



April/May 2014

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Legal Eagle

Vice-Chancellor's *view*

The last few months have again been remarkable for our university. Following the accolade of 'The University of the Year', we have now signed a strategic alliance with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, our applications position is outstanding, and work has begun on a series of transformational building projects around the campus.



Vice-Chancellor Professor David Eastwood

YOUR BUZZ

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Front cover image: Carolyn Pike,
Director of Legal Services

The energy of the University of Birmingham is remarkable. Precisely because so many of us are caught up in the whirl of excitement that currently characterises the University, we sometimes lose sight of just how much we are achieving. Again, over the last couple of months, work has begun on the High Temperature Research Centre at Ansty, the Institute of Translational Medicine jointly with our colleagues at University Hospitals Birmingham, and now we have full planning permission, on the University Training School. Few universities can rival this range of activity and none, I think, currently surpasses it.

A university's reputation is massively enhanced by the range of additional activities and projects that it can sustain. Universities are, by definition, huge in scale and ambition.

That said, the quality of our core activities is critical to our reputation. For these reasons, the increase in applications to the University of Birmingham for 2014 entry is hugely heartening. We are currently massively out-performing our competitors in applications from home students for undergraduate programmes, and are well ahead of target for postgraduate home and international applications.

There is still more than we can do in a number of key areas, notably in international undergraduate recruitment and in recruiting postgraduate research students. Nevertheless, our applications position and popularity should give us confidence in facing an uncertain future.

Following the recent HEFCE grant letter and changes in health funding, the future is increasingly challenging. The HEFCE teaching grant was reduced nationally by a shade under six per cent for the coming year and further cuts are on the horizon. Our fees are capped, and research has been funded at 'flat cash' since 2010. As a result, by say 2017 in real terms research funding will have been cut by 25 per cent

and teaching funding by about 16 per cent. This is a massively challenging environment in which to be operating. We are doing as well as we are because of the boldness of the decisions we have taken and the clarity of our strategic vision.

For the University to continue to succeed in this environment we will need to sustain our attractiveness to applicants and broaden the base of our recruitment, notably international undergraduate recruitment. We have managed to stabilise our market share of competitively-won research income: now we need to increase it. New capital opportunities will continue to emerge, and we will need to seize these with imagination and enthusiasm.

Few universities are as well-placed to face an uncertain future. That said, we will only succeed through the contribution that we all make, the quality of all that we do, and the shared vision that we all must have of a still greater future for a great university.

So there is much to celebrate, much to achieve, and much to look forward to. In the meantime, let's all enjoy an additional day's leave!

Vice-Chancellor
Professor David Eastwood



BIRMINGHAM GLOBAL

AFRICA

Africa is the fastest-growing part of the world economically but remains marginal in school curricula and public culture. Many images associated with African society reproduce stereotypes that say more about the authors than about the issues they claim to represent. The University has a long tradition of thinking about Africa differently – a proud tradition given impetus by recent developments.

Last year the University established an Africa Strategy Group. The group, chaired by Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Martin Stringer, has been working to articulate a new approach to our engagement with Africa that builds on existing research links and recent recruitment success, and takes into account the growing middle class, increased penetration of technology and desire for education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The past year has seen the signing of new memoranda of understanding (MoU) with three Nigerian universities (Port Harcourt, Covenant and Lagos) centred on schemes to support training of their faculty through split-site PhD supervision, helping to build their research potential. The University also signed its first exchange agreement in Africa with the University of Cape Coast in Ghana.

For more than 50 years the University has had strong ties with Africa through the Centre for West African Studies (CWAS), which has been distinguished by its interdisciplinarity with research spanning the humanities and social sciences. While CWAS continues to develop and disseminate West Africa-focused research, the creation of the Department of African Studies and Anthropology (DASA) in 2013 formalised recent expansion beyond West Africa as well as the growing importance of Anthropology.

However, research engagement with Africa goes well beyond the work of DASA and examples can be found

across campus in areas as diverse as Cynthia Carliell-Marquet's research in resource recovery, from anaerobic digestion of biomass wastes through to Graham Martin's work on the foraging behaviour of African Spoonbills and Ground Hornbills. Information on Africa-related research is collated and disseminated by the online Africa Hub.

Every spring, we invite young scholars working in African universities to spend time at the University of Birmingham as Cadbury Fellows. The Fellows participate in seminars and lectures and work with staff in CWAS to hone a conference paper for presentation and ultimately publication. This year the Cadbury Fellows will be joined by Fellows from Uganda after the University won Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship funding for a professional development programme that will see the Ugandan Fellows spend three months on campus, strengthening existing research links.

CWAS is also hosting its third Newton International Fellow, Dr Augustina Adusah-Karikari, from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. Funded by a prestigious two-year award from the Royal Society and the British Academy, Tina's research centres on the impact of the recent oil find on women in Ghana, which aims to feed into government policy on natural resource management in Ghana. Dr Katrien Pype, a previous Newton International Fellow, who helped to

establish a permanent research network on African media and popular culture, has returned to the University as a Birmingham Fellow. Dr Pype works on the Democratic Republic of Congo and has a joint appointment with the newly founded DASA and International Development.

We have long attracted a significant number of students from Nigeria and other African nations and the University of Birmingham has had an office in Lagos since 2012. Nigeria is now our second largest international recruitment market, with more than 250 Nigerian students on campus and a record intake of 145 in 2013. In 2012 we also welcomed our first cohort of sponsored students from Rwanda, with numbers since rising to more than 40. We are in conversation with the Rwanda Education Board regarding its five-year plan for development and capacity-building and look well placed to be a key stakeholder.

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Meet the Team: International Relations



Study Abroad and Exchanges Team. Alexandra Moorghen, Melanie Humphreys, Natasha Crompton, Dr Angela Turton



Peter Clack,
Director of International Relations



International Development Team and Regional Managers. L-R: Dr Allan McKinley, Catherine Lemon, Shruti Doshi, Wenwei Wu, Katrina Moore, Peter Jordan, Marilyn Miles, Andréa Edwards, Dr Marion Fleming-Froy

'In International Relations we very much see our role as informing, enabling and implementing the international aspirations of the University and its academic community thus bringing tangible benefits to our students, colleagues, and campus here in Birmingham.'

Peter Clack, Director of International Relations

The University of Birmingham can claim to be a global university in every sense, with world-leading research, a diverse international student and staff community and a global network of partners – and it is the role of the International Relations (IR) team to facilitate and support that global engagement. Although our partnership activity is truly global, we have a particular focus on the four strategic priority regions of China, India, Brazil, and North America.

Sometimes described as the University's 'diplomatic service', we have representatives working on the ground in China, India, and Brazil, as well as our core team here on campus that works in close collaboration with academic colleagues to identify, prioritise and nurture relationships with international partners. Fundamentally, everything that the team does in terms of global partnerships is about enhancing research, creating real-world impact, and providing opportunities for the reciprocal sharing of knowledge.

The IR team has a wide remit that includes administering the University membership of Universitas 21; managing our overseas offices, including the landmark Birmingham Guangzhou Centre; overseeing our agreements with more than 225 international exchange partners; facilitating over 1,300 student

mobility opportunities and advising staff on international opportunities and collaboration.

International Relations is formed from two teams; both overseen by Andréa Edwards. The International Development team is headed by Marilyn Miles and the Study Abroad and Exchanges team is led by Angela Turton.

Development Team

The International Development team supports the creation of collaborative links and partnerships with overseas institutions and other international stakeholders. The team works closely with colleagues across the University to identify priorities; to foster links and where appropriate to formalise these in agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoU).

The International Development team can help colleagues to find appropriate international partners and is the first point of contact for any prospective agreements, especially in our strategic priority regions. The team also disseminates any interesting leads or opportunities that come to us through our global network and administers a number of institutional funds that are intended to foster further academic collaboration in our strategic priority regions. We also provide leadership for new University-wide international

initiatives such as the Birmingham International Summer School which welcomes its first intake in 2014.

Study Abroad and Exchanges

The Study Abroad and Exchanges team supports Birmingham students who are seeking to enrich their academic studies with an overseas experience at one of our network of international partner institutions. It also supports students from institutions who are looking to spend a semester or year here at Birmingham. The team works with these partners in order to agree on exchange numbers and processes for approximately 800 incoming students and around 550 outgoing students every year. Incoming students include those on the EU's Erasmus study abroad scheme, and fee-paying students. Additionally the team supports incoming students coming on the flagship Science without Borders programme where the Brazilian government has committed to send 100,000 science students to pursue their studies overseas. The team also administers Erasmus funding for staff mobility, which encompasses both teaching activity and visits made by professional services staff.

Did you know?

- 1 We work with a network of academic country 'champions' across all Colleges
- 2 In the past year we have hosted 68 incoming VIP visits and delegations
- 3 International Relations offer over 40 awards every year for staff and students to engage with Universitas 21 partner universities
- 4 We have more than 150 student exchange partner universities around the world
- 5 We send students to more than 30 different countries

Digital dissection comes to Birmingham

New technology will allow medical students to conduct life-size virtual dissections of reusable cadavers.

The Anatomage Table is a virtual device for exploring hard-to-reach parts of the body on a life-size scale and is a groundbreaking tool providing new opportunities for medical teaching and research.

The touch screen facility allows users to explore the human body in a brand new way. The interactive table is designed to enable students to cut open and patch back up their virtual patient so they can explore different areas of the body and the impact of injuries.

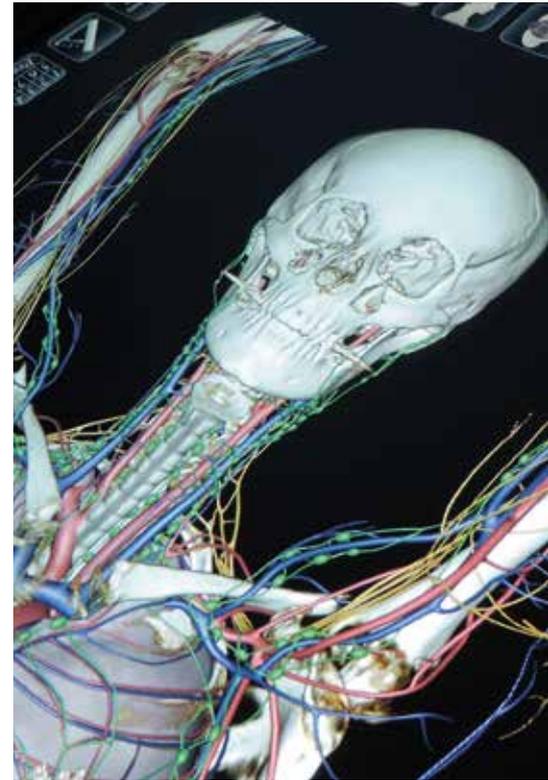
The University is among the first to use the 3D modelling anatomical study tables, developed by American 3D medical technology company Anatomage in collaboration with Stanford University. The touch screen allows students to move and rotate 3D images of the body and interact with the anatomy using a virtual

knife to cut away layers and isolate structures for in-depth study. The high definition images morph from soft tissue to hard tissue and CT scan images are available, augmented with 3D modelling and annotation to explain the different areas.

While there is no replacement for physical dissection, the technology can have a significant impact on medical study. Moving away from small images in textbooks, students are encouraged to engage with 3D images of the life-size body.

Two tables will be available for teaching sessions in small groups in the College of Medical and Dental Sciences. Birmingham is one of only four institutions in the UK using Anatomage, with only 25 of the tables available worldwide.

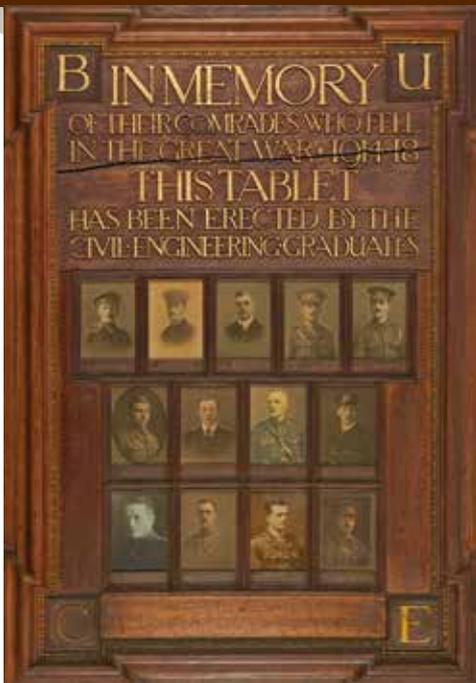
This new teaching option provides



an opportunity for medical students to engage with the body on a regular basis and extend teaching capacity, which is limited by space for cadaver storage and preparation.

The purchase of the equipment was made possible thanks to a bequest from Mr Kenneth Foster, who left the University £120,000 in his will.

CAMPUS CURIOSITIES



What is it?

Civil Engineering WW1 Memorial, The Campus Collection of Fine and Decorative Art, Research and Cultural Collections.

Where is it?

To be displayed in the School of Civil Engineering

This plaque was created by Civil Engineering graduates as a memorial to Civil Engineering students who died in the First World War. There are 13 original photographs of students in uniform, some of whom used their engineering skills serving in the Royal Engineers. The plaque has recently been conserved by Research and Cultural Collections and will soon take pride of place in the School of Civil Engineering as part of the World War One Centenary commemorations beginning this year.

Academic work was reduced significantly during the conflict as more than 200 students and staff members signed up at the start of the war; this rose to 785 by 1917. In total, 175 former students and staff of the University lost their lives and they are commemorated on the war memorial in the Aston Webb Building.

STAFF OPINION SURVEY 2013 HAVE YOUR SAY

what would YOU change?

how do YOU feel?

More than 50 per cent of staff took part in the staff opinion survey and the results for all departments have now been received and distributed via the Senior Management team.

Martin Stringer, Chair, Staff Survey Project Group, said: 'On behalf of the University, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to those who took the time to complete the survey.'

'The results are important because they give us an overall sense of how we compare to other institutions. They help us focus our leadership activity on key areas and they allow local teams to reflect on areas of strength and weakness compared to the University norm.'

'Thank you also to the staff survey champions who did, and continue to do, a fantastic job at engaging with their local teams and communicating the benefits to colleagues of completing the survey and engaging with the action planning process.'

The key findings of the survey include:

- 78 per cent of staff are proud to work for the University
- 85 per cent understand how their work contributes to the University
- 82 per cent are clear about what they are expected to achieve in their job
- 57 per cent think their manager provides regular constructive feedback
- 29 per cent think managers in their department/school deal effectively with poor performance
- 46 per cent think their pay is appropriate compared with jobs elsewhere

There were diverse results across local teams and wide variations in response rates – from 81 per cent in one school to 21 per cent in another of comparable size. Schools and departments are being asked to analyse their local results and level of engagement to see how they compare with the University as a whole and look at the possible reasons for any significant differences or areas of concern.

The full University highlights report can be found at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/documents/public/staff-survey/University-of-Birmingham-staff-survey-2013-report.pdf>

You said: We did.

Disappointingly, only 41 per cent of respondents thought that action would be taken on issues identified in the survey. However, previous results show that where action is taken, impact is felt.

- **In 2011, you said... only 31 per cent of support staff and 36 per cent of academic and related staff found the PDR/SDR process useful.**

We said we would monitor the effectiveness of recent changes to PDR process and review and implement suggested changes to the SDR process.

The results show a 17 per cent increase in positivity from academic and related staff and a 31 per cent increase in positivity for support staff in the PDR process.

- **In 2011, you said... only 45 per cent of staff thought there was effective leadership in their College/Corporate Service.**

We said we would increase the proportion of colleagues undertaking leadership interventions.

The results show a six per cent increase in positivity with regards to line manager feedback and a four per cent increase in positivity with regards to effective leadership in Colleges/Corporate Services.

- **In 2011, you said 70 per cent of staff thought Health and Safety was taken seriously by the University and only 64 per cent of staff were aware of how to report bullying and harassment.**

We said we would investigate the reasons for low opinions of health and safety and increase awareness of the harassment advice service.

The results show a five per cent increase in positivity with regards to the University taking Health and Safety seriously and a five per cent increase in awareness of how to report bullying and harassment.

What do we need to work on this time?

- There are a cluster of scores around issues of workload and the clarity of school/department objectives that have clearly declined.
- Responses to 'I am comfortable with the amount of work I am expected to do' were down by eight per cent and work/life balance was down by four per cent, which is eight per cent below the Russell Group average response for this question.
- The way managers are thought to deal with poor performance has decreased by 15 per cent. This is in line with Russell Group opinion and is problematic in the sector as a whole.
- Clarity of local objectives was down significantly by 15 per cent and this puts the University back in line with the Russell Group benchmark.

These problems need to be investigated and addressed both at a University level and at a local level and it will be important for local reports to be analysed to see how these pressures are reflected and how we can respond in action plans at all levels of the organisation.

Learn more:

www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/haveyoursay

WWI 'engagement centre' opens



What happens next?

The University will produce an action plan in response to the overall highlights report and each college along with Corporate Services will produce an action plan which will be presented to UEB by the end of March.

Each local area will then be required to produce an action plan based on their local results, which will be submitted to the staff survey project team by the end of May 2015. Implementation of action plans should begin immediately and will be reviewed on a six monthly basis. There will be a further report in *buzz* showing examples of local action planning success stories and summarising all of the work that has been done to date in response to the staff survey.

The overall University action plan will be available on the staff survey intranet <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/university/survey/index.aspx> as soon as it is available. Local action plans and school and college/Corporate Service level action plans should be made available to all members of the team to which they relate.

If you would like to be involved in the action planning process or have any questions relating to the staff survey results please contact your Director of Operations if you are in a college or your relevant Senior Officer for members of Corporate Services.

what do YOU want?

The University has launched a centre dedicated to supporting public projects relating to the First World War.

Based in the new Library of Birmingham, it is one of five First World War 'Engagement Centres' around the UK, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The universities collaborating on the project are: Birmingham, Kent, Queen's University Belfast, Hertfordshire and Nottingham.

A key focus of the centres will be to provide UK-wide support for community groups funded through a range of Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grants, particularly its new £6 million 'First World War: Then and Now' community grants scheme.

The centres will form a part of the First World War Centenary Partnership, led by Imperial War Museums, and will complement other AHRC activities related to the

centenary, including its collaboration with the BBC's World War One at Home project.

Professor Ian Grosvenor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor commented: *'The Centre and its attendant projects are about marking a significant event in history, but also offer opportunities for outward looking universities such as Birmingham to engage with the wider community and build relationships that will be important for the future.'*

The University's research will focus on voices of war and peace; themes to be researched include gender on the home front and the issue of religion and belief led by Dr Michael Snape.

The Engagement Centres are funded through a joint initiative of the cross-Research Council Connected Communities programme and the AHRC's Care for the Future theme.

Birmingham signs strategic alliance agreement

The University has strengthened its links with North America by establishing a strategic alliance with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

A strategic alliance agreement between Vice-Chancellor Professor David Eastwood and Illinois' Chancellor Dr Phyllis Wise was signed at Urbana-Champaign. The BRIDGE (BiRmingham-Illinois Partnership for Discovery EnGagement and Education) alliance sets a future precedent to invest institutional resources in support of the partnership's expansion and sustenance.

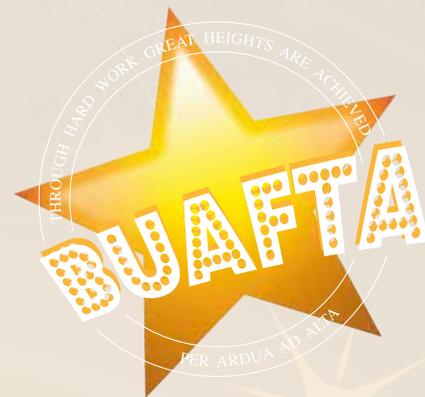
The city of Birmingham has enjoyed a 20-year affiliation with the state of Illinois via its sister city relationship with Chicago. This has seen a flourishing partnership develop between the city, the wider state of Illinois and the US Midwest.

Building on this status, the University of Birmingham has developed a network of faculty relationships with leading North American academic institutions, generating research results and funding successes.

Exciting educational opportunities have been established for students through new exchange partnerships, prestigious internships and collaborative teaching arrangements.

Engagement between the University of Birmingham and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign continues to gain momentum, with more than 25 established faculty-to-faculty links in 14 key academic disciplines already in place. Research links between the two institutions include such disciplines as Economic and Physical Geography, Railway Engineering, Maths, Psychology, Environmental Genomics, History of Art, American and Canadian Studies, Cultural Heritage and Education.

Furthermore, the number of joint publications with US collaborators over the past few years has increased, from 454 in 2009 to 651 in 2013, enhancing the University of Birmingham's global reach and impact.



HOLLYWOOD THEME ADDS SPARKLE TO GALA AWARDS

Shortlisted nominees, guests and sponsors gathered on Friday 28 February for the seventh annual Birmingham University Awards for Tremendous Achievements (BUAFTAs).

The Hollywood themed gala dinner, hosted by alumna Kay Alexander, was a spectacular event which celebrated the achievements of our Professional Services colleagues over the past year.

In true Hollywood style, the gala also celebrated our BUAFTA stars of the past with Hall of Fame features. The volume and quality of nominations for this year's BUAFTAs has been outstanding and this was emphasised throughout the night most notably from our BUAFTA head judge, Professor Michael Whitby, who likened the task of selecting finalists as difficult but incredibly rewarding.

2013 was a very special year for the University as we moved up in both the national and international rankings, and have been announced *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* University of the Year. The University's Registrar and Secretary, Lee Sanders, as well as Vice-Chancellor Professor David Eastwood made clear that Professional Services staff were at the heart of our success and that their hard work resulted in this wonderful accolade.

A special additional 'Principal's Award' was announced on the night, recognising the efforts of Security Services staff who work tirelessly to protect our campus.

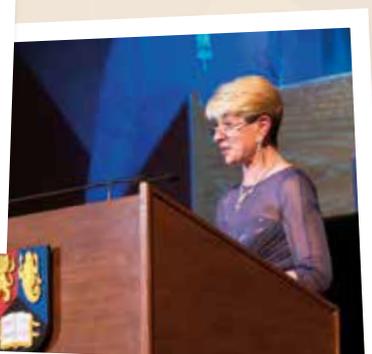
They were particularly recognised for their significant contributions in January when they showed great courage in protecting the campus during the violent protests which broke out.

BUAFTAs 2014 raised in total a record breaking £4,667 for Acorns Charity. Thank you for all your tremendous support.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR 2014 WINNERS!

For more information about the winners as well as the BUAFTAs raffle please visit <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/university/BUAFTAS>

■ CHARITY BOOST, page 15.





Best Support for our Working Environment Award
Dean Cross



Idea of the Year
Simon Levermore



Best Support for Research Award
CAL Research and Knowledge Transfer Office



Role Model of the Year
Caroline O'Mara



Team Player of the Year Award
Michael Shoolbred
Brendan Casey picking up award



The Student Experience Award
Information Points Team



Team of the Year
BiFor Working Group



The Vice-Chancellor's Award
Eluned Jones



Best Newcomer Award
Sonya Bloxham

Giving Ethiopian women a voice

Ros Dodd talks to Sylvia Gardiner about the success of the University-founded charity LUCIA.

The idea of founding a charity to support women and children in Ethiopia came to Sylvia Gardiner as she was browsing the shelves in Sainsbury's.

She had just returned from her first visit to the poverty-stricken country and the experience had profoundly affected her.

'You can't come back from a country like that and do nothing,' she says. 'We talk about poverty in this country, but this is poverty on a completely different level: you see children drinking from muddy puddles and scrabbling for food that's been thrown on the ground.'

'I went to Ethiopia for Christmas in 2004, because my son was working there. When I came back, I went to Sainsbury's to buy coloured toilet rolls to match the bathroom, and I thought: "What am I doing?"'

So, in March 2005, Sylvia and a group of colleagues at the University founded LUCIA (Life Uplifted by Change In Africa), which has raised hundreds of thousands of pounds, helped about 700 women and nearly 600 children through more than 30 projects ranging from building a school library and funding a hand-washing station to teaching sewing and crop cultivation.

'WE TALK ABOUT POVERTY IN THIS COUNTRY, BUT THIS IS POVERTY ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LEVEL: YOU SEE CHILDREN DRINKING FROM MUDDY PUDDLES AND SCRABBLING FOR FOOD THAT'S BEEN THROWN ON THE GROUND.'

The charity's work was recognised in the latest New Year's Honours list with Sylvia being awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM).

Although delighted to receive the award, she stresses it is an honour shared with the other seven trustees – five of whom work at the University: Louise Gessey, Jill Russell, Rebecca Shales, Jane Colbourne and Anne Brazier.

'I couldn't have done this on my own; as well as the seven other trustees, there are other supporters and fundraisers,' says Sylvia, a digital assets assistant at the Main Library who has worked at the University for 20 years. 'Everyone involved in the charity in this country gives their time freely.'

LUCIA's broad aim is to provide academic and vocational education for women and children in a country where girls can be married off by the age of ten.

'There is a saying, "If you educate a boy, you educate an individual, but if you educate a girl, you educate the community". Education gives you choices and opportunities. I'm not pretending all those who join our projects will go on to get jobs, but they do get a voice.'

Sylvia cites women unable to make eye contact who blossom after joining one of LUCIA's self-help projects, which typically run for between six months and three years. *'After a year, these same women can look you in the eye. They walk taller too, because they are proud of what they have achieved. After three years, they are confident enough to do presentations with flip-charts and joke with my husband.'*

Street children and orphaned youngsters have also been helped by LUCIA, which works closely with non-governmental organisations in Ethiopia.

'We recently helped to build and equip a library at Saria School, a primary school about 160km from Addis Ababa with 500

pupils. So keen are these children to learn that one little girl, who's maybe seven or eight, walks two hours each way to school every day.'

Despite the desperate poverty and the low status of women in Ethiopia, Sylvia says: *'The Ethiopians are warm, proud people and have a sense of humour that is similar to ours. They just need a chance.'*

Over the past nine years, LUCIA has 'grown and grown and grown' and now raises almost £40,000 a year, *'which in a country as poor as Ethiopia goes a long way. It may be in a relatively small way, but we are making a difference. For example, children at Saria School had no uniforms, so we bought two Singer sewing machines and enough material for the school, financed the training of two destitute women in sewing and paid them to make the uniforms for the pupils. Of the street children we've helped, one is now training to be a doctor and another teacher – both of them girls. And three women who joined our sewing programme have since opened their own shop.'*

Much of the charity's fundraising is done through social events, such as quizzes and concerts, and it also runs stalls and has collecting tins on the University campus.

'There are lots of opportunities to raise money on campus and we're in the process of putting together a group to move this forward. Oxfam was co-founded by academics from Oxford, so it would be lovely if LUCIA could become this University's international charity.'



Anyone interested in getting involved in LUCIA should contact:

Sylvia Gardiner
s.gardiner@luciacharity.org.uk
or

Rebecca Shales
r.l.shales@luciacharity.org.uk

Give something back – and feel better!

As part of the University's Curriculum Review, the University and Guild of Students have launched an initiative to enrich and encourage volunteering throughout the campus.

Volunteering is a great way for students to enhance their skills and employability while achieving a deep sense of personal satisfaction.

The University is looking at ways of working in partnership with the Guild to increase student participation and ensure the activity is recognised. A new website is being launched to showcase opportunities for volunteering.

'Having a first-class degree or a 2:1 is not enough today. If you can say you volunteered, it will help from an employability perspective.'

Existing volunteering opportunities throughout the campus, including the University and the Guild, were mapped during a four-month period, representing the first review of its kind into volunteering.

The Guild is already involved in an extensive amount of activity, through societies, external organisations and charities, and it is hoped the partnership will help to showcase those opportunities that already exist and encourage wider student participation.

Since September 2013, more than 600 students have registered to volunteer with the Guild's community volunteering groups. This does not include students who volunteer directly with external charities.

About 1,000 students have volunteered with the Guild's campaigning and fundraising work including Carnival, the Raising and Giving group, which raised nearly £19,000 for charities last year.

Volunteers organised fundraising events for the Philippines and raised more than £3,000. They also organised the RAG Conference 2014 at the University which involved national charities and student unions and helped to raise the profile of the University and Guild.

The Guild has organised tree planting and bat box building volunteering opportunities on campus with University Estates. It is also organising a Student Grow Garden Club with Winterbourne Gardens.

Community volunteering groups carry out a wide range of activities including a 'Buddy a Granny' scheme, helping the elderly at Bournbrook Manor Residential Home and St Stephens day centre; Kids Adventure, which organises holidays and trips for children referred from social services; and a weekly play scheme in the Guild for autistic children.

Examples of internal volunteering roles within the University include mentoring school pupils, helping at festivals and freshers' activities, assisting at the Barber Institute and the Lapworth Museum and departmental volunteering.

Volunteering can count towards the Personal Skills Award (PSA), the University's undergraduate employability programme, in which 1,600 students participate each year. The PSA is widely regarded as great preparation for the graduate jobs market.

A new website for University volunteering will act as a portal for staff to show all the



areas in which activity currently takes place and will link through to the Guild. It will act as an information point for staff who are thinking of offering volunteering within departments. The website will also define the difference between volunteering and unpaid work and link to University policies on the issue.

If staff have volunteering opportunities they wish to promote, or want to discuss how to offer these, they should email: volunteering@guild.bham.ac.uk or telephone: 0121 251 2411.

Susan Welland, Assistant Director of Work Experience in the Careers Network, said: *'Volunteering is about giving back to the community, it is about doing something for someone else. You get a lot of satisfaction from that.'*

'Students improve their communication skills and team-working skills. Volunteering also helps to widen students' outlook and experience.'

'Having a first-class degree or a 2:1 is not enough today. If you can say you volunteered, it will help from an employability perspective. It is the extra things, like volunteering, that make students stand out compared with every other graduate.'



In the driving seat of fundamental science

By Richard McComb

Quark-gluon plasma, cryogenic energy storage and radar systems that allow cars to adjust their speed automatically, without the driver doing a thing, may not appear to have much in common.

But they are all examples of cutting-edge scientific discoveries that have grown out of the research within the University's College of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

As competition for research funding grows more acute, collaboration between fundamental science and engineering, which is actively encouraged at the University, is likely to play an increasingly important role in pushing the boundaries of new enquiry.

The academic in charge of nurturing intellectual talent and driving this innovative, cross-disciplinary collaboration is Professor John Bridgeman, who was appointed Director of Research and Knowledge Transfer for the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences last November.

Professor Bridgeman is on familiar territory at the campus, having graduated from the University, in civil engineering, in 1989. He subsequently worked in industry, for Severn Trent, for 15 years,

before he re-joined the University as a senior lecturer in civil engineering, focusing on teaching and research in water engineering. There then followed a personal chair in environmental engineering in 2013.

Professor Bridgeman is now responsible for driving the research portfolio of the College's nine schools and maximising its output. The work involves effective stakeholder management and intelligence gathering to ensure the University is, in Professor Bridgeman's words, 'truly strong and world-beating.'

In broad terms, this means addressing three key research themes, whose spheres of influence overlap. The themes can be broadly summarised as: Science Frontiers; Advanced Manufacturing; and Resilience, Energy and Sustainability.

'Most College research activity maps on to these three areas,' says Professor Bridgeman. 'My job is to maximise the research we do in terms of its value in financial terms and environmental and societal terms so that the University is recognised as world leading in these areas.'

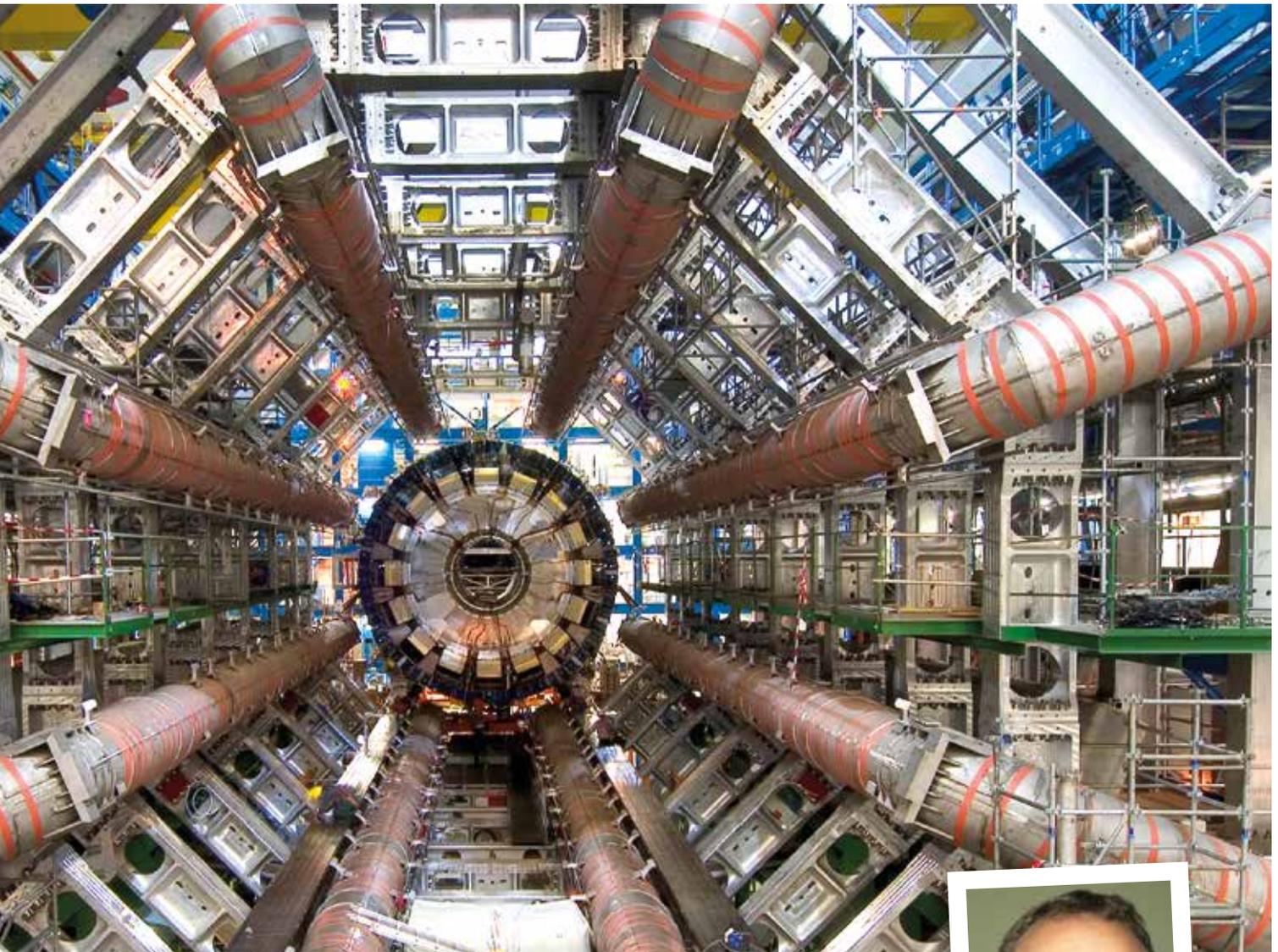
'Collaborative working within the College has to be the key. We have real opportunities with the College structure because it brings people together, so we have, for example, chemists collaborating with materials engineers, and physicists working with civil engineers.'

'By forming the strongest research teams, the University will benefit when it comes to attracting funding for research.'

Professor Bridgeman adds: *'But it is not simply about following the money. It is about carrying out research that has benefit and impact for society, the environment and science.'*

In terms of Science Frontiers, the University's huge range of world-leading research goes from the very smallest to the very largest, from quarks to galaxies, unlocking the mysteries of what happened straight after the Big Bang to the discovery of new planets in the Goldilocks Zone.

Particle Physics and Nuclear Physics – one of the areas covered by the Science Frontiers theme – arguably accounts for one of the most well-known research discoveries – namely, the Higgs boson,



providing one of the biggest breakthroughs in physics in half a century. University physicists were at the forefront of analysis that led to the discovery of the Higgs boson in ultra-high energy proton-proton collisions at the Large Hadron Collider, built by CERN, the Geneva-based European Organisation for Nuclear Research.

In Advanced Manufacturing, the University has been in the driving seat on developments in automotive radar, boosting safety levels for motorists. Adaptive cruise control (ACC) and blind spot monitoring (BSM) are now integral to the Jaguar Land Rover range and engineers have delivered training programmes in 'understanding automotive radar: theory, practice and current development' to the company. Manufacturers including BMW, Daimler Benz, Fiat and Volvo have further benefitted from the University's expertise via work for the EU Technical Committee working on European standards for radar.

The thematic portfolio covering Resilience, Energy and Sustainability puts the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences at the forefront of

devising sustainable solutions to the challenges of building future cities, energy and transportation.

The University is making significant contributions to nuclear energy and energy storage with research extending into areas such as bio fuels, powertrain systems, novel energy carriers and energy-efficient manufacturing. Researchers are helping to develop cryogenic energy storage, which could be used to drive turbines and generate 'green' electricity for future generations, and energy will remain a major theme for the College's research in the future.

Professor Bridgeman concludes: *'Here in the College we are making discoveries in fundamental science and transferring this knowledge into new technologies to revolutionise the way we think about the world around us.'*



'It is about carrying out research that has benefit and impact for society, the environment and science.'

Professor John Bridgeman

The Enterprising Birmingham Fund – driving the delivery of economic impact at the University

The Enterprising Birmingham Fund (EBF) was set up 18 months ago and provides an important source of funding for commercialisation projects that, it is hoped, will deliver significant economic impact. The fund has been designed to bridge the gap between translational/follow on type funding and investment and funds a broad range of activities to demonstrate the commercial viability of an idea. These activities might include developing a prototype, carrying out market analysis, bringing external expertise into the project, writing a business plan etc.

In July 2013, a report on the first year of the fund was presented to UEB who approved continued funding, based on the outputs delivered in the first year.

Since the inception of the fund, 13 projects have been approved and almost £300k has been allocated. The funding has also been used to 'lever in' over £150k additional funding into these projects.

The projects cover a wide range of excellent ideas, three projects have involved investment into a University spin out company – the other projects are outlined below.

The application process is supported by the Enterprise Acceleration Team (based in Research and Innovation Services), Alta Innovations Ltd and the College Research Support Offices and applications can be submitted at any time.

For further information contact Catherine Mansell; Commercial Skills Development, Research and Innovation Services, email c.mansell@bham.ac.uk.

Project name	Lead Applicants	Type of project
Targeting cancer using novel antibody therapy	Dr Mark Cobbold	Engaging independent expert knowledge
Use of automated MRS analysis for the improved characterisation of brain tumours	Dr Martin Wilson	Market research
Using biomarkers to detect rheumatoid arthritis	Dr Parth Narendran	Collection of data for proof of concept
Smart Antennas for mobile phones.	Dr Peter Gardner	Building a demonstrator, engagement of an expert and writing a business plan, engaging potential customers. This has now been set up as a University spin-out company
Recycling rare earth metals from electronic scrap	Dr Allan Walton	Proof of principle work and development of commercial relationships
Development of scanning probe electron technology, a novel imaging technique	Professor Richard Palmer	Prototype development and Market research
Low cost synthesis of boron carbide for use in armour applications	Dr Isaac Chang	Proof of principle work and market research
Innovative manufacturing techniques to enable development of terahertz technology	Professor Mike Lancaster	Market research and customer engagement
Innovative food supplement to reduce the incidence of laminitis in horses and ponies	Dr Rosemary Waring	Proof of principle work
EA Worldview - a leading website for news and analysis on events in the Middle East and North Africa	Professor Scott Lucas	Website development and proof of principle work

Active Kids Easter Camp

Active Kids Camps will be taking place on campus throughout the Easter break.

The camps offer active fun for 5–15 year-olds where they can try out new sports, improve their skills and fitness and enjoy high-quality coached sport and fantastic fun and games!

With such a wide range of sports and activities there is something for every active kid. The Easter camp runs from Monday 14 April to Friday 18 April 2014. Costs are £86.50 for the week, which includes all activities from 9am–5.30pm every day. We also offer half a day week of quality coaching sessions for just £45.50.

University of Birmingham Sport Active Kids Camps are run in association with Pure Sport Foundation.

For more details and booking information please visit www.sport.bham.ac.uk.



Go Central and Costa Coffee in University Centre are now opening Monday to Friday during the Easter break.



Why not treat yourself to breakfast which is available 8.00am–10.30am?

Go Central serves a variety of lunch dishes from around the world until 3.45pm and boasts a vibrant covered outdoor seating area for those days when the sun does shine!

Costa coffee offer a wide selection of drinks and snacks together with complimentary Wi-Fi and free to use computers – open 8.00am–6.00pm Monday–Friday and 10.00am–4.00pm on Saturdays.

'Trust Me I'm A Doctor'

'Trust Me I'm A Doctor' (BBC2) is filming at the University of Birmingham and is looking for volunteers to take part in an item on exercise. Lunch and refreshments will be provided and participants will be able to find out how much energy they use during their day to day tasks.

We are looking for a variety of people representing a range of age, fitness, ethnicity, gender, shapes and sizes. All participants will have to be happy to have their weight and height divulged on television and be available all day April 14 and 15.

If you are interested please contact Sam Walter for more information on s.h.walter@bham.ac.uk

STOP PRESS

As Buzz went to press it was announced that this year's BUFTAs raised a total of **£4,671.00** for the Acorns children's hospice in Birmingham.

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.

Laura Piddock, Professor of Microbiology, was interviewed on *BBC News* discussing the KPC super bug. The piece was repeated on *BBC Midlands Today* and Professor Piddock was featured in an article on the BBC website.

Professor Mark Kilby's research into the Solomon method to reduce TTTS in neonatal twins was featured in *i* (*The Independent's* compact version) (7.3.14), and by the Press Association.

Professor Bill Chaplin and his research into the sounds made by the Sun were featured in an episode of *The Sky at Night* on BBC 4 discussing surface vibrations on the Sun and how Helioseismology is used to detect how sound is effected by what it travels through.

Dr Jonathon Boff was featured in an article on the *Guardian* website discussing the First World War. PhD student Aimee Fox-Godden was also featured talking about her course.

BBC Radio 5 interviewed Tony Belli concerning the chances of recovery for Michael Schumacher.

An interview with Dr Michael Snape about the influence of the Church during the First World War was featured across BBC local radio, including BBC Radio Gloucestershire and BBC Radio Nottingham.

Dr Derek Averre was featured in an article in *Voice of Russia* discussing a potential conflict in the Crimea because of a lack of obvious candidates to take over government.

The University was discussed in an article on *Sina.com* which featured information in its history, courses and requirements for students.

Dr Richard Clay participated in a panel discussion programme about iconoclasm in Syria for *The Voice of Russia*.

Dr Jessica Woodhams was interviewed by *Gehirn Und Geist* for an article about multiple perpetrator rape.



BMedSci students - @unibirm_mds



Nano training - @lseult5



UoBwomen on campus - @Guild_VPS

feeling social...

International Women's Day was marked here at Birmingham on Friday 7 March when both women – and men – celebrated the contribution women make to our University using the hashtag **#UoBwomen**

The initiative was spearheaded by the Alumni and Development Office (@birminghamalum) and they received almost 800 tweets across the day, gaining 107 new followers and enjoying 200 views of their Storify so far. You can enjoy it for yourself at www.storify.com/birminghamalum/uobwomen-2014-part-one

Our **#UoBwomen** were alumni, students, staff and friends of the University from around the world, with tweets coming from as far afield as the Australia and the US. Prolific **#UoBwomen** tweeters included Sarah Jane Marsh (CEO of Birmingham Children's Hospital), Helen Sullivan (Director of the Melbourne School of Government, University of Melbourne) and Dr Anna Phillips, Reader in Behavioural Medicine in our School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences.

The initiative has welcomed incredibly positive feedback from both women and men, who found it an empowering and inspirational day. Plus, the **#UoBwomen** hashtag continued being used on Saturday 8 March (designated International Women's Day) and beyond!

Join the UoB online community

Follow us on Twitter at @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

Carolyn Pike... in my own words

Carolyn Pike, Director of Legal Services



I've been in this job quite a while, but it still feels fresh and exciting because the work we do is innovative and always has been – Birmingham really does lead the way. As well as being only the second university in the country to have an in-house legal team, we started the Association of University Legal Practitioners (AULP), which has grown enormously since it was set up nearly 16 years ago and now has 130 members from 75 institutions. I was secretary from the outset and have been chairman for the past three years.

I am sure AULP is one of the reasons I was named one of the UK's 'Hot 100' lawyers for 2014 by leading legal journal *The Lawyer*, an accolade that came completely out of the blue and for which I feel very honoured, because the publication tends to focus on the big commercial firms. As far as I know, I'm the only university lawyer ever to feature on the annual list.

The innovative work we do at Birmingham is another reason for my inclusion, I think. For example, we are opening a 'University Training School' – one of the first university-led secondary schools in the country, which is due to open next year on the outskirts of campus. It will enable our trainee teachers to learn and share their training with the community by teaching local children. We're also one of the first universities to set up a Chinese representative office and to open a legal company in China.

On top of the new challenges and increased external engagement, the regulatory obligations on the higher education sector have increased hugely: that's why it's so important to have an in-house legal team. You need people who really understand all aspects of the institution from the inside to advise fully, covering all the issues, and so ensure that risks to the university are minimised.

I have spent much of my adult life at the University of Birmingham: I read law here and then went into private practice in Birmingham for a few years before returning to the University. I came back initially to do some occasional under- and post-graduate teaching, but realised I missed the university environment and so left private practice to return to my alma mater. Within three months I was asked to help start Legal Services with the then pro-vice-chancellor, which I did one day a week while continuing with my teaching.

When he retired in 1998, I was asked to take over and become Director.

As well as the AULP, I am becoming more engaged outside the University. For example, I'm working with Universities UK and the Office of Fair Trading on competition law. External engagement means you get a different perspective on lots of things. It's been fascinating and rewarding working with bodies like UUK and the Information Commissioner's Office and helping to influence how changes come about.

Our team, which now numbers 11, advises on a wide range of issues, such as employment, property, student matters, specialist contracts and charitable and corporate governance.

One of the issues close to all our hearts is freedom of information. There's a proposed revised clause going through in the new Intellectual Property Bill, which I helped to draft through UUK, and which will help our researchers protect their information. The volume of information requests has ballooned over the past few years and the complexity of the questions we're now being asked means we're having to engage in complex legal arguments to protect the University, particularly because of the competition issues.

Another area that's become more important is the drive for commercial collaboration, such as the High Temperature Research Centre we're building in Coventry. Then there is our overseas engagement – collaborating with a foreign university, for example, which we do in countries including China, India, Brazil and, now, the Middle East. Negotiating the agreements can be very intellectually challenging, and you also have to get your head around the cultural as well as the legal requirements.

A lot of what we do here in Birmingham changes the way universities do things – which makes this kind of legal work fascinating.

None of this would be possible, though, without the team I have around me – their depth of experience and willingness to learn new things are invaluable.

The joy of this job is that it changes from day to day. I never know what's going to turn up on my desk tomorrow morning. You either love that way of working or you hate it – and I love it. »