success**Professor Margaretta Jolly (Media, Arts and Humanities)**

Margaretta has shown tremendous commitment to advancing impact work in the School of Media, Arts and Humanities. She has led on strategic planning and implementation of the School's impact support programme, engages in numerous internal and external networks and steering groups, plays a crucial role in impact funding decisions, and has contributed substantially to raising impact literacy and mapping activity among faculty, through an extensive series of individual impact meetings. Further to this, she is leading the AHRC IAA's largest strategic 'cluster' project, bringing together research across and beyond the School to facilitate impactful engagement with key regional stakeholders.

**Engaging the disengaged to achieve hepatitis C elimination and improve symptom burden in advanced liver disease****Professor Sumita Verma (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)**

Nationally, we have championed novel community models of care for people who use drugs and the homeless – a cohort with high hepatitis C virus (HCV) prevalence. This work has been a major player in our national goal to achieve HCV elimination by 2030. It has been endorsed by national/international bodies and charities and submitted as a REF ICS 2021. Secondly, we lead on trialling novel palliative intervention for untreatable fluid accumulation in the abdomen (ascites), the commonest complication of advanced liver disease. We hope to reduce inequity in palliative care provision thereby enhancing end of life care for this neglected cohort.

Professional Services impact champion

Driving impact literacy, activity and achievement through collaborative support and team development**Katherine Blackadder (Media, Arts and Humanities)**

Katherine has been pivotal in enhancing research impact in MAH since December 2022. She created a new work programme for impact support, leading a mini-team with marked gains in productivity and personal growth. Recognised for fostering non-academic impact understanding, she's also adeptly managed the AHRC Impact Acceleration Account, updating policies and guiding impactful research and ethics. As a mentor, she's nurtured over 30 advisory relationships, encouraging collaborative impact efforts across the university, and demonstrated exceptional leadership and integrity in preparing for REF 2029.



Emerging Researchers

Undergraduate, postgraduate (PGR) and early career (ECR) researchers make a vital contribution to research and the research environment at Sussex. Their work is showcased in various Summer of Research events.

The Three Minute Thesis is an international competition that asks PGRs to present their thesis to a non-specialist audience, with the aid of just one static slide, in only three minutes.

An average PhD thesis is 80,000 words, so this poses a unique challenge. It teaches communication, clarity of thought and encourages collegiality between participants, and neatly demonstrates the skills that PGRs bring to the table..

This year's winner is Sunisha Neupane, a researcher in IDS, for her talk titled 'मातृत्व र संघर्षका कथा [Stories of Motherhood and Resilience] - Researching maternal health and care in rural Nepal'. You will hear her talk this evening.

For our ECRs, the Dragons' Den competition offers a chance to pitch for up to £2,000 in research funding for small research projects, particularly those that support external grant or fellowship applications and generate exciting and innovative ideas.

It provides experience in bid-writing and communicating their work and its potential impact, and for nascent researchers it is an important stepping stone to bigger things. This year's winner will also present during the ceremony.

The Adam Weiler Impact Awards recognise PGRs who show the potential to make a lasting, positive difference with their postgraduate research. In fact, they are often already making an impact.

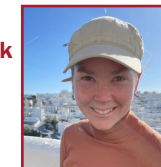
Part-funded by a donation to the University in memory of a former student, these awards showcase some of the incredible things our PGRs are doing to enact real change in the world.

The Adam Weiler PGR Impact Awards

Sciences First Place

Nico Edwards (Global Studies), nominated by supervisor Dr Andrea Brock

Nico's PhD examines what is driving the pivot to environmental sustainability in military industry and practice, looking at both 'green militarism' and climate justice, and considers both the consequences of this shift in strategy and the potential for resistance.



Taking innovative approach that combines interviewing, reflective diary writing and participant observation at international arms fairs, and already widely published, she is making a truly original contribution to the literature and to civil society work.

And as an advisor to Scientists for Global Responsibility, an Associated Researcher with the World Peace Foundation and an Emerging Expert with the Forum on the Arms Trade, Nico shows the potential to make a real difference on the world stage.

Sciences Runner-Up

Catherine Grant (Institute of Development Studies) who is using innovative and interdisciplinary methodologies to research disease epidemics and pandemics more effectively.

Social Sciences First Place

Wezi Mhango (Psychology), nominated by supervisor Dr Darya Gaysina

Wezi's research, supported by the Commonwealth Commission Scholarship and Wellcome Trust Active Ingredients Award, proposes effective mental health interventions for pregnant adolescents in low- and middle-income countries, addressing a gap in support for young women at high risk of common mental health problems.



Focusing on Malawi, her studies resulted in the development of Footpaths for Adolescent Maternal Mental Health, or FOR MAMA, an antenatal intervention incorporating psychoeducation, emotion-focused and problem-solving coping strategies.

This simple, flexible and low-cost initiative can be delivered by non-specialist health workers or adolescent peers, and offers a real opportunity to address the growing burden of mental health problems and positively impact young people's lives across Sub-Saharan Africa.

Social Sciences Joint Runners-Up

Robert Dickinson (Psychology), whose work combines political and social theory with public health and psychology research topics such as Covid-19.

Julia Schreiber (Psychology), who uses emerging AI to analyse millions of social media posts across borders, examining allyship and responses to conflict.

FIND OUT MORE

You can read more about Sussex Research Culture, Research Impact
and the Sussex Researcher School on our webpages at:

[**sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/research-culture**](https://sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/research-culture)

[**sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/rqi**](https://sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/rqi)

[**sussex.ac.uk/internal/sussex-researcher-school/**](https://sussex.ac.uk/internal/sussex-researcher-school/)