

Institution: Ulster University
Unit of Assessment: UoA33 (Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts and Film and Screen Studies)
<p>Section 1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</p> <p>Unit Context</p> <p>This submission reflects the deepening integration and expansion of Ulster's research in creative and performing arts over the course of two REF cycles. Our unit has prioritised the growth of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity, combining music and drama with film and screen (included in our 2014 submission), and latterly heritage and museum studies, within a single structure. This has facilitated the development of new research agendas across the majority of UoA33's discipline remit, and beyond.</p> <p>The resulting collaborative environment is reflected in co-authorship, grants and PhD co-supervision between the unit's disciplines, and with others covering all REF panels, including A (UoA3), B (UoA11), C (UoA14, UoA18, UoA22, UoA23), and D (UoA26, UoA27, UoA32, UoA34). Our collaborative base is further strengthened through Ulster's Creative Industries Institute (established 2017, integrating UoA33, UoA32 and UoA34), School of Arts and Humanities, and Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (6 schools and 9 UoAs).</p> <p>The unit's achievements in the present REF cycle can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased SRR staff (15.8 FTE, up from 13.4) • PhD community grown by approx. 50% to 30 PhDs (headcount, leading on 22 PhD projects), with 17.58 FTE completions (up from 13.4) • Top-performing unit at Ulster for PhD research community (PRES 2019), with the university placed 3rd in UK for this metric • 131 outputs (peer-reviewed or equivalent practice-based outputs) • 15 conferences/symposia hosted • Leading on Future Screens NI, one of nine AHRC Creative Clusters: award of £5.7 million from AHRC (in partnership with QUB and industry), with funding from industry and other partners bringing the total to £13 million • Unit-level research awards spend of £1.461 million this cycle (£92,468 per FTE over the cycle, or £13,209 per annum per FTE); almost three times our REF2014 figure (£514,901) • Leadership roles within scholarly organisations, editorial boards and peer review across the UK, Ireland, Europe, the US, and Australia <p>Through the development of critical mass at Ulster within performing arts, film and screen, and associated fields, the unit has contributed to the creative industries component of the successful Belfast Region City Deal (an £850 million total investment package), which will include a £61 million investment in a Screen Media Innovation Lab). The unit is headquartered at Magee campus in Northern Ireland's second city, Derry/Londonderry, adjacent to the Irish border, which will also benefit from a City Deal total investment package of £250 million. Our staff are distributed between the Derry and Belfast campuses, supporting research and impact across NI, the Republic of Ireland, the wider UK, and beyond.</p>

Unit Structure and Research Themes

Our research is structured around four interdisciplinary themes, which provide the basis for our research groups:

- (1) **Applied Arts, Health and Disability** (performance and health, applied drama, community/participatory music and disability arts)
- (2) **Arts, Heritage, and Conflict** (post-conflict arts, arts and reconciliation/conflict transformation, cultural heritage, arts practices engaging with cultural heritage, arts and protest movements)
- (3) **Arts Practices and Practice-as-Research** (from music theory and practice to drama/performance studies and film and screen, encompassing both practice-based and practice-led outputs as well as theoretical commentary)
- (4) **Creative Industries and Technologies** (screen industries and creative/emerging technologies, arts and cultural heritage sectors in economic contexts)

In keeping with our aim of supporting interdisciplinarity, staff may elect to be members of multiple groups simultaneously, and these themes have been chosen to foster synergies with other parts of the institution, namely **Art and Design, Geography, and Social Work and Social Policy**, and also align with Ulster's institution-level strategic research themes (**Research and Impact Strategy 2017–22**) of *healthy communities, social renewal, and creativity and culture*. These synergies have supported the development of internal collaborations, in addition to providing strategic focus for new external partnerships. We have provided thematic leadership for Ulster's work within the creative industries, including Lilley's appointment as **Research Champion for Creativity and Culture** and our unit's leadership of the **Creative Industries Institute** (Moore and Lyons, with colleagues from UoA32 and 34) and **AHRC Future Screens NI** project (PI: Moore).

Our research is also organised at discipline level. **Music** research is centred upon composition, technology, performance, and the soundtrack. **Film and screen** research ranges from practice-based screen and immersive media to studies of social media, protest and political economies of news media, and horror studies, which intersects with research interests in drama around gender, performance and violence. **Drama** research also encompasses post-conflict arts, Irish and British contemporary theatre, TYA (theatre for young audiences), arts and health, disability arts, dramaturgy, and actor training. **Heritage and museum studies** research also involves drama/performance studies staff, with collaborations on post-conflict heritage.

Unit Research and Impact Strategy

The unit's structure and strategy are informed by the imperatives of developing breadth and critical mass across creative and performing arts and humanities, offering a distinctive contribution to the UK research system and our regional, cross-border, and international partners. Our integration of the broad range of disciplines within UoA33 can be traced to our former School of Creative Arts and Technologies (2006-2017), which formed the core of our REF2014 submission. In the present cycle, our strategy has seen our experience of dialogue across disciplines being utilised in activating connections and contributing across broader disciplinary and geographical frames.

The unit's REF2021 research and impact strategy focuses on three aims:

(1) Setting new research agendas and developing critical mass through interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary dialogue

(2) Developing knowledge around practice within research and its relationship with other research methods

(3) Providing an interface for research between the UK, Ireland, Europe and the wider world, exploiting our unique geographical position and cultural context, and connecting academic research with cultural, community and economic impact

These strategic aims, consistent with our 2014 priorities, have developed as follows:

(1) Our 2014 submission's strategy statement concentrated on interdisciplinarity at the arts/technology interface; **this cycle's strategy takes a broader perspective**, enlarging our disciplinary base and engaging more explicitly with interdisciplinary and applied arts contexts, and collaborations with disciplines including nursing, computing, peace and conflict studies, and geography.

(2) Our current cycle's strategy emphasises our contribution to practice-as-research (again, building upon our REF2014 strategy), providing a range of approaches which embrace practice, from practice-led to practice-based, including topics in arts/technology, arts and health, participatory arts, composition, performance and installations, and developing novel research projects around post-conflict arts and heritage.

(3) We have prioritised developments around our role as an interface between academic systems and between academia and cultural organisations and the creative industries sector (consistent with our 2014 aims, but with an expanded remit around impact within the NI creative economy, particularly within the screen sector).

Strategy and Achievements

(1) Setting new research agendas and developing critical mass through interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary dialogue

The fruits of our collaborations across disciplines include the unit's leadership on the AHRC Creative Cluster for Northern Ireland, Future Screens NI (**PI: Moore; CIs from this unit Maguire, Lyons and Keeney**), combining areas of screen and creative industries research from this unit in partnership with Ulster colleagues in UoA32, UoA34 and UoA11, and with music and law at QUB). Collaborations with social sciences include **Jennings'** work on the **AHRC Art of Reconciliation project (PI: Shirlow at Liverpool)**, and **Akser's British Academy-Newton Mobility grant, The Aesthetics of Trauma** (CI: Adak: Sabanci University, Istanbul). Publications informed by interdisciplinarity include edited collections combining performance studies, cultural studies and museum and heritage studies (**Crooke and Maguire**), media and cultural studies on socio-political topics (**Akser and McCollum**, and **McCollum** in collaboration with researchers from Media), and arts and health/wellbeing (**Jennings** with Nursing, **Lyons'** with conservatoire sector on disability

art, see REF3, and **Goddard's** work on disability arts). **Bridges** researches across the interface between music, sound, and technology, and **Keeney's** practice utilises emerging technologies. Interdisciplinary PGR supervision is a feature of the unit, both internally, and through collaborations with Art and Design, Computing, Nursing, Education, Peace and Conflict, Social Policy, and Irish and Celtic Studies, adding **16 PhDs** (headcount).

Furthermore, the vibrancy of the unit's diverse research base is illustrated by the publication of **131 peer-reviewed or equivalent practice-based outputs**, including **8 monographs and edited collections**, **30 compositions** and other creative outputs, and **93 journal articles, book chapters and published conference proceedings**.

(2) Developing knowledge around practice within research and its relationship with other research methods and contexts

The unit's focus on practice within research has seen the creation of outputs across a range of fields and media, the development of new methodologies for applied/community arts, and the use of arts practices within person-centred nursing. This cycle, we have generated **over 30 substantive creative and practice-led research outputs** (film and screen, installation art, street opera, traditional music, technological performance systems, dramaturgy, and music composition). Creative arts approaches have supported public engagement and impact, including partnerships with **Calouste Gulbenkian (REF3 Inclusive Creativity)** and **National Museums NI and Heritage Lottery-funded community partners (AHRC Living Legacies)**. Work has been presented at venues including the **Brooklyn Academy of Music, OperaDagen (Rotterdam), Kunstfest Weimar, Galería Moisés Pérez de Albéniz**, (Spain, in collaboration with Turner nominee Willie Doherty), **Cultural Centre D'Irlandais (Paris)**, **Toronto Film Festival**, and the **South Bank Centre** and **Royal Festival Hall** in London (Irvine), with **Campo's** voice work on the film *Tides* leading to presentations at festivals in Malta, Italy and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Other presentations include Ireland's **National Concert Hall** (Irvine, Casey), the **Ulster Hall** (Irvine) and the **MAC (Metropolitan Arts Centre)** in Belfast (Irvine, Goddard), **Spectrum, NYC** (Lyons, Bridges), the **Royal Northern College of Music** and **Hugh Lane Gallery: Dublin City Gallery** (Lyons), and a headline concert at the **Cork Jazz Festival** (Hamilton).

Furthermore, the unit has hosted conferences and supported networks which have placed practice at the centre of academic enquiry, including:

- ISSTA: the Irish Sound, Science and Technology Association (2016, 2018)
- the Irish Screen Studies symposium (2020, now rescheduled to 2021)
- Inclusive Creativity (Gothenburg, Sweden, 2016; Derry/Londonderry 2017, Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin 2018)
- Virtual Systems and Multi-Media conference (VSMM), Ulster University Belfast, and UCD, 2018
- Irish Humanities Alliance 2019 (*Border Heritage*)
- the AHRC's 10th anniversary Beyond Digital symposium (jointly hosted by Ulster and King's College London)

We have also developed partnerships with major arts organisations including Irish National Opera, the Ulster Orchestra, New Music Dublin, National Symphony Orchestra (Ireland), BBC Radio 3, Hull City of Culture, RTÉ Lyric FM, and the Ulster Museum.

(3) Providing an interface for research between the UK, Ireland, Europe and the wider world, and connecting academic research with cultural, community and economic impact

As one of two research-intensive universities in NI, with its distinctive post-conflict cultural geography and border with the Republic of Ireland (and hence, the EU), we are uniquely placed to act as an interface between differing global systems and experiences, contributing research and impact addressing the place of creative practice within cultural, social, and technological domains. Our REF2014 aim of becoming a conduit for UK-Ireland research exchange has developed into leadership during the present cycle. Recent examples include our **influence within the Irish music conservatoire sector** (see *Inclusive Creativity* REF3), **leading the museums sector's response to Brexit** (Crooke), and leading and **collaborating with our Northern Ireland partners, QUB**, on the **AHRC Future Screens NI project** and creative sector bid within the exchequer-funded **Belfast–Region City Deal**.

We have fostered research connections through taking leadership roles within organisations and networks including:

- Irish Sound, Science and Technology Association: Bridges served as Vice-President (2015-17) and President (2017-19)
- International Federation for Theatre Research (Galway, 2020/21): Fitzpatrick and Maguire on conference committee; Fitzpatrick convened Feminist Working Group (IFTR Shanghai, 2019)
- ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering (AAG) Birmingham, 2016; International Theatre for Young Adults Research Network (ITYARNN symposium at AISSTEJ World Congress, Cape Town, 2017); AAG Beijing 2018, and AAG Kristiansand 2019: Maguire
- TaPRA Working group Co-Convenor (Applied Theatre and Health Working Group, 2016-20), board for International Community Arts Festival (Rotterdam): Jennings
- Irish Humanities Alliance (Royal Irish Academy and all Irish and NI universities: Bridges, Akser, Campo, Crooke)
- ECREA: the European Communication Research and Education Association (board member: Akser)

This period has also seen our integration into the wider UK Doctoral Training frame via the **AHRC Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership**.

Strategy and Achievement in Impact, Open Data and Research Integrity

Our approaches to impact, and, in particular, our impact case studies, *Inclusive Creativity* (Lyons) and *Arts Data Impact* (Moore), reflect these strategic aims in (1) their resulting from interdisciplinary work (Lyons: composition and disability arts; Moore: data and ethnography), (2) their methodologies involving practice (Lyons: practice-led, participatory creative work; Moore: impact from ethnographically-informed data-driven narratives), and (3) interfaces between sectors and institutions (Lyons: influence upon the conservatoire sector, and resulting UK/Ireland/Europe engagement; Moore: connection with national cultural institutions and the creative industries).

The unit has also sought to broaden access to its research through Open Research initiatives, supporting its staff to serve on editorial boards (*CineJ*: University of Pittsburgh, *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland*), co-publishing the journal *Interference: a Journal of Audio Culture* with Edinburgh College of Art, and the Faculty's postgraduate journal *Intersections*. We have developed positive cultures around research integrity, supported by the university's adoption

of the UUK Concordat, with a dedicated Research Ethics Filter Committee and Chair, IT system, and staff development opportunities which have seen 100% of FT staff complete research integrity training.

Strategic Aims (2021-28)

1. To become a recognised centre of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary excellence in music, drama, film and screen, and heritage, addressing themes of contemporary urgency, including:

- Media and protest; gender and violence
- Arts, heritage, conflict, and social cohesion
- Socially engaged arts practices: health, disability, wellbeing
- Practice and emerging technologies

The siting of NI's new Medical School at Magee (supported by City Deal funding), will provide opportunities for interdisciplinary research, alongside our experience and growing critical mass across a wide range of arts practices, and established connections with the wider arts and cultural sectors (MoU with National Museums Northern Ireland, upcoming UKRI project on COVID-19 and museums, and collaborations with national broadcasters and leading ensembles and artists).

2. To expand our international footprint through strategic collaborations within UK-Ireland and wider European contexts through our distinctive cultural resources (working within a post-conflict society and at the UK-EU border). We aim to foster international collaboration at all research levels, including PGR partnerships and academic and artist–researcher residencies, following our hosting of colleagues from Turkey and Australia, and Visiting Professorships by Harbison (traditional music) and Mann-Kler (immersive, joint with UoA32), with the anticipation of more in the upcoming cycle, beginning with Landy (music).

3. To become a leading centre, on the island of Ireland, and in the wider UK, for arts-led R&D, with a particular focus on screen production. We contributed to the Belfast City-Region Deal, which will see a new **5,000 m² £61 million** virtual production **Screen Media Innovation Lab**, established in partnership with **Belfast Harbour, NI Screen, and the BBC**. A £1 million (£594,000 from NI Department for Economy; remainder from industry) virtual production facility will also be established at our Belfast campus in partnership with Epic (Unreal Engine), building upon a **£679,400 investment in studio facilities at Belfast and Magee campuses** allocated during the present cycle.

Section 2. People

Staffing Strategy and Development

Introduction, Supports, Staff Development and Sabbaticals

Our staffing strategy seeks to support discipline-based and thematic research, serving our strategic aims of (1) developing a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research culture with critical mass, (2) developing practice within research, and (3) providing an interface between academic and professional fields. The unit is led by a 1.0 FTE **Research Director (Bridges)**, combining the role of **REF Unit Coordinator** with **PGR Tutor** (responsible for unit PhDs and their assessment), coordinating with the **Head of School (Maguire)** and the **Associate Dean for Research and Impact (Lyons)**. Leadership roles are advertised internally, with selection via gender-balanced interview panels. Support staff include a 0.5 FTE research unit administrator and a dedicated 0.5 FTE administrator for PGR matters (shared with one other unit). The Concordat has been implemented through a combination of University-wide supports and unit-level initiatives around research integrity, mentoring, EDI, and a collaborative approach to goal setting between researchers and management. University-level supports include training on research quality (SOARING), grant development (RIGOUR) and Impact, in which over **70% (12 out of 17: headcount) of SRR staff**, including **100% of ECRs**, have participated. Other supports include a peer-to-peer research mentoring scheme and a university-wide **Doctoral College**. Staff support around research integrity includes training (FT staff 100% completion rate), with ethics monitored by a **Research Ethics Filter Committee** chair (**Fitzpatrick**) and the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC). **University, Faculty and School research leave schemes** have seen nearly **40% of eligible staff (FTE)** obtain a sabbatical during the present cycle (Bridges, Campo, Crooke, Fitzpatrick, Lyons, Moore), contributing to the completion of a monograph, edited volumes, compositions, and research projects.

Other supports include Ulster's ECR Research Excellence and Distinguished Research Awards, providing £1k funding for research projects, and a supportive environment around developmental supports has seen **84% of CAT A eligible staff confirmed at SRR status**, with supports for non-SRR staff including international conference attendance (Harding: NIME 2018, Virginia Tech; Cadieux: ABAI, San Diego). Support for technical staff to undertake PGR degrees has seen O'Connell (technician in drama) enrol on a PhD. SRR staff are further supported through **40% dedicated research time**.

Staffing Strategy and Recruitment Policy and Demographics

Our strategy has resulted in an increase in our staffing levels (**15.8 in comparison with 13.4 FTE for 2014**), whilst also attaining greater sustainability through increased headcount, more focus within the staffing base (the expansion of music, drama, film and screen, the addition of heritage, and the withdrawal of dance, for which we returned 1 FTE in 2014), and intensified collaboration between our component disciplines. SRR staff are distributed across **music (5.6 FTE)**, **drama (5)**, and **film and screen (4.2)**, with **heritage/museum studies** being the focus of a single researcher, but also providing a thematic focus for collaborative research. The staff profile consists mostly of 1.0 FTE posts (with exceptions being the 0.6 post for Irvine and a 0.2 reappointment for Lilley), and the **majority (85%) of SRR staff are on continuing contracts**.

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

The majority of new posts have been aimed at ECRs (two each in drama, film/screen and music), with the participation of Research Director and/or Associate Dean (Research and Impact) on interview panels ensuring the prioritisation of research. We benefit from a staff composition which is consistent with sustainability, balanced **towards 31% FTE mid-career and experienced academics** (Akser, Bridges, Campo, Melvin, Jennings) and **37% FTE senior researchers** (Professors or long-standing SLs: Croke, Maguire, Lyons, Fitzpatrick, Moore, Irvine, Lilley), with **19% FTE ECRs** (Keeney: SL, but coming from a previous non-SRR post; Casey, Goddard in first posts) and **13% FTE non-ECR lecturers who are submitting to their first REF** (Hamilton, McCollum). Hiring processes ensure balanced gender representation on panels and EDI training for panels is mandatory). **70% of unit staff have completed EDI and related training.**

The unit has enjoyed a particularly high degree of staff retention and two staff have moved to other HEIs. **Newark**, unit coordinator for REF2014, moved to a senior post at the **Guildhall**, where he became **Head of Research** and, latterly, **Professor of Music**. **Dean**, ECR in drama (2015), moved to an ECR post at **Technological University (TU) Dublin** in 2018, but has continued to collaborate on two PGR supervisions.

Through targeted recruitment, we have been able to foster development within disciplines and at their intersection, further supporting sustainability. The growth of film and screen following **Akser's** 2013 appointment has seen posts for **McCollum** (2015) and **Keeney** (2019, from QUB, having previously worked in the BBC). **Akser, McCollum, Keeney** and **Melvin** (music, whose work includes soundtrack studies), and **Moore's** work within creative industries, all contribute to critical mass within film, screen and associated fields. **McCollum's** work on **horror** intersects with **Fitzpatrick's** work on **gender and violence**. In music, composition has been enhanced by the appointment of ECR **Casey**, and the expansion of **Irvine's** role (0.6, in comparison his 0.2 role in the previous REF cycle). Practice-based expertise also encompasses **dramaturgy** (Maguire, Dean), **directing and voice** (Campo), **sound art and installation art** (Bridges, Lyons, Moore, Melvin), **composition** (Bridges, Casey, Lyons, Melvin, Irvine), **traditional music** (Doherty), **film and screen** (Akser, Keeney), and **jazz P-a-R** (Hamilton). **Applied theatre** has also been a focus of strategic development, with **Goddard** (disability arts) appointed to complement the work of **Jennings (applied theatre and arts and health)** and **Maguire (theatre for young audiences)**. The addition of **Croke (heritage/museum studies)** has fostered collaborations combining heritage with performance studies, including *Heritage after Conflict* (**co-edited with Maguire**). Furthermore, the unit's disciplinary breadth has allowed it to engage with a range of creative industries contexts, leading to the founding of the **Creative Industries Institute** (2017), and continuity in this domain is provided by the re-appointment of **Lilley** as 0.2 FTE. Other senior unit staff include **Fitzpatrick**, a former Head of the Faculty of Arts Research Graduate School and Chair of our Research Ethics Filter Committee, **Croke**, Professor of Museum Studies, and **Moore**, PI on the AHRC Creative Cluster project. This cycle, **43% of SRR staff have taken on Faculty administrative roles relating to research** or administration of significant externally-funded projects, providing a strong basis for succession planning.

Supporting ECRs

ECRs (by both REF and research council definitions) **are given priority support for international conference attendance and/or fieldwork costs**. Start-up costs for ECRs, including laptop purchase and long-haul travel for conferences (Dean: American Society for Theatre Research, Atlanta, GA) and fieldwork (McCollum: College of Charleston, SC, and Salem, MA in 2018/19) all

contribute to a supportive culture for ECRs. All ECRs have the opportunity to supervise a PGR, supported by more experienced colleagues and a Doctoral College staff development programme. ECRs have been supported to apply for institutional strategic funds, including the Distinguished Research Award Scheme's ECR strand (McCollum won the Faculty award in 2018; Casey won in 2019) and Civic Impact Fund (McCollum, 2018). The unit currently hosts a postdoc, **Sun**, working on the *Music 2025 (Music and Data)* project (UK Intellectual Property Office; PI: Lyons; with CI from computing).

Recognition, Support and Reward

We have supported the development of research profiles for ECRs from previous cycles as they progress to becoming mid-career researchers. Bridges (appointed in 2008, first returned in 2014) has taken on the role of Research Director (REF Unit Coordinator and PGR Tutor), in addition to external leadership roles (President of ISSTA, 2017–2019; various editorial boards). Melvin (appointed 2007) has been recognised as Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (2018). Akser (appointed 2013) has leadership roles in ECREA (European Communication Research and Education Association) and the *CineJ Cinema Journal*, and has been supported to attend conferences in the US, Canada, and across Europe. Jennings (appointed 2012) is a CI on the AHRC *Art of Reconciliation* project (PI: Shirlow, Liverpool), and co-curator of the ICAF International Community Arts Festival (Rotterdam). Internal schemes to support impact have also seen awards from the Civic Impact Fund (Doherty, £4k, for *Safe Trad*), Garfield Weston Trust (Bridges, £18k for ISSTA 2016 and Inclusive Creativity 2017), and HEIF (Bridges: £2200).

During this cycle, the unit has distributed a total of **£97,423** to researchers. This has supported funding applications, hosting conferences and symposia, and participation at conferences in China (IFTR Shanghai; International Association of Critical Heritage Studies, Hangzhou), the US (NIME 2015, 2018; ASTR), Canada (North Atlantic Fiddle Convention, International Conference on Communications and Media Studies), and across Europe. Capacity for funding bids has been enhanced through a Faculty Grants Review Panel, drawn from the Associate Dean and Research Directors, alongside review from the Head of School and peer review from successful PIs and CIs. This has seen recent successes in grant award at various stages, **from Akser's UK–Turkey Newton Mobility award (£9.5k)** to the award of **NI's £13 million AHRC Creative Industries Cluster (£5.7 million** from AHRC with matched industry funding).

Senior researchers have been supported in developing discipline leadership, resulting in invited presentations at leading international-level fora (**Fitzpatrick: Otago, NZ; Lyons: Stockholm; Maguire: Switzerland and Liechtenstein**). In addition, they have been supported to contribute to international fora including IFTR (Serbia 2018, Shanghai 2019), IASIL: International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (Netherlands, 2018), ASSITEJ: International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People (Beijing, 2018) and Association of Critical Heritage Studies (Hangzhou, China, 2018).

The unit's strategic aim of cross-sectoral collaboration has led to a range of collaborations with industry and third sector bodies. Jennings has been supported to engage in a knowledge transfer project with the NHS (NI Western Trust), with research unit and School facilitating buyout with £9000 from this income (as part of a £97k grant to Western Trust from the Burdett Trust). Goddard has collaborated with the Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast, and Ragdoll Foundation on research into disability arts. Moore was lead researcher on an AHRC grant with Nesta, Arts Council England,

Unit-level environment template (REF5b)

and the Audience Agency: *Arts Data Impact* (REF3). He was supported by Faculty with a 1.0 role in 2017/18 to work with industry and academic partners to develop the successful AHRC *Future Screens NI* bid. Lyons' work with Walled City Music on *Inclusive Creativity* (REF3) has been supported through unit-level technical resources, alongside recognition and support through an internal Impact Excellence Award. Other areas of support include facilitating Crooke's serving on boards in the museums sector and working with the Irish Museums association to secure an AHRC Northern Bridge collaborative doctoral award.

Progression has seen senior staff take on leadership roles: **Fitzpatrick** (Head of Research Graduate School, Faculty of Arts, 2013–2017; Chair, Research Ethics Filter Committee 2020–), **Maguire** (Head of School, Arts and Humanities, 2017–present), **Lyons** (Associate Dean for Research and Impact, 2017–present; Co-director of Creative Industries Institute, 2018–present), **Moore** (Director of Creative Industries Institute and Future Screens NI, 2018–present).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The unit is relatively diverse in terms of nationality, with approximately half of the headcount originating outside the UK, and two from outside the UK and Ireland. Unfortunately, the unit's staff composition is not currently (as of census date) gender-balanced. Of 15.8 FTE SRR staff, 4 FTE Cat A are female, following the departure of two other female colleagues late in the cycle. During the cycle, the Faculty created the role of Athena Swan Coordinator (Doherty) and a self-assessment team has been put in place to take an application forward early in the next cycle. We are committed to working with the university to address our imbalance in future cycles, and our PGR cohort is now largely gender balanced (14 female researchers out of headcount 30 PGRs). Furthermore, the unit is particularly supportive of LGBTQ+ PGR research topics, with recent projects including LGBTQ+ narratives in the museums sector and in film practice, a collaboration with Hillsborough Castle (the NI Royal Residence), and exhibitions at Outburst Queer Arts Festival (Belfast), CAI02 Contemporary Art Institute (Japan), Centre for Contemporary Art (Derry~Londonderry) and Crawford (Cork). Disability arts is also a focus of the unit (*Inclusive Creativity* REF3, and Goddard's work). Our approach to wellbeing includes collaborative engagement between Research Director and SRR staff around goal setting, and consultation between Research Director and Head of School around workload balance and consideration of individual circumstances, and the unit has made targeted use of its own QR funds for teaching buyout to facilitate short periods of development for projects and outputs.

The unit has adhered to the institutional Code of Practice in confirming SRR staff and selecting outputs. The final decision around output selection, including consideration of external reviews and suggested profiles via the PURE system's selection algorithm, is discussed and confirmed by a gender-balanced panel, in support of a Chair (the Research Director). Output selection is informed by our research strategy, the institutional Code of Practice, and the imperative of EDI monitoring, resulting in the selection of 30% of selected outputs (incl. double-weighted) from female researchers (greater than the 25% female/male ratio at census date). In addition, 28% of selected outputs are from staff submitting to their first REF (broadly consistent with staff composition of the unit headcount).

Research Students

Recruitment and Funding

Our **PGR cohort numbers have increased by approximately 50% over this cycle to 30** (headcount at census date), with a total of **23 scholarships** at UKRI rates over the cycle, and an average of **3 fully-funded awards annually** and our membership of the **AHRC Northern Bridge DTP** has further supported the expansion of PGR provision. PGR awards are advertised internationally and selected by interview, with gender-balanced panels including at least one subject specialist, one from another discipline, and a Chair, with required completion of EDI training for selectors. Internationalisation has been supported by the university's **Vice-Chancellor's Research Scholarship**, providing full fees coverage and subsistence (equivalent to Research Councils) for international PGRs. Approximately **one third of the completions during this period were from non-UK PGRs**, with the current PhD cohort including researchers from Colombia, Lebanon, the USA, Iran, and across Europe.

PGR Culture

Our PGR culture has been significantly enhanced by the establishment of a university-wide Doctoral College, providing PGR-specific spaces (Doctoral Hubs) and Researcher Development Programmes (informed by the Vitae Researcher Development Framework), and Festival of PhD Research. At unit level, PGRs are fully integrated into our research culture, through seminar participation, support in organising events, and dedicated office space at Magee campus. The **2019 PRES** saw **Ulster ranked 8th for PGR satisfaction** and **3rd for Research Culture**, with **UoA33 receiving Ulster's highest score in this category**. PGRs regularly present at our research seminars and PGRs have also been mentored in organising symposia (funded by the research unit), including East Asian art in Museums (at the Ulster Museum: PGR Harper with Crooke; keynote Pierson, SOAS), LGBTQ+ Narratives in Museums (at Hillsborough Castle: PGR Reid with Crooke; keynote Sandell, Leicester), and hosting PGRs and ECRs from across the UK at the Performance and Protest symposium (marking the 50th anniversary of Radio Free Derry).

Progression, Support and Monitoring

The unit has been proactive regarding PGR progression and support. PGR support is provided by a Postgraduate Tutor and a 0.5 administrator and our completion figures of 17.8 FTE compare favourably with our 23 scholarships this cycle. Apart from the seminars and events noted above, frequent meeting fora for PGRs within the unit complement Doctoral College initiatives such as the Researchers' Forum, the provision of generic research skills training at campus-based Doctoral College hubs, and the Festival of PhD Research. A structured approach to progression and monitoring sees initial assessments within the first semester and confirmation assessments within the first year, examined by unit researchers alongside examiners from cognate areas, with all such meetings chaired by the PG Tutor or experienced supervisors. Scholarship students have an expense allowance of £900 per annum. This has allowed us to support presentations at international conferences, including Widdis (Association of Critical Heritage Studies, Hangzhou), Smith (Yale Graduate Music Symposium), and Koliopoulou (Performance Studies International, Calgary). Furthermore, PGRs' integration into the wider research community is enhanced through School provision of bespoke computer-equipped office spaces and a departmental library.

Section 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Research Funding Strategy, Achievements and Awards

The unit's strategic focus has led to significant developments in income and infrastructure in this cycle. We have attracted significant research income, generating **£1.461 million of research spend** (the vast majority of which, £1.379 million, is from UK research councils) from **£5.8 million of successful bids**, including our leadership on the **£5.7 million Future Screens project**. The total research spend for the unit is **almost three times that of REF2014** (£514,901).

In support of these bids, we have made strategic interventions around our research infrastructure. The unit has benefitted from **Ulster's £20 million investment in the Creative Industries Institute**, a key part of the university's contribution to the successful Belfast City–Region Deal, leading to new hires (including Keeney), and the development of new VR/AR/screen-based media facilities at our Belfast campus. The unit's growth and multidisciplinary critical mass has allowed it to develop cross-sectoral partnerships (AHRC Creative Cluster project and Belfast City-Region deal, and research projects funded by third sector organisations, including the Intellectual Property Office and Calouste Gulbenkian in partnership with the Walled City Music trust). In addition, unit staff have been supported to contribute to projects from a range of funders including AHRC and British Academy.

The unit leads on the following externally-funded research projects:

1. Moore, Future Screens NI, Funder: AHRC £5.7 million CIs Lyons, Maguire, Keeney from this unit; other CIs at Ulster and at QUB)
2. Moore, *Arts Data Impact*, Funder: Nesta, via the Audience Agency, £43,091 (CI: Maguire, L., Computing at Ulster; overall award to Nesta/the Audience Agency: £299,985)
3. Lyons, *Creators' Earnings in the Digital Age*, Funder: Ivors' Academy, £30,000 (CI: Sun)
4. Lyons, *Music 2025* project, Intellectual Property Office, £49,990 (CI: Curran, Computing at Ulster)
5. Akser's British Academy—Newton Mobility grant to on *The Aesthetics of Trauma* with a partner in Turkey (CI: Adak: Cultural Studies at Sabanci University, Istanbul): £9,451
6. Lyons, Calouste Gulbenkian/British Council grant for the Inclusive Creativity project (see REF 3) and the composition *Nonzerosum*: £8,978

Aside from the projects noted above, the unit is involved with the following externally-funded collaborative research projects:

1. *Living Legacies 1914-18* (AHRC, in collaboration with QUB, Goldsmiths, Newcastle, National Museums NI and the National Library of Wales; CI Crooke, £602,987 total grant, £16,636 to this unit; PI Lilley, QUB) and *Living Legacies 1914-18: From Past Conflict to Shared Future* (AHRC: £618,649, £14k to this unit; PI Lilley, QUB)
2. *Art for Reconciliation* (AHRC, in collaboration with Liverpool and QUB; CI Jennings, £571,076 overall, with £27,986 to Ulster, PI Shirlow, Liverpool).

The unit recently joined the AHRC Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership and secured its first Northern Bridge Collaborative Doctoral Award (2020) in association with the Irish Museums Association. Furthermore, impact projects such as *Inclusive Creativity* (REF3) have facilitated

multiple awards to partner organisations, the largest being grants totalling £97k from Calouste Gulbenkian to Walled City Music.

Infrastructure and Investment

The unit's strategy of supporting cross-sectoral partnerships, the development of practice within research, and multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary critical mass, has led to Faculty support via a **£679,432 investment** in studio facilities at Belfast and Magee campuses. Screen studios and a virtual production R&D facility are the focus of Belfast campus developments, including a full Blackmagic-based 4k ATEM live studio and outside broadcast unit, plus dedicated film/TV studio with 270 green screen infinity curve and B&W cyclorama, with 4 x 4k-capable edit suites, and a dedicated 50-seater screening room with 4k projector and Dolby 5.1, hosting of the Northern Ireland Screen Film Archive, and two 38-seat Mac labs. At the unit's Magee campus base, a new (2018) **£11 million centrepiece building** has provided the venue for academic conferences (ISSTA 2018; Performance and Protest 2019; Irish Humanities Alliance annual conference 2019). Studio and performance facilities have been expanded at Magee, including an investment in A/V in the university's historic Great Hall (1865) facilitating its use for the Music at One series, Walled City Music festival, Jazz Hub at the City of Derry Jazz Festival, and multichannel audio concerts as part of ISSTA 2016, ISSTA 2018, Staging Sonic Spaces symposium (2017), and, externally, the Imbolc International Music Festival. Faculty strategic funding has upgraded music and screen production facilities at Magee, building upon the development of a multichannel studio in the previous cycle. Mobile music technology and VR equipment (HTC Vive) has been used to support the development of the Acoustronic ensemble (see REF3). We have two recording studios: one based around standard stereo production, upgraded this cycle to an Audient ASP4816 desk; one multichannel/immersive studio (adaptable to discrete octophonic, 7.1 or ambisonic operation), additionally hosting modular synthesisers, including a well-preserved vintage 1970s EMS Synthi AKS. Other facilities include two 21-seat Mac-based computer labs, with creative software from Adobe, Apple, Cycling 74, etc. Recent investment in immersive audio has also seen the addition of ambisonic microphones (Sennheiser Ambeo). Film and screen at Magee shares the computing facilities above (with one computer lab dedicated to screen production), alongside a green screen studio, a colour grading facility featuring Davinci Resolve, one general film studio (with pro-grade LED lights), and ten 4K cameras, including a Blackmagic 4K camera, Canon C100 full-frame 4K and Zeiss lenses. Drama facilities include three performance studios (one with sprung floor, for dance/physical theatre; one 'white box' 12m x 6m (50 capacity) and one 'black box', 18 x 6 m, which can be provided with tiered seating up to a capacity of 100), with moving truss and a 512 DMX Channel Lighting Control. In addition to these facilities, researchers have collaborated with partner venues including the Ulster Hall, Ireland's National Concert Hall, Void Gallery, Echo Echo Dance, the Playhouse Theatre, and the Abbey.

Our library has important collections on Irish literature and culture, with a strong focus on war and conflict (the Northern Ireland Troubles, via CAIN (Conflict Archive on the InterNet), WWI, WWII), and Irish studies. The Library holds almost a million print and electronic books. In addition, it has subscriptions/access to nearly 150,000 online and paper journals. This cycle, library investments for the unit have totalled £139,000 (books), £87,000 (journals), alongside a share of Faculty database spend of £927,000. We have access arrangements with other university libraries via the ALCID (Ireland) and SCONUL (UK) schemes, with borrowing access for QUB, University College

Dublin, and reading access for Ireland's copyright library, TCD. Staffing support includes subject librarians and a dedicated university Research Librarian.

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

Collaboration and Networks

Our strategy of developing connections between disciplines, institutions, and sectors has led to new collaborations. The **AHRC Future Screens NI** project, our first large-scale collaboration with QUB, has seen this unit providing leadership in creative industries and emerging media, with strategic support from Faculty creating a 1.0 role to facilitate this major bid. Crooke's research is another example of collaboration with QUB, along with National Museums Northern Ireland and HLF-funded community projects (AHRC *Living Legacies*), as is Jennings' work (CI on network including Liverpool and QUB for AHRC *Art for Reconciliation*; advisory board on QUB-led *Objects with Objectives*). Moore and Lyons are also members of the AHRC Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre.

During the cycle, the unit has supported collaborations across the UK, Ireland, Europe and the Americas. Film/screen partnerships include Akser's Newton UK-Turkey collaborative project with Hülya Adak (Sabanci) and co-authorship with colleagues at Cambridge and the Turkish-German University Istanbul. Akser and McCollum also collaborated on *Alternative Media in Contemporary Turkey*, featuring a significant number of Turkish scholars. McCollum has also co-edited volumes on contemporary American media featuring European and US scholars. Music research has seen co-authorship with colleagues at TCD (Bridges, Melvin) and the US (Bridges). Other partnerships include the Royal Irish Academy of Music (Lyons: Inclusive Creativity impact project), and work with sectoral bodies including the Ulster Orchestra (Irvine, Lyons). In drama, Campo has engaged with the Brazilian field through a chapter in Portuguese on the Grotowski tradition and a co-authored article with Martens (Santa Catarina). Crooke and Maguire edited *Heritage after Conflict*, with contributors in Germany (Göttingen), France (Aix-Marseille), Denmark (Aarhus), and the UK. Jennings has collaborated with Beirne (Prof. of Business: Glasgow), on precarity in the arts.

International partnerships have seen the hosting of visiting researchers from Australia (Dwyer, Performance Studies, Sydney) and Turkey (Adak, Sabanci University, Istanbul: British Academy Newton project), in addition to outward mobility. Sabbaticals have seen Campo hosted at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and Bridges based in Beijing, and McCollum has been supported to undertake research trips to the US (College of Charleston, SC). PGR supervisory collaborations have included colleagues at Irish universities (Maynooth, TU Dublin).

Research Impact and Beneficiaries; Diverse Communities and Publics; Contributions to Wider Society

Researchers have also contributed to the development of international practitioner-focused organisations (Jennings: Indra, International Community Arts Festival; Maguire: board member of ITYARN), in addition to arts development across NI (Jennings, succeeded by Maguire: Derry City and Strabane Council; Irvine as Belfast's first Music Laureate). Crooke has undertaken leadership roles in the Irish Museums Association and Northern Ireland Museums Council, including reports

on Brexit's impact. Jennings' research has led to updated training protocols for nursing students at Ulster and CPD for nursing professionals across NI.

We have collaborated with industrial and cultural bodies ranging from **national broadcasters BBC and RTÉ** (via advisory board membership for the AHRC Creative Industries Cluster, and via Irvine's work with BBC Radio 3 and RTÉ Lyric FM) to arts organisations including **Hull City of Culture, Irish National Opera, Echo Echo Dance Theatre** and **Void Gallery** (respectively, NI's premier contemporary dance and contemporary arts gallery), and leading specialist music festivals across the island, including **Imbolc** (traditional music), **Celtronic** (electronic music), **Derry International Choir Festival, Derry Jazz Festival, and New Music Dublin**. We have forged innovative partnerships with the NI-based organisations above in presenting academic conferences in collaboration with arts venues, including, but not limited to, exhibiting practice-based sound art and performance at the 2016 and 2018 ISSTA conferences. The unit's long-standing partnership with **Walled City Music Festival** (featured artists including Kronos Quartet, Jeffrey Ziegler, Measha Brueggergosman, and Bang on a Can) has seen international artists presented at university venues and the development of audiences for contemporary music, including Lyons's work on disability arts. Partnerships have also been developed with the **Imbolc International Music Festival** around electroacoustic music, supporting the presentations by composers Ailís Ní Ríain and Úna Monaghan, and an Ulster commission of Landy (De Montfort) for *On the Éire* (2017). Paris-based pianist **Ivan Ilić** was appointed musician-in-residence from 2018-2021, contributing to programmes at the university (including Hamilton's Music at One series) and local hospitals in collaboration with the university's new Medical School. Music at One has featured other international artists including **Grammy winner Cassandra Wilson, Jim Beard and John Herrington (Steely Dan)**, and contemporary percussionist **Patti Cudd** (University of Wisconsin, who has worked with contemporary composers including Feldman, Ferneyhough, Oliveros, Wolff), contributing to the development of audiences for a range of contemporary music within Derry and the wider region.

As part of the AHRC Creative Industries Cluster bid, Moore and Lyons undertook the first comprehensive scoping study of the creative industries in NI. The resulting project, Future Screens NI, has seen £1.4 million invested in NI to June 2020 from the AHRC (with additional funding from other sources), resulting in more than 90 live R&D projects and facilitating 223 new posts, alongside 20 Early-Career Fellowships and a weekly seminar series for the creative sector. Affiliated organisations include NI Screen, BBC, Belfast City Council, Belfast Harbour, Causeway Enterprise Agency, Digital Catapult, Catalyst Inc., RTÉ, Games NI, Kainos, Invest NI, Techstart NI, Matrix, and Tourism NI. Furthermore, Moore and Lilley's work (REF3) with NESTA and the Audience Agency has contributed to the development of awareness of the role of data in decision-making in leading UK arts organisations (the National Theatre, the English National Opera and the Barbican).

Irvine has been commissioned by the Ulster Orchestra, Ireland's National Symphony Orchestra, New Music Dublin, Galway International Arts Festival, and venues including the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Ireland's National Concert Hall and Belfast's Ulster Hall for participatory compositions. Akser has engaged audiences with contemporary issues through his work as a filmmaker, with his 2017 film *The Gift*, funded by NI Screen/BFI Access Shorts, winning Best Short Film (Silk Road Film Festival, Dublin) and Keeney has created the EU PEACE-funded VR documentary *Frictionless* in partnership with Derry's Playhouse Theatre. Dean co-authored the influential *Waking the Feminists* report on gender-based exclusion in Irish theatre. Jennings has served as

a curator of the International Community Arts Festival (Rotterdam), and academic adviser to the Indra Congress.

Inclusive Creativity (REF3) has served as an exemplar for the development of a cross-border network of inclusive ensembles in partnership with the Royal Irish Academy of Music and has also been influential in the development of related initiatives at European and UK levels (ShareMusic, Drake Music UK). The project has also seen musicians with disabilities perform at festivals including the Royal Northern College of Music Chamber Music Festival (a networked performance of Lyons' *NonZeroSum*), St Magnus International Festival (Orkney), Walled City Music Festival, and Calouste Gulbenkian showcase (Lisbon). Lyons has also been commissioned to write reports on the music industry (UK Intellectual Property Office), receiving an MBE in recognition of this work (2019).

Leadership within Research Base and Disciplines

Our researchers have responded to and set agendas across our discipline remit, chairing international working groups on topics including gender (Fitzpatrick: IFTR Feminist Working Group and the Australian Women's History Project) and applied arts and health (Jennings: TaPRA co-convenor), in addition to Lyons' work on disability arts informing developments within the conservatory sector. Bridges and Melvin co-chaired the ISSTA 2016 and 2018 international festival and conference on sound (alongside Casey in 2018), with Bridges serving as Vice-President (2015–17) and President (2017–19), developing the organisation's reach and scope, attracting international delegates and raising its profile through attracting keynotes including Professors Landy (De Montfort), Voegelin (Univ. Arts London) and Barney (Engineering, Southampton), and Robert Henke, founder of Ableton.

Keynotes and invited lectures

The following staff have delivered keynotes: **Fitzpatrick** (Otago, New Zealand; National University of Ireland, Galway), **Maguire** (ASSISTEJ Switzerland and Liechtenstein, 2016; Irish Renaissance Society, 2019), **Crooke** (Heritage Encounters, Newcastle, 2019; INMP17 Belfast), **Irvine** (Society for Music Education in Ireland); **Lyons** (ShareMusic Sweden conference, EASPD International Conference: European Association for Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities, 2020), and **Jennings** (Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2018). **Jennings** was invited speaker at the **Chinese University of Hong Kong's Forum 2020** (May 2020), discussing his research collaborations with nursing. **Campo** has been an invited speaker in Brazil (**Sao Paulo, Salvador de Bahia**). **Akser** has been an invited presenter on social media and activism at **Northwestern** and **Cambridge**. **Fitzpatrick** was an invited speaker at the **Warwick/Nawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi** event *Global Pandemic and Gender* (2020).

Conference Organisation and Committee Memberships

We have hosted international conferences and symposia at Magee and Belfast campuses, including ISSTA 2016 and 2018 (Irish, Sound, Science and Technology Association: Bridges, Melvin and Casey), VSMM (Virtual Systems and MultiMedia) 2017 (Lyons and Bridges), Canadian Association for Irish Studies 2017 (Fitzpatrick), Irish Humanities Alliance 2019 (Crooke), International Workshop on Digital Empathy 2016 (Bridges, Dean, Maguire, with Computing),

Hearts of STEM 2016 (Bridges), Staging Sonic Spaces 2017 (Bridges and Melvin), Performance and Protest 2019 (Akser, Bridges, Crooke, Fitzpatrick, McCollum), Social Media and Protest 2016 (Akser and McCollum) and Irish Screen Studies 2020 (postponed): Akser and McCollum.

Researchers have also served on the organising committees of events at other universities: IFTR Galway 2020/21 (Fitzpatrick, Maguire); TaPRA: Jennings (Applied Theatre and Health Working Group), ISSTA 2017, 2019 (Bridges), ISSTA 2020 (Casey), and ITYARN (Maguire).

Editorial boards and Peer review

International editorial board memberships include *About Performance* (University of Sydney: Maguire), *CineJ* (University of Pittsburgh: Akser), *Voz e Cena*, *Repertorio* and *Rascunhos* (Brazil: Campo), in addition to boards in the UK and Ireland: *Interference: A Journal of Audio Culture* (Edinburgh and Ulster) and *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland* (Bridges).

Researchers are active as reviewers for the EU (Horizon 2020/ERC: Lyons and Moore; Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions: Akser and Lyons, Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research: Lyons; Erasmus+: Maguire) the AHRC Peer Review College (Akser, Crooke, Fitzpatrick, Maguire, Moore), Turkish Research Council (Akser), journals and conferences of music technology and sound (Bridges: *Computer Music Journal* (MIT Press), ISSTA (2016–2019), *Sounding Out the Space* (Dublin 2017). Fitzpatrick has reviewed for Cambridge UP (*Elements Series on Women Theatre-Makers*).

Examining Research Degrees

Researchers have served as examiners for PhDs in Turkey (Akser: Bahcesehir University), Norway (Lyons: University of Agder), France and Italy (Campo: Paris IV and Ca' Foscari, Venice), in addition to engagements across the UK and Ireland, including Cambridge (Crooke), Birmingham Conservatoire (Irvine), University of Surrey (Lyons), University College Dublin (Fitzpatrick, Crooke), and TU Dublin (Irvine, Melvin, Lyons).