



August/September 2014

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Introducing our
New Chancellor
Lord Bilimoria

Vice-Chancellor's *view*

Building on success

As I write, we are coming to the end of a remarkable year. The year began with the news that we had been named by *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* as the 'University of the Year.' It ended with the Installation of our new Chancellor, Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea.



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Eastwood

YOUR BUZZ

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Views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the University or a statement of University policy. All submissions may be subject to editing. The Editor's decision is final.

Front cover image: Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea, Chancellor

Between these two notable events far more happened than can be captured in one short article. We said farewell to Sir Dominic Cadbury, and thanked him for his quite remarkable 11 years as our Chancellor. We acclaimed the election of Professor David Charlton to the Royal Society and Professor Richard Backhouse to the British Academy. This was welcome recognition by our National Academies of two remarkable colleagues. Professor Richard Williams was named by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council in the first select group of its RISE Fellows. Academic colleagues across the University continued to be lauded for the quality of their research. I cannot remember a year where we have won more academic prizes.

Equally heartening were the colleagues whose contribution to teaching has been recognised externally, while colleagues in professional services carried off a *Times Higher Education* award, and colleagues in HAS have been garlanded with prizes and awards.

Indeed so successful has the University been this year that, at the suggestion of the Provost, we are going to produce a supplement to the next edition of *Buzz* celebrating all that our colleagues have achieved.

It is on these and other successes that we are building the future of the University. Never has the University of Birmingham been more popular. Our undergraduate applications are up by 18 per cent and we have seen substantial increases in applications from international and postgraduate taught students. Our research awards run ahead of target, though there is still much further to go. We have broken ground with Rolls-Royce on the High Temperature Research Centre and, with colleagues at University Hospital Birmingham, work is well advanced on the Institute of Translational Medicine.

Next year we will be taking time to develop the University's new Strategic Framework which will act as a compass guiding us through the second half of this decade. We can embark on this exercise with real confidence that we are shaping our own future, and will continue to do so. Indeed, as Professor Andy Schofield suggested to the University Leadership Forum, we might think about moving from a strategy where we are aspiring to succeed to a strategy where we expect to succeed. That, symbolically, would mark the distance that we have travelled.

The work on the Strategic Framework will involve conversations, focus groups, and open events right across the University. It is a process to which I hope many of you will feel that you can contribute.

As I have said before, it is a characteristic of great universities that they are constantly looking forward and reshaping themselves. The very best do that in ways which break new ground and remodel the idea of a university for generations to come. We can now, I believe, claim to be in that select group.

So next year, the next five years, and indeed the years beyond will be as exciting as the year that is now coming to a close. As we face the future with a sense of excitement and privilege to be working at the University at such an exhilarating moment, we can all reflect with satisfaction at having been part of a truly memorable year.

I would like to thank all of my colleagues for everything that they have contributed. Our new Chancellor said at his Installation that to be associated with this university at this time is an honour. We are equally honoured that he has agreed to become our Chancellor and shares our vision. **Our future will be what we choose to make it.**

*Vice-Chancellor,
Professor Sir David Eastwood*

University staff recognised in Queen's Birthday Honours

The University is delighted that its Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Eastwood, has been knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Sir David has been honoured in recognition of his remarkable services to higher education and the drive and commitment he has shown to enhancing the UK's reputation in this field.

Donna Willmetts, College Facilities Manager for the College of Social Sciences, received a British Empire Medal for services to higher education. Mrs Willmetts, who has worked at the

University for 29 years, supports the University's core activities by managing the services, buildings and physical resources in an integrated and co-ordinated way. Her work ensures a safe and efficient working environment for staff and students.

Earlier this year Pro-Chancellor and chair of University Council Ed Smith was recognised in the New Year's Honours list. Mr Smith is pictured receiving his CBE for services to higher education from His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales.



University of Birmingham wins Outstanding International Strategy

The University recently won the *Times High Education Leadership & Management Award (THELMA)* for its bold approach to securing its position in Brazil as the higher education institute partner of choice. Working with key stakeholders Birmingham has developed flourishing partnerships that have led



to enhanced grant capture, increased joint publications, increased student enrolments and plans to enhance education collaboration and mobility. Over the past academic year, the University of Birmingham has collaborated with all of the top ten universities in Brazil and 17 of the top 20.

We would like your Views on Equality in the Workplace

As part of our submission for the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index 2015, we are asking all staff to fill in a questionnaire on their experiences working for the University. Taking part in the Workplace Equality Index is an effective way to create an inclusive workplace for lesbian, gay and bisexual employees. Please complete the short questionnaire via the link below; the University's unique three digit code is 662. www.stonewall.org.uk/WEI15/weistaffattitude2013.htm

Responses submitted online will go directly to Stonewall; you can find more information about the staff feedback questionnaire at www.stonewall.org.uk/at_work/workplace_equality_index_2015/default.asp.

Life Sciences Review – your opportunity to contribute

As many of you may be aware, the University is currently in the process of conducting a Life Sciences Review in order to develop a co-ordinated strategy at University level that allows us to deliver world-leading research and teaching. The review will assess our current portfolio of activity across the broad span of life sciences, identifying existing and potential future strengths. It will also define links with relevant partners and

stakeholders to ensure that we continue to enhance our national and international profile in this area.

To support the work of the academic advisory group conducting the review, the opinions and input from across the University community are actively encouraged.

Find out more at: intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/life-sciences-review



THE EMERGING POWER OF BRAZIL



Dr Marco Vieira, Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS) and Dr Jonathan Grix, Centre for Policy Research in Sport (CPRS), look at Brazil's role in International Affairs and engagement with the University.

The question of how emerging powers will affect the global order, and the international regimes and norms that sustain it, is fast becoming one of the most pressing of the 21st century. Brazil is a prime example of a new power trying to adapt its foreign policy to the fast-changing context of global politics and governance. From issues as diverse as climate change, international peacekeeping, development assistance, humanitarian intervention and economic reform, Brazil is deeply involved in reshaping and renegotiating the current rules of global governance.

Since the end of the millennium, Brazil has played a central role in the creation of a web of regional institutions in South America, provided unprecedented levels of development assistance to Africa and actively promoted its own and other developing countries' interests in the World Trade Organisation, which currently has a Brazilian diplomat as its director-general. In the aftermath of the world financial crisis in 2008, Brazil flexed its diplomatic muscle to make the G20 and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) important new structures in the international landscape.

As part of the University's broader strategy of engagement with Brazil, Dr Vieira and Dr Grix have received a São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP)

and University of Birmingham pump-priming award to critically investigate Brazil's role in the management of international security, international development, global economic governance, climate change, regional integration, and the political leveraging of sports mega-events. This project has already resulted in a successful two-day workshop that brought together policy and academic experts from Brazil and the UK to discuss the prospects for cooperation between these two countries in several areas of global governance.

A central part of the University's engagement with Brazil is what could be termed a 'sports agenda', which has seen University experts advising on a variety of sport-related topics, ranging from elite sport development to school and youth sports. This has been spearheaded by CPRS; the Centre's Director, Dr Grix, has been heavily involved with the Brazilian Ministry of Sport and was invited to Brasilia in 2012 – along with Zena Wooldridge, Head of UB Sport – to speak to an audience of National Governing Bodies of Sport on how Brazil can improve its elite sport system.

The University's engagement with the Brazilian Ministry of Sport has revolved around four specific workshops held in Birmingham and Brazil. The first two workshops were held at the University in 2012 and São Paulo in 2013, the next,



Dr Jon Grix, André Almeida Arantes (Brazilian Ministry of Sport), and Zena Wooldridge

this November, will focus on how best to use the Rio Olympic Games (2016) to improve education and sport in Brazil. A major outcome of this will be drawing up a set of recommendations for Brazil, led by the University, using the experience and best practice of states around the world. The final workshop, taking place in December, will conclude the first phase of collaborative work by bringing together scholars not just from Brazil, but from each of the University's strategic partner states, including the USA (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), China (Shanghai University) and India (Institute for Economic Growth). The next phase of Brazil-related research will benefit greatly from the Institute of Advanced Studies' next major research theme 'The Politics of Sport' launching in September. Led by Dr Grix, the wider team is drawn from across the University and will offer a multi-disciplinary perspective on, amongst other things, the impact of Brazil's double host status (2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games).



BIRMINGHAM GLOBAL

BRAZIL

Birmingham's engagement with Brazil continues to progress apace with recent highlights including:

- An EPS delegation to São Paulo and Paraná, led by Head of College Professor Richard Williams, to host a series of Energy Storage workshops and meet University and industry partners.
- A visit to the University by the Brazilian Ambassador to the UK to attend the President of the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), Professor Celso Lafer's honorary degree ceremony.
- The University being recognised as being sector-leading in Brazil winning the Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards (THELMA) for Outstanding International Strategy.
- The launch of a £240,000 fund with the state funding agency for the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ) to fund collaboration with Rio.

The University has recently launched a joint pump-priming fund with FAPERJ and the University of Nottingham. Worth £240,000 over the next two years and open to all disciplines the first call for proposals is now open. With funding available for a range of activities the ultimate purpose is to foster collaboration that has the potential to lead directly to further applications to external funding bodies to support joint activity between academics in Brazil and the UK. The call is also open for a new Visiting Fellows scheme with São Paulo State University (UNESP) that will see the exchange of three academics in each direction per year for visits of up to three months.

In early July the University hosted a visit by Professor Celso Lafer, the President of FAPESP, an independent public foundation that fosters research and scientific

- 70+ University of Birmingham academics are involved in collaborative engagement with Brazilian partners
- 224 jointly authored papers with Brazilian academics produced in 2012 – a threefold increase from 2011
- 25 full time Brazilian PhD students currently studying at the University, one of the largest cohorts in the UK
- 66 Science Without Borders undergraduate students spending a year at the University
- Joint pump-priming funds with the two largest state research foundations in Brazil: FAPESP and FAPERJ

development. Professor Lafer, a former government minister and senior diplomat, received an honorary doctorate (Doctor of the University) from the University. Professor Lafer has led a process of internationalisation of FAPESP that includes the establishment of a jointly funded pump-priming research scheme worth £480,000 with the University and the University of Nottingham, to support research collaboration with Brazil. This innovative scheme is one of the cornerstones of the University's successful engagement with Brazil and contributed to the institution receiving an Outstanding International Strategy Award.

With a Brazilian student community of more than 100 students on campus, a number which will grow in September, the Guild of Students has recently approved the establishment of a Brazilian Society. This student-run society will host a series of social and cultural events each year; volunteers are currently planning events for the autumn term so please keep an eye out for details.

Also International Relations will shortly be circulating details of the £375 million Newton Fund to support collaboration with a number of countries, with £18 million set aside for Brazil collaboration. The second call is also about to launch for the Global

Innovation Initiative (GII) which provides funding to support collaborative projects involving one US, one UK and one other partner from selected countries, including Brazil. Grants are available of £110,000–£150,000 for university consortia focusing on STEM-related (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) multinational research. Proposal guidance and application details will be available when the call opens on 18 August from:

www.britishcouncil.us/programmes/education/higher/policy-dialogue/international-partnerships.

Further information:

Strategic lead: Andréa Edwards
Operational lead: Marion Fleming-Froy
Recruitment: Emma Hewitt
brazil@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Brazilian Society:

www.facebook.com/pages/Brazilian-Society-University-of-Birmingham/575911932529823

More information:

intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/external/international/relations/Brazil/CollaborationwithBrazil.aspx

BIRMINGHAM FOUNDATION ACADEMY

— *Leading the way* —

Buzz examines the inspiring breadth of the work of the University's pioneering Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) and uncovers why the BFA attracts so many of the brightest international students from around the globe.

When it was launched in February 2012, the BFA boasted one of the first foundation programmes of its kind and merged with the University's existing English for International Students Unit to become one of the most respected and unique international student offerings in the UK. This June saw the BFA's management team shortlisted for the *Times Higher Education* Leadership & Management Award's (THELMA) Outstanding Leadership and Management Award.

The BFA acts as a feeder for international students to undergraduate and postgraduate study at the University. The programmes ensure that our international students have the academic English and study skills, as well as the subject specific knowledge, to succeed on their programme. There are currently three main pathways but there will be a new addition to the BFA arriving soon.

The BFA's title pathway – the **Birmingham Foundation Programme** offers a one-year course to enable academically talented students, from countries with twelve year education systems, to enter into undergraduate study. This therefore enables highly motivated learners, with an excellent academic record, to bridge the gap between their current qualifications and entry onto an undergraduate degree at Birmingham.

'We are very proud that all our students are taught by University of Birmingham academics and English language tutors. Our students live on campus and are

fully integrated into campus life giving them the best preparation for starting undergraduate study at the University. This brings tangible benefits to the students and academic community and increases our international student recruitment whilst ensuring that we recruit only the very brightest of overseas students.'

Dr Steve Minchin, Academic Director, Birmingham Foundation Academy.

The **International Pre-Masters Programme** offers international students the option of integrating a pre-masters year into their academic study at the University of Birmingham. The Pre-Masters programmes are designed to help students make the leap from their current qualification to a postgraduate programme at Birmingham; this maybe because their current degree is not equivalent to a UK honours degree or because they have not previously studied some of the topics required for entry to their desired masters programme.

Despite the perception that the summer months are a quiet time on campus, each July and August, hundreds of international students begin **Pre-essional Academic English Courses**, and this summer has seen a record breaking number of international students arrive on campus. At the last count, 967 Pre-essional students are due to join their college programmes in September, having improved their knowledge of spoken and written English in preparation for their academic study.

'The Birmingham Foundation Academy really helps me to improve my English. It not only teaches us about the modules we need for next year but also the study skills such as writing skills and critical thinking.'

Tiara Utomo, Indonesian BFA student

The courses range in length from 4–42 weeks and are only open to students who hold a University of Birmingham offer, be that for a foundation, undergraduate, pre-masters or postgraduate course. Students with offers conditional on improving their International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score can be offered the option of attending one of these courses instead of retaking the test.

The pre-essionals are delivered by the English for International Students Unit (EISU) which is also responsible for offering English support to all current students whose native language is not English. This includes free open access English classes, self assessment English tests, individual language tutorials, and the provision of self study materials. There are also courses specifically designed for the partners of international postgraduate students and staff.

More information
[www.birmingham.ac.uk/
 International/foundation-academy/
 index.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-academy/index.aspx)



THROWING CAUTION TO THE WIND

From a holiday in the 'Axis of Evil', post-conflict resolution and artificial intelligence, to the possibility of robot overlords, the University's first TEDx conference tackled the theme 'Throwing Caution to the Wind.' Faye Jackson reports.



TED is a non-profit organisation that is devoted to spreading inspirational ideas in the form of 18-minute long talks. TEDx is run independently to share ideas in communities around the world. The inaugural conference took place in May and saw a variety of academic and non-academic speakers. The event proved popular so we may see another meeting on campus in the future.

Dr Jeremy Pritchard, Senior Lecturer and Head of Education at the School of Biosciences, discussed the issues of human evolution, asking questions about how perfect evolution is as a process. Dr Nick Hawes, Senior Lecturer in Intelligent Robotics at the School of Computer Science, gave a talk about the potential robot overlord uprising, which certain mathematical systems predict, and the use of autonomous robots in everyday life.

Ben Goodwin, International Media Relations Manager, spoke about his recent trip to North Korea, discussing his experiences as a tourist in the 'Axis of Evil'.

Ben said: 'I was thrilled to be asked to do a TEDx talk as a member of non-academic staff. I think it was a great initiative to be hosted by the University of Birmingham, and I hope we can do something similar in the future so that more people can enjoy the TEDx experience.'

Tom Farrar, Digital Communications Officer and organiser of the TEDx conference said:

'Organising TEDx was an exhilarating experience and I am proud to have given students, staff and the community an opportunity to gain an insight into a range of academic disciplines and inspirational talks they wouldn't normally be exposed to.'

You can watch all seven talks from the first Birmingham TEDx at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/tedx/index.aspx

Discover more about the TED organisation www.ted.com

Contact Tom Farrar for further information about TEDx at the University 0121 414 8783 t.s.farrar@bham.ac.uk



CAMPUS CURIOSITIES

What is it?

Field Grid: Pleiades

by David Prentice (1936–2014)

Where is it?

Ground Floor, Materials and Metallurgy Building

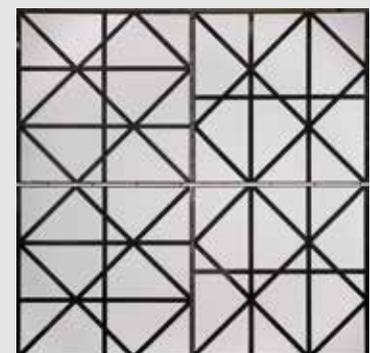
This series of works by David Prentice was commissioned for opening of the Materials and Metallurgy Building in the 1970s by the Department of Physical Metallurgy, as it was then known.

The work consists of a series of complex, geometric grids painted directly onto mirrored panels. Although Prentice

became famous for his grid-paintings, *Field Grid: Pleiades* feels perfectly specific to the department in which it is situated. It directly interacts with the geometric architecture of the building, and more subtly refers to features of the department's work.

David Prentice, who recently passed away, played a key role in establishing Birmingham as an important place for contemporary art; notably he was a founding member of the Ikon Gallery in 1964. He will be remembered for his substantial contribution to landscape painting, in particular his body of work focusing on the Malvern Hills. We at

the University of Birmingham continue to enjoy his marvellous contribution to our Campus Collection of Fine and Decorative Art.



Transforming *our* campus



Tests of life, not a lifetime of tests – transforming pupils' lives at the University of Birmingham School

Michael Roden is a man with a vision – but he's also a man on a mission. Moving to the University of Birmingham to head the University School at Easter this year, he now has 14 months to develop a curriculum, plan his school day, draft rules and regulations, work on governance and recruit staff. Plus, enlist enough pupils to fill both Year 7 and the lower sixth form before the school opens its doors in September 2015. Thankfully there are other people ensuring that the £23 million school building on Selly Oak campus is all on track to be finished in plenty of time, although as you would expect, Mike is still keeping a watchful eye on proceedings.

Joining the University from King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys where he was headmaster for six years, Mike has moved from the rigidity of a school day marked by fixed periods, bells and breaktime, to a school for which he has an almost completely blank canvas to create the ethos, timetable and staffing which best fit the aims of the University creating it.

But Mike is not a man to be phased by that challenge – in fact, quite the opposite, and it's clear that the ability to establish new traditions and ways of working is something that delights, enthuses and motivates him.

He said: *'It is both a little daunting but also immensely rewarding in being responsible for the shaping, at its birth, of the culture of the school. By this,*

I mean a shared way of doing things that is essential to who we are and what we stand for. And that is the pursuit of excellence in what we do, how we behave, how we support and encourage each other.'

He is quite clear that the University of Birmingham School will be a very different school – academically non-selective for 11–16-year-old pupils, and with a broad and academic sixth form, its aim is simple: to transform the lives of its pupils, whatever they want to achieve. The School, as well as striving for academic excellence, will focus on equipping pupils with the skills they need for life, or, as Mike puts it, 'equipping children for the tests of life – not a lifetime of tests.'

Hailing from a coal mining community in South Yorkshire, Mike and his twin brother Martin were the first in their family to go to university – this is a man who knows what he is talking about when he stresses how a good education can transform lives: *'I knew my teachers believed I had the talent and ability to be successful in life and they did everything they could to challenge, engage and support me to realise my potential.'*

At the University of Birmingham School, Mike wants his pupils' aspirations to be similarly raised – and the offer of an extended school day, containing a broad academic curriculum, a diverse student body and access to the facilities and expertise at the University are key to this.

The School will be a centre for trainee teachers to learn their craft – but Mike stresses that this School is no experiment, and that pupils will benefit from the extra numbers of adults in the School.

'The additional support to the teaching staff, stretch and challenge for students, energy and innovation will be a real bonus for all as they provide increased contact with able and well qualified adults in the school,' he said. *'We aim to play a crucial role in creating the next generation of outstanding teachers both for the school as we grow to capacity, but also the city and region as a whole.'*

The School is being developed by the University to reflect the original civic mission that Joseph Chamberlain decreed should underpin the institution, and it will cater for a predicted under-capacity in school places. Half of the pupils in the 11–16 school will come from the area around the School, with the remaining half coming from the 'nodes' of Small Heath, Hall Green and the Jewellery Quarter, while the sixth form entry will be caused on academic performance and GCSE results.

These sixth formers will be expected to be the leaders of the School, and, in turn, Mike hopes that there will be a pathway for students at the University to mentor the sixth formers, and volunteer at the School.

Above all else, it is quite clear that the notion of character, and helping to create a well-rounded person, is what makes this school stand out from the crowd.

Ringing the changes

Dramatic changes to the University Ring Road will already have been noted by staff who circumnavigate the north of campus on a regular basis; the old ring road, which ran round the bottom of the running track, is now closed, with a new loop constructed around what will eventually be the new library.

However, another new road is now being constructed which will run from the side of the Munrow Sports Centre to Pritchatts Road, where vehicles will be able to exit campus on to the public highway. The road now in use as the ring road will eventually, after construction of the new library and demolition of the old, be kept as a service road for maintenance vehicles, to enable the pedestrian-friendly green heart to function as a large public space without being bisected by a road.



While many of the most successful and traditional schools in the country have structures which support the development of character, the focus on 'taught and caught' character education will underpin the entire school ethos at the University of Birmingham School. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues in the School of Education is in the process of developing a bespoke scheme of work and set of resources for the new school, which Mike hopes will help pupils to both acquire and strengthen virtues.

He concludes: *'As a community committed to self-improvement, we must all be dedicated to getting a little better each day, to be the best we can be, as a team or community of learners. We want our pupils to become better people not just become better in exams.'*

'Our aim will be to equip our pupils with the experience and develop their skills in making wise choices that, eventually, will enable them to flourish in society – that is, to be happy and to fulfil their potential.'

To find out more about the University of Birmingham School, visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/university-school

From pub to pool – your new sports centre becomes a reality

The Gun Barrels pub passed into University of Birmingham folklore last month, when it was taken down in readiness for the construction of the new University sports centre. Contractors Interserve and their sub-contractors Braithwaite Demolition did not so much demolish the buildings as carefully take them apart, ensuring many of the materials could then go on to be recycled.

The pub, which closed in May 2013, has made way for a 50m hole in the ground that before long will become the city's first 50m swimming pool. It will be accompanied by a multi-sports hall, six glass backed squash courts, an extensive gym and a range of activity and fitness studios. The new sports centre, which will be open to staff, students, alumni and community members, will open its doors in early 2016.



Anyone interested in seeing what a 50m swimming pool looks like in its early phases and the progress of the new library and surrounding roads can follow construction via webcams at www.birmingham.ac.uk/building.



Communications Team

The University's Communications Team is responsible for protecting and enhancing the University's reputation as a leading global higher education institution, internally and externally; locally, nationally and internationally. Although you may think of it as 'the press office', the team, led by Deborah Walker, Head of Communications, actually does much more than just sending out press releases. We promote research, support the University's impact agenda and strive to enhance Birmingham's performance as an 'engaged University'.

Promoting Academic Research

By promoting your research and expertise to our contacts in the national and international media, the Communications Team generates more than £5 million worth of media coverage every month. That's because we use our journalistic expertise and media contacts to turn leading-edge research into stories of national and international significance. The team is always ready to react to the news but we also aim to be proactive; we can't always set the news agenda but we can contribute to it. The University is full of experts who can provide informed and thought-provoking comment on what's happening around the world whom we match with relevant and influential print, online and broadcast media. We have even developed a mobile phone app for our Media Expert Guide, to ensure journalists turn to University of Birmingham experts first. Academics, to be included in the app, speak to your college web manager about adding a media tab to your profile page.

Don't worry if you are a bit nervous about appearing in the press. We offer bespoke media training for academics who want to engage with the media and we are on-call 24/7 to answer media enquiries and support academics who have themselves been contacted by the press. Our out-of-hours number is +44 (0) 7789 921165.

Supporting Impact

Demonstrating impact can be tricky. A positive news story does not, in itself, demonstrate impact but often has impactful consequences. We have numerous examples of academics who have been called to give evidence to a Parliamentary

select committee or to advise government bodies or departments as a result of a media appearance.

Because important research doesn't always match the national or international news agenda, we use a range of channels to promote your work such as: The Birmingham Brief, a comment piece written by a different academic each week and sent to relevant policy-makers, stakeholders and journalists; The Perspective, published on the University website homepage, and The Conversation, an academic news website. The University of Birmingham remains the biggest contributor of articles to The Conversation, of all-time. Then, of course, there is social media. A considerable number of journalists are among our 1,500 Twitter followers.

Engaged University

Developing our Public Intellectuals is a key part of ensuring the University of Birmingham remains an engaged university. We are always looking for opportunities to promote our Public Intellectuals, whether that is through events at political party conferences or placing experts as panellists at key events. The recent appointment of a Public Affairs Manager will further facilitate interaction between the University and our key political stakeholders.

Original magazine is the University's flagship bi-annual magazine we produce to showcase some of our best research to an external audience. Internally, *Buzz* magazine and *Buzz Bitesize* are two of the ways we keep University staff up-to-date, alongside events such as the Vice-Chancellor's Forum and the Birmingham Professional Forum.

'I love going to work each morning and not knowing what the day will hold.'

Deborah Walker, Head of Communications

**Deborah Walker
Head of Communications**

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Deborah oversees the work of the Communications Team and deals with corporate and crisis communications. Before joining the University, Deborah was the web Politics Editor of *The Guardian* and spent more than ten years as a political correspondent based within the House of Commons.

'I love going to work every morning not knowing what the day will hold. From pursuing global coverage for our research successes to protecting the University's reputation in a crisis it's my job to liaise with senior colleagues, journalists and politicians to ensure we get our message out there.'



A day in the life of...

A day in the Communications Team can vary greatly from handling national or international press calls, to meeting colleagues across campus to identify stories and produce internal and external communications using a variety of mediums including print, web and social media. Here are some of our recent highlights...

Faye Jackson recounts our involvement in the BBC documentary series *World War I at Home* that examined the Cadbury family's role in the War – one brother fought while the other was a pacifist.

'Back in January the Communications Team was contacted by a researcher from the programme enquiring about the University's archives and potential filming locations. A BBC producer was given a tour of campus and following a meeting with staff at Special Collections it was confirmed the University would feature in the programme. The next step was to coordinate the logistics. Dr Rebecca Wynter was identified as the lead academic, Sir Dominic Cadbury, the former Chancellor was contacted, security was informed, insurance arranged, a venue located and archive items moved into position.

'On the day we were due to film, it was raining heavily so exterior shots of campus

were postponed. I took the camera and lighting crew to the venues I had scouted and the Rodney Hilton Library was selected. Later in the day we were joined by Richie Woodhall, the series presenter, Dr Wynter and Sir Dominic. We spent more than six hours filming. The crew returned a week later to do external shots and close-ups of the artefacts. When the show aired the footage from the University lasted approximately six minutes. It takes time to arrange a feature like this but it is worth it.'

Ed Thomas on our public affairs activities:

'My main focus now and throughout the summer is preparing for the party conference season in September. In addition to organising high level meetings, speaking opportunities and networking, we will be capitalising on the fact the Conservative conference is in Birmingham. We are exploring a range of exciting opportunities including inviting some 'big names' to visit campus and mooring the University's hydrogen barge alongside the conference centre as a dynamic venue from which to showcase our research and engage with key stakeholders. To that end, we are in talks with the Canal and River Trust, West Midlands Police, Special

Branch and conference organisers. However, the nature of public and political affairs means our final programme of activities will remain fluid right up until the last minute but we are confident it will be a successful conference season for the University.'

Ben Goodwin on International Relations:

'When I was recently in Brazil ahead of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor-led trip to one of our key territories, I met journalists from the nation's top newspapers, magazines and websites. Talking through the University's research interests within Brazil, I was able to generate interest prior to the senior delegation's arrival, which was reflected in subsequent interviews and media coverage. I continue to nurture relationships with international journalists from afar, sending them carefully selected research news from across the University that I know they will be interested in and, consequently, are more likely to publish to their global readerships.'

Continues overleaf...





meet the
TEAM

Rebecca Vowles
Internal Communications Officer
0121 414 3312
r.m.vowles@bham.ac.uk
@buzzunibham



Rebecca joined the University in May 2014 having previously worked in communications roles for not-for-profit membership organisations; her job involves editing *Buzz* magazine and compiling *Buzz Bitesize*. She also works on other key areas of staff engagement including staff events, social media and the staff intranet.

Faye Jackson
Press and Public Relations Assistant
0121 414 6029
F.E.A.Jackson@bham.ac.uk



Faye handles regional press enquires, keeps reports of press coverage, facilitates film crews on campus and arranges Expert Alerts, where academics put themselves forward to speak to the press on current affairs. She is an alumna of the University (MA Contemporary History, 2013) and initially worked in the press team as a Media Monitoring Assistant during her studies.

'Every day is different; one day I can be with a film crew and the next fielding calls on a breaking news story – I love the variety.'

Kate Chapple
Media Relations Manager
(Science and Technology)
0121 414 2772 / 07789 921 164
k.h.chapple@bham.ac.uk



Kate looks after publicity for science and works with academic colleagues across the Colleges of Engineering and Physical Sciences and Life and Environmental Sciences to source positive news stories around research outcomes. Kate is particularly interested in research results and scientific breakthroughs led by Birmingham that could generate coverage in the national media.

Jenni Ameghino
Media Relations Manager
(Corporate Publications)
0121 415 8134 / 07768 924 156
j.ameghino@bham.ac.uk



Jenni is a former national newspaper journalist who works across all subject areas on corporate editorial content for our brochures, magazines and the web. She is also editor of the University's flagship research publication *Original* magazine and co-ordinates the Birmingham Brief.

Ed Thomas
Public Affairs Manager
07837 337 585
E.Thomas@bham.ac.uk



Ed's role in public affairs is to connect academics and policymakers. Ed would be interested in meeting academics from right across the University to assist in maximising policy engagement opportunities. He also monitors the higher education policy landscape.

Stuart Gillespie
Media Relations Manager
(Arts and Social Sciences)
0121 414 9041 / 07813 521 270
s.gillespie@bham.ac.uk



Stuart covers the College of Arts and Law and the College of Social Sciences and is always on the lookout for exciting research stories that may be of interest to the national and international media. He joined the press team at Birmingham in June, having previously looked after media relations for the humanities division and museums at Oxford University.

'The most rewarding part of my job is being able to communicate important academic research to a wider audience. There are countless fascinating projects being carried out in the arts and social sciences at Birmingham at any one time, and I'm keen to hear from anyone who'd like to seek media coverage for their work.'

Ben Goodwin
International Media
Relations Manager
0121 414 8254 / 07827 832 312
b.r.goodwin@bham.ac.uk



Birmingham alumnus Ben is responsible for international media relations at the University to enhance the institution's global media profile. His role involves arranging interviews with international publications, pitching articles, offering guidance on preparation for interviews with overseas media outlets and producing corporate and research communications.

'This is my dream job; I am involved in a breadth of stories across all colleges, which is an exciting prospect for me.'

Luke Harrison
Media Relations Manager
(Health Sciences)
0121 414 5134
L.Harrison.1@bham.ac.uk



Luke recently joined the University from a similar role at the University of Warwick. He covers all human health stories, creating press releases, promoting new research and liaising with key journalists.

COMEDIAN CHRIS ADDISON CONTEMPLATES HAPPINESS

On 11 June Chris Addison, award-winning writer, stand-up comic, actor and director, took to the stage in the Great Hall to deliver the annual Baggs Memorial Lecture.



The Baggs Memorial Lecture began in 1976 and was named in honour of alumnus, Thomas Baggs. He left a legacy donation to stage an annual public lecture on the theme of 'Happiness – What it is and how it may be achieved by individuals as well as nations.' Past speakers have included David Attenborough, Benjamin Zephaniah and Alastair Campbell.

Prior to the lecture *Buzz* caught up with Chris to talk about his time at the University and what makes him happy.

Chris, who received an Honorary Doctorate last year, is an alumnus of the University (BA English, 1994) with fond memories of campus and the surrounding areas. Chris observed the look of the University had 'changed massively' but 'fundamentally it's the same place, because so much of what Birmingham is, is the feeling you get from Chancellor's Court which hasn't changed much.'

Chris is well known for his career in comedy, yet comedy was not his first creative outlet. As a student he was Co-Chair of the Guild Theatre Group and worked behind the curtain as a director on several Guild productions. He considers Alan Ayckbourn's *Table Manners* his finest hour as director yet he also enjoyed his moment in the spotlight when he was convinced to take to the stage in the Michael Frayn farce *Noises Off*: 'the best work of comedy for the stage, an amazing piece of writing.'

Staff at the University were a big influence on Chris and his career; in particular Dr Tom Davis, who lectured in the English department until his retirement. Dr Davis was clearly an inspiration to Chris; 'the things that Tom taught me about how to organise your brain and pieces of work, I still use that today when putting a show together. He told me a way of putting essays together that I still use as a way of constructing pretty much anything creative, it's really good.'

Chris has gone on to carve out a successful career, making regular appearances on popular panel show *Mock the Week* and working on both sides of the Atlantic behind the television camera. 'I'm very grateful, I'm an incredibly fortunate person' said Chris: 'I'm happy as I am one of the luckiest people I know.'

However, there is one thing in his career that can make him unhappy: 'Like a lot of people in my line of work, I went into this when I was a young person with no notion of any kind of responsibility, beyond that month's rent. And what you don't realise is you are setting yourself up for a career where, if it works well, if you're doing ok, there will be large periods where you're taken away from your family.'

Chris began his lecture saying he was 'terrified' to take to the stage in the Great Hall as to him it remained 'the exam room.' He also noted the little things in life that resonate and make us feel happy; for Chris



they are 'the first chord of *A Hard Day's Night*' and 'the tiny bit of yoghurt you discover on the foil lid.' During the lecture Chris went on to share his tools for dealing with creative unhappiness and offered a unique insight into the creative process behind television programmes such as *The Thick of It* and *VEEP*.

The lecture, delivered to a capacity audience, was intelligent and entertaining, offering food for thought on where we find happiness. Chris Addison is currently working as a director and producer on the HBO series *VEEP* and was recently seen starring in the Sky sitcom *Trying Again*.

Follow him on Twitter @mrchrisaddison

BRITISH SCIENCE FESTIVAL



The British Science Festival (BSF) 2014 will take place in Birmingham this September hosted by the University.

Events will be held on campus from Saturday 6 until Thursday 11 September with additional activities happening across the city. The programme includes lectures, hands-on experiences, family fun and evening entertainment celebrating science, engineering and technology, and the impact that it has on all our lives.

The Festival is open to all and staff are encouraged to attend events during their lunch hour and after work. Some of the events are pre-bookable but many will be

drop-in activities. The Festival will be focused around Chancellor's Court with events being hosted in the Aston Webb Building, Bramall Music Building, Poynting Physics and the Arts Building. There will be a Marquee on the lawn – The Flask & Bunsen – throughout the day and into the evening offering a range of food and drink.

Many of the lectures will be delivered by University academics on a wide range of fascinating topics.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FESTIVAL INCLUDE:

Inside Future Robots – Dr Nick Hawes and Dr Jeremy Wyatt
Journey to the frontier of intelligent robotics

The Sound of Stars and the Search for New Worlds – Professor Bill Chaplin
When you look into the night sky many of the twinkling stars are playing a stellar symphony; find out more about how astronomers are sounding stars.

Dawn of the Giants: How Dinosaurs Rose to Dominate the Triassic World – Dr Richard Butler
Discover how approaches such as CT scanning allow palaeontologists to peer deep inside fossils and extract exciting new information.

High-Speed Rail: An Engineer's Perspective on HS2 – Professor Felix Schmid
Investigate how HS2 could benefit from better integration of engineering, urbanisation and societal aspirations that would allow integration of high-speed railways into the fabric of society.

Making Body Parts – Professors Liam Grover and Duncan Shepherd
Explore the history of implant development and take a peek at new advances in creating replacement body parts.

The Art of Anatomy – Professor Alice Roberts
Trace the history of the illustrated anatomy text through time, illuminating advances in anatomical knowledge.

Community Day
The University's annual Community Day is taking place on Sunday 7 September and will offer a variety of family friendly activities for all age groups.

Evening Entertainment
There will also be plenty of time to relax and take part in the programme of evening entertainment activities. Enjoy a cabaret night hosted by comedian Steve Cross, join astronomers for a spot of stargazing and get your thinking-caps on to enter the science pub quiz all on campus.



BritishScienceFestival



@BritishSciFest #bsf14

www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/british-science-festival/index.aspx

www.britishscienceassociation.org/british-science-festival

Meet the Robots:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/british-science-festival/meet-the-robots.aspx

Dates for the diary

Vice-Chancellor's Open Forum

Thursday 16 October, 12.30–1.30pm, Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building

Join the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Eastwood, for his first staff address of the academic year. All staff are encouraged to attend and there will be an opportunity to ask questions on the day.

Birmingham Professional Forum

Friday 7 November, 10.30am
Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building

This event is for all Professional Services colleagues (administrative, support and technical staff) from across the University. Introduced by the Registrar and Secretary, Lee Sanders, the forum is a great opportunity to hear from colleagues on a wide range of topical subjects for both staff and the University.



news+views

Our regular feature gives *Buzz* readers a quick tour of the latest University news hitting the headlines and activity among our online community.

in the news...

Many articles about Birmingham research and expertise appear in local, national and international press every day. Here are just a few examples of our recent highlights.

Bob the autonomous robot's work experience as a security guard at G4S and Dr Nick Hawes were featured on the BBC News Channel, *BBC Breakfast*, BBC News (website) the *Daily Mail*, *Metro*, the *Daily Star*, the *Daily Mirror*, *BBC Radio 5 Live*, CBBC's *Newsround*, the *Birmingham Mail*, *The Times*, *BBC Radio Gloucestershire*, *BBC Radio Newcastle*, the *Birmingham Post* and *The Telegraph*. The story also featured on the blog Mashable, the article was shared over 1,200 times.

Dr Nick Hawes and Bob the robot were featured widely in the international coverage including the *Nigeria Sun*, *Exame.com*, *WebNews*, *Último Segundo*, *Terra*, *Ambiente Brasil*, *NDTV*, *RTL Nieuws*, and *Silikon Vadisi*. Plus international blogs *Ubergizmo* (USA) and *UOL* (Brazil), the largest online portal in Latin America.

Professor Laura Piddock (MDS) was interviewed for an article on *Channel 4 News* about the Longitude Prize, discussing how research into antibiotic resistance should be refocused.

Professor Sir David Eastwood's Knighthood in the Queen's Birthday Honours was featured in *The Guardian*, the *Birmingham Mail*, *MyScience*, *Western Daily Press*, *BBC News Somerset*, *BBC Radio Somerset*, and *Wales Online*.

Dr Pat Hanlon (CoSS) was interviewed on BBC Radio WM concerning the 'Midlands Connect' meeting about possible long-term strategies to improve transport provision in the Midlands.

An Indian delegation's visit to the University of Birmingham was featured in *DNA India*; Peter Clack (International Relations) was quoted discussing institutional links with Punjab state. The story was also featured in the *Hindustan Times*, *India TV* and *The Times of India*.

Dr Jonathon Reinartz (MDS) and Martin Killeen (Cadbury Research Library) were featured in *World War One At Home: War Hospital* on BBC Radio WM which looked into the First Southern General Hospital in the University's Great Hall during the First World War.



feeling social...

Congratulations Class of 2014

Cheers, celebrations and the relief of being able to walk under Old Joe without jinxing exam results filled campus in July as around 6,000 students celebrated their graduation.

The buzz was captured by two students from PhotoSoc, the student Photography society, who snapped graduands and their families throughout the ceremonies. Some of our favourite moments are here but you can view all the photos at [facebook.com/birminghamalumni](https://www.facebook.com/birminghamalumni)

Graduands were also asked what they will miss the most about Birmingham, and their huge range of responses included:

- 'Amazing campus, amazing friends'
- 'Absolutely everything'
- 'The ducks on campus'
- 'Fab!'
- 'It has been the best three years of my life... so far!'

Birmingham's newest alumni also had the chance to win a working wardrobe by using **#uobgraduation** in their Twitter and Instagram posts; watch a few familiar faces say well done in a celebratory film, and share tips and knowledge from fellow former students through *The Graduate Guide*. To find out more, visit www.bham.ac.uk/classof2014

Join the UoB online community

Follow us on Twitter at [@unibirmingham](https://twitter.com/unibirmingham).

If you use social media at work and would like to increase your visibility, get in touch with our Digital Marketing and Communications Team via k.connolly@bham.ac.uk

If you would like to work with the press office, or find out more about how they can help you promote your research, email pressoffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk or call 0121 414 6029

Lord Bilimoria... in my own words



Lord Bilimoria of Chelsea CBE was recently installed as the University's seventh Chancellor. The Indian-born entrepreneur and independent crossbench peer in the House of Lords is founder and chairman of Cobra Beer.

I have known about the University of Birmingham for as long as I can remember because my mother, uncle and maternal grandfather graduated from here. My grandfather used to say, 'ah, my grandson will go to Birmingham', but I didn't, and I feel I let him down. When I was made an honorary graduate at my Installation Ceremony in July, I looked up and said, 'I'm sorry it took me so long!' As well as my wife and children, my mother came to see me installed as Chancellor and that was so special. Whenever she comes to England, she always makes a pilgrimage to Birmingham. I have been a member of the Business School Advisory Board since 2005, and the School is based at University House, where my mother lived for three years (when it was a hall of residence). The day after I was installed, we actually found her old room.

I've been a university Chancellor before: I was the youngest Chancellor in the UK when I was appointed to Thames Valley University (now University of West London) in 2005 and I really enjoyed that experience for five years. When the invitation to become Chancellor here came along, I was completely thrilled and humbled, and I feel very privileged to have been given this opportunity. I am passionate about higher education and what I like so much about Birmingham is that it has history – it's more than a century old – but it is completely forward-looking and cutting-edge.

I am also very lucky in terms of my timing – taking up the post five years after Professor Sir David Eastwood became Vice-Chancellor. I think he and his team, supported by Pro-Chancellor Ed Smith, have done an amazing job in taking the University forward. It is now a top 20 UK university and it's only a matter of time before it is permanently in the top ten: it has everything in terms of depth and breadth to achieve that.

I have been overwhelmed by the welcome I've received, and I'm really impressed by everyone I've met – very talented people who are experts in their fields and who are passionate about what they are doing. If you have that passion, you can achieve anything. If you also have the right leadership, which we have, then I believe everything is aligned for us to achieve great things.

Birmingham has many jewels in its crown: the Medical School, which is attached to a hospital with the largest solid organ transplantation programme

in Europe and which is also a regional centre for trauma and burns. Then there's the Barber Institute, one of the four best university centres of art in the country, and there's our Business School – where my grandfather did his BComm degree in the 1920s – which dates from 1902, six years before Harvard Business School opened. Along with the world's most elite business schools, we now hold the gold standard of "triple-crown" accreditation and offer undergraduate as well as postgraduate courses.

The infrastructure projects going on are phenomenal – amazing, world-class facilities such as the new Library, Sports Centre and the University of Birmingham School. These will not only be fantastic for staff and students, but will be shared with the local community. Integrating with Birmingham as a city is crucial. Having these new facilities not only attracts students to the University, it also attracts talented staff to Birmingham.

My role as Chancellor is very clear. I'm looking forward to interacting with the students. Chancellors can be aloof figures that students never see apart from at degree ceremonies, but I am planning events so that I can meet students. I think it's really important, for me as well as for them, so that I can learn what's happening and get feedback, both good and bad.

The Chancellor also has the role of being an ambassador, making connections, promoting the University and using every opportunity to try to convey what Birmingham is doing. I'm fortunate that with the other roles I have, I should hopefully be able to do that. The Chancellor can also be an adviser to the Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellors, and I would be in a position to give objective advice. Then there's the international role: the University has become increasingly more of an international institution. For instance, America has some great centres for trauma medicine, which we should be linking up with. We already have links with India, but there could be a lot more, especially now that India is opening up its higher education system.

As a businessman, I know how important it is for research-led universities to forge strong relationships with industry and business. Birmingham already does this very successfully and I hope I can help to strengthen those links yet further. ■