

OUR IMPACT

The Economic, Social and Cultural Impact
of the University of Birmingham

April/May 2017



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Transfer's *view*



Professor Tim Softley, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Transfer

Delivering excellence and impact through European and international engagement and collaboration in research has never been as important as it is now. It is therefore important that we understand that Brexit should not be seen as a barrier to maintaining and enhancing our connections with international researchers, both across continental Europe and beyond. Many of us at the University have been participants in EU-funded collaborations for a number of years – over 25 years in my own case – and have not only benefited from the academic outcomes, but have also built up genuine friendships with colleagues across a wide range of EU states. In my view, the most critical qualities to ensure successful international collaborations and partnerships are trust and openness. Such qualities always take time to be established in academic groupings, given our natural competitiveness, but I believe that the sustained period of our participation in a sequence of funded European framework programmes has enabled the building of that open and trusting collaborative environment that makes us the envy of researchers outside Europe. Perhaps in the early days we were just 'in it for the money' but now we are 'in it for the science' and for the culture of friendship. And the opportunities provided for our students and early-career researchers to travel and exchange through programmes like Erasmus and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie programmes has embedded this culture strongly for the future.

Outcomes from the Brexit negotiations are a long way off, but it is extremely encouraging to see that science and innovation was specifically identified as one of the government's 12 priorities for their forthcoming Brexit talks. It is also clear that the government understands the importance that we attach to international research collaboration and to enabling the influx of talented researchers from Europe. With this in mind, we remain optimistic that the UK will indeed continue to be associated, in some form at least, with European research and education programmes, thereby enabling our researchers and students to continue to thrive through cross-border interaction and mobility. And it is already guaranteed that all EU funding coming to the UK will be honoured if it is formally agreed before Brexit occurs – that effectively takes us to

the end of the Horizon 2020 programme.

The details of how we will participate in EU programmes are uncertain though, and we must be prepared to have to work harder to maintain our place at the heart of multilateral European partnerships. Whereas our position as a full-member state enabled participation in EU programmes through 'bottom-up' interactions without strategic intervention, we may need to be more coy about identifying who our strongest partners in Europe are, both in universities and industry, and establishing more strategic agreements with them. We will also need to continue to build partnerships outside Europe – as I write this editorial, I am on a plane bound for Chicago to visit the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a group from our Research Leaders' Programme. The BRIDGE partnership with UIUC already acts as an umbrella for over 60 bottom-up collaborations, and will surely position us well if the government broadens its support for international research engagement.

Within this issue you will find a highlight article on our office in Brussels and the facilities and benefits you can gain by using this free service to connect within Europe and beyond. Maintaining this facility, together with access to internal European travel funds for our researchers, demonstrates our commitment to enabling the continuation of these interactions irrespective of any outcome of the Brexit negotiations. Indeed, our presence in this office in Brussels in partnership with other universities and organisations in the West Midlands will also enhance our regional engagement, and help us to work more closely with local partners to sustain and increase the economic impact of the University's business. At the same time, the Brussels office offers opportunities for new relationships with partners outside Europe who will join us in taking advantage of having a base at the heart of EU business.

The University of Birmingham places the highest value on our future role as a global university and this vision must be played out through every aspect of our work. Our close relationship with our neighbours in the European Union will be a crucial aspect of the University's new international strategy, and in ensuring our future global influence.

YOUR BUZZ

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Front cover image: Our Impact

BIRMINGHAM GLOBAL

Brazil – a hat-trick of firsts in March

As spring emerges on campus, the sights of International Relations during March were set firmly on Brazil and a month of firsts for the University.

A region of strategic importance for the University of Birmingham, our ever deepening ties with Brazil were illustrated with the University's first Brazil Week and an overseas delegation visit to key research partners, led by Professor Robin Mason, visiting Brazil for the first time in his capacity as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International). This was also the first overseas trip supported by our internationally renowned Birmingham Heroes campaign.

Brazil Week 2017

Celebrating our extensive research partnerships with top universities across Brazil, a week of exciting events in March for Brazil Week took place to celebrate Brazilian culture, ideas and research. Events ranged from insights into the world of diplomacy from both the current Ambassador of Brazil to the UK, Eduardo dos Santos and the former Ambassador to Brazil, Alan Charlton, alongside academic seminars on issues ranging from cultural identity to corruption networks and lively discussions on Brazilian literature and film. The week closed with a celebration evening of live Brazilian music and performance.

Peter Clack, Director of International Relations, said: 'In recognition of our engagement and collaboration with Brazil, we're proud to celebrate our first Brazil Week on campus with a range of exciting events.'

University delegation visits key research partners in Brazil

Professor Robin Mason, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International), led a delegation of University academics and staff in Brazil from 13 to 17 March in a week of engagements with key strategic partners. The aims of the visit were to build on our strong research partnerships, and to identify new opportunities for both research collaboration and funding with public and private organisations.

The visit included meetings with contacts at the University of São Paulo (USP) and São Paulo State University (UNESP), as well as all major funding agencies and government trade and industry bodies.

An Academic Workshop hosted at São Paulo State University (UNESP) entitled 'Identifying Research and Policy Agendas for Sustainable Cities and Energy Solutions' showcased the research excellence at Birmingham in these fields and scoped opportunities for collaboration with Brazil in preparation for forthcoming research funding calls.

Birmingham Heroes arrive in Brazil

For the first time, the Birmingham Heroes campaign 'We are tackling the energy crisis' was used overseas in support of the delegation visit in March and the Global Challenges Workshop. Utilising digital and social channels, the campaign had individual targeting adapted to Brazil and will grow our international reputation with key regional influencers and stakeholders.

Opportunities for University staff to collaborate with Brazil

Research funding call now open – deadline 24 April 2017

The joint pump-priming research fund between the Universities of Birmingham, Nottingham, and FAPESP is now inviting proposals across all academic disciplines. This represents an opportunity to consolidate and foster relationships that facilitate long-term collaborative ties. Whilst tripartite applications are preferred, bipartite applications involving colleagues from the University of Birmingham and Brazilian, FAPESP-eligible colleagues will also be considered.

For more information about the call, including eligibility, finance and deadlines visit

Birmingham.ac.uk/brazil

Travel fund for visits to Brazil

This fund provides match-funding costs related to visits to Brazil for the purpose of developing collaborations with Brazilian institutions/organisations. The fund may also support visits by individuals from Brazilian institutions to the University where these may help develop collaboration.

For more information, please contact Richard Brunt, r.brunt@bham.ac.uk or on extension 47733.

★ COMMUNITY ★ festival

BIRMINGHAM: YOUR PASSPORT TO THE WORLD

See our research brought to life as we take you on a voyage of discovery across the globe!

FREE fun for all the family where you can explore our beautiful, historic campus and enjoy events and activities throughout the day. See for yourselves the great things that the University is doing for people in Birmingham and around the world.

We'll also be throwing the doors open so you can explore our world-famous cultural attractions including the Lapworth Museum of Geology, Elgar Concert Hall, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, and our brand new library.

[www.birmingham.ac.uk/
communityfestival](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/communityfestival)

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday 11 June 2017, 11.00am–4.00pm



Don't miss our spectacular performances and hands-on workshops, culture trails, farmers' and craft markets.

Dates for the diary

Birmingham Professional Forum
Friday 19 May, 11.00am–12noon,
Bramall Music Building.

All staff are warmly invited to the forum, which is introduced by the Academic Registrar, Stephen McAuliffe. The agenda will follow closer to the event.



MESSAGE FROM PROFESSOR TIM SOFTLEY, PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER):

I am writing to let you know that from time to time you may be invited by email to participate in University research projects. Facilitating high-quality research is vital to the success of our University, and we believe that allowing researchers the opportunity to recruit participants via staff and student email addresses is part of this. We also want colleagues and students to have the opportunity to participate in the research of the University if they wish.

However, it is entirely up to you whether you choose to respond to such invitations and I would emphasise that you are under absolutely no obligation to do so.

Staff Fundraising Week raises over £5,000 for early miscarriage research

A huge thank you to everyone who organised, baked, ate, quizzed and shaved! Together, we had over 25 events across campus, raising an outstanding £5,002.79 for our research. Along with the raffle tickets sales from the BUAFAS, nearly £10,000 has been raised and given hope to couples who have experienced the heartbreak of early miscarriage.

Your support will allow for a feasibility study for a new test to identify a cause of multiple early miscarriages. This in turn will help Professor Ari Coomarasamy and his team understand why miscarriage happens, if it is likely to happen again, how to prevent it and how to provide the appropriate aftercare.

THANK YOU!

Please visit our website to read about what different departments got up to: www.birmingham.ac.uk/stafffundraising

newcore get involved!

New Core, the University's extensive programme to redesign core Finance, HR, and Payroll processes has carried out more than 90 workshops with colleagues across the University to discuss data, design and delivery needs of the new system. Thank you to all colleagues who have attended these; but did you know that there are plenty of other ways to get involved in New Core?

- Join a User Reference Group
- Become a New Core Champion
- Attend 'Town Hall' meetings
- Feedback via email or intranet

Input from Academic and Professional Services colleagues will be vital in ensuring that New Core meets the wide variety of staff needs – don't miss your chance to get involved!

To find out more email the team at newcore@contacts.bham.ac.uk

MAKING SPACE:

Celebrating Women at the University of Birmingham

Launched on International Women's Day, 'Making Space' celebrates the achievements of inspiring women from the University of Birmingham's past, present and future. The exhibition creates a positive platform for female figures today, and considers what we need to achieve in order to make a better space for women on campus and beyond. The exhibition includes portrait photography by artist and anthropologist Liz Hingley along with 'object portraits' which consider how women are represented through material culture.



Speaking at the launch event, former Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said: (for the purposes of *Buzz*, we have extracted highlights from her speech)

“It is right that we celebrate the diversity, the contribution, and the symbolism of women’s roles in this [Making Spaces] exhibition.

I’m glad that UoB is building on its history of supporting women’s education. But in celebrating, we also need to recognise what still needs to be done. Women are 35% more likely to go to university than men, but only 24% of professors are women – and when those women graduate, they will still face a gender pay gap.

It matters that women are playing a full part in leadership roles, in our public and political life and in our universities. Diversity isn’t just some ‘nice to have’. It’s fundamentally important that we are using all the talent pool in our organisations. Stale groupthink means less innovative, less effective and less efficient organisations.

The faces and images that surround us in buildings like this need to represent

the opportunities for the future as well as the narrowness of our past; that sends out an important and encouraging message about the future for young women – and men – who are surrounded by them.

The theme for IWD 2017 is “Be Bold for Change”. So I want to finish by asking what we can do during this year to be bold for change: mentor a younger woman; challenge all-male events and panels; educate young men about stereotypes; and don’t get complacent.

Tonight is a celebration, but it’s also an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to ensuring that our teams and organisations are diverse and vibrant – and that our fellow women are supported and promoted. Thank you to everyone who shares that aim.”

 #UoBMakingSpace

Visit the exhibition at:

The Rotunda, Aston Webb Building, Edgbaston campus

Open until 21 July FREE entry

Monday–Friday, 9.00am–6.00pm

Policy engagement for impact

In support of the policy impact agenda we will be hosting a series of workshops and seminars in the coming months to help inform research colleagues of how, and why, they should think about policy engagement for impact. Sessions will also be open for Professional Services colleagues who support policy engagement.

This month we will welcome the Houses of Parliament Outreach service who will run a session on How Parliament Works. The session will take place on April 20, 1.30–5.00pm, First Floor Muirhead Tower.

On 2 May and 8 May we will be holding workshops for academics who want to improve their policy engagement and impact. These will cover matters such as how to engage with the political process and practical ways of influencing policy and legislation. On 6 June, from 12.30–1.30pm, David Mair, Head of Unit Geographic Coordination, Joint Research Centre

of the European Commission will speak on Science into Policy, and on 29 June from 12.30–1.30pm, Dr Fabiana Scapolo, Deputy Head of Unit Foresight, Behavioural Insight for Policy, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, will speak on Horizon Scanning and Foresight as a tool to support EU policy making.

Please watch College, Planning and Public Affairs communications channels for information on how to register for these workshops. In the meantime you can email your policy engagement enquiries to publicaffairs@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Book your place at:

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/research-impact-and-the-uk-parliament-birmingham-tickets-32288969176

transforming **Our** campus

Home of some
of Birmingham's
finest cultural
assets

Campus developments

Construction work on campus continues to gather pace as part of the University's ambitious capital development plan, including major projects at the Sport and Fitness building, the new Hotel and Conference Park, and *Bournbrook*, a residence for 178 students, which also includes a new sports pavilion, café and accommodation and community drop-in service.

The Collaborative Teaching Laboratory building is making clear progress next door to Biosciences and the Learning Centre, and the project team continue to host events and workshops to ensure the opening meets the extensive needs of staff and students. This development, which includes three main lab facilities (wet, dry and computer based), will transform teaching and learning in STEM disciplines for a new generation of scientists and engineers, and will be open by 2019.

Finishing touches for our new sports centre

We look forward to welcoming our members to the new state-of-the-art facility very soon. You can sign up for memberships now, including peak and off-peak options for gym, swim, squash or inclusive by contacting sales@sportandfitness.bham.ac.uk, 0121 414 2056/0121 415 8732 or visiting our Sales Hub in the Munrow Sports Centre. Get your membership now to be one of the first to use the new facility.

Discover more at www.sportandfitness.bham.ac.uk

Designed to enhance the student experience, we were delighted to unveil the refurbished Avon and Loft spaces last month in University Centre, which have made available up to 190 new study spaces.

The Green Heart project team continue to make preparations for demolition of the old library over the summer, as the new Library was formally opened last month by guest of honour, Dame Lynne Brindley. The vast parkland at the centre of campus has been designed with staff, students, and the community in mind, and is focused on sustainability, as well as enhanced meeting, study and entertainment space.



Dame Lynne Brindley and Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir David Eastwood at the University of Birmingham Library opening

To keep up to date with all of our campus developments please visit the University campus developments web page: birmingham.ac.uk/building

OUR CAMPUS DESTINATION



Have you seen the new University railway station signage?

Anybody travelling to the University by train over the past few weeks will have noticed some new University of Birmingham signage around the platforms, lifts, stairs and main foyer.

The installation of a suite of new artwork has been designed as part of the Estates strategy to enhance the first impressions

of visitors and commuters at the station, whilst also supporting a shared ambition to improve passenger flow. Reflecting the themes of the Strategic Framework, the new visuals celebrate our 11 Nobel Prizes, the depth and breadth of research and study opportunities at the University, as well as putting a new spotlight on

our visitor attractions and cultural assets. Our campus is home to a wealth of historical, scientific, cultural and sporting assets open to our community: many of which are free to enter, every day of the week!

Have you visited our prime destination spots yet?

Lapworth Museum of Geology – transporting visitors back 4.5 billion years, the museum houses everything from dinosaurs to diamonds. The Lapworth Museum of Geology has the finest and most extensive collection of fossils, minerals and rocks in the Midlands region, and has been highlighted by *the Guardian* (2016) as one of Britain's best paleontological Museums.

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts – your very own mini National Gallery: whether you are enchanted by Monet, captivated by Rossetti or inspired by Van Gogh, the Barber houses one of the finest small collections of European art in the UK. It uses its renowned collections to create inspirational opportunities for learning and enjoyment for all and is

home to a concert hall, which hosts a series of top classical concerts by international soloists, ensembles and orchestras; including the free Friday lunchtime concerts.

Winterbourne House and Garden – recently awarded new, official museum status thanks to Accreditation by the Arts Council, Winterbourne welcomes visitors to explore the historic Edwardian Art and Craft house nestled in seven acres of botanic gardens.

The Bramall – we are lucky to have Birmingham's most exciting new entertainment venue for music, comedy, lectures and 'Audience With' evenings right on our doorstep. Let us entertain you: www.thebramall.co.uk.

Cadbury Research Library – from Middle Eastern Manuscripts to fine printing, D. H. Lawrence to the Chamberlain Papers, feed your curiosity and consult 200,000 rare books and some 4 million manuscripts.

Research and Cultural Collections – visit our exhibitions to see some of our most unusual, inspiring and significant pieces from our Collections. The University of Birmingham has thousands of objects in its Research and Cultural Collections. From West African masks to Pop Art prints, to celestial globes and 19th-century medical waxes, discover a cornucopia of extraordinary artefacts.

Be inspired, entertained and expand your knowledge at birmingham.ac.uk/destination

OUR IMPACT

The Economic, Social and Cultural Impact
of the University of Birmingham

In autumn 2016 we commissioned London Economics to look at the diverse ways in which our University contributes to the success of Birmingham, the West Midlands, and the UK; and to calculate our economic, social, and cultural impact during the 2014–15 academic year.

The report found:

- We contribute £3.5 billion every year to the economy
- Almost 1 in 50 jobs in Birmingham depend on the University
- Our teaching contributes £1.34 billion to the economy
- Our international students contribute £160.2 million to the economy
- Our research and knowledge transfer activity is worth £885 million

Our Economic Impact

We're one of the region's largest employers, and our community of more than 40,000 staff and students contributes significantly to the economies of Birmingham, the West Midlands and the UK.

On a like-for-like basis **our economic impact has grown by 59% in ten years**

The University employed **7,200 staff** in the 2014–15 academic year

We are one of the most significant employers in the region

We sustain **15,545 jobs in the West Midlands**

Almost 1 in every 50 jobs in Birmingham depend on the University

The impact of the University's spending and that of our students is **£1.09 billion per year**

Value of Teaching and Learning

We attract students to Birmingham from all over the UK and from across the world. Our students' spending supports the local and regional economy, and many of our graduates (48%) stay in the region – making us a net importer of talent. We are giving more young people the chance to study at University: 80% of our students are from state schools, and 23% come from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Value of Research and Knowledge Transfer

We're consistently ranked in the top ten UK universities for the quality and impact of our research – research that creates innovative, grounded and enduring solutions to some of the world's biggest issues.

Our research and knowledge transfer activity is worth **£885 million**

Every **£1 million** invested in our research by the UK Research Councils generates an additional **£12 million** for the economy

81% of research rated as world leading (4*) or internationally excellent (3*)

Our teaching and learning contributes **£1.34 billion** a year to the economy

34,160 students and more than **100,000** online learners

Almost 1,700 people who completed a programme with us in 2014–15 work in the healthcare sector

We are developing entrepreneurs
In 2014–15 we supported our students and graduates to start over 50 new business

A Global University

Our University is a large, global organisation. Our networks enable us to work with universities, governments and companies across the world, to solve the world's greatest challenges, to create international experiences for staff and students, and attract overseas visitors to the region.

Our international students bring ideas and a global outlook, contribute to the academic and social richness of our University, and become advocates for the region and the UK when they return home.

Eight additional international undergraduate students would add £1 million to the economy

over the three years they spend studying here

Our international students contribute **£160.2 million** to the economy each year



Social and Cultural Impact

In addition to delivering a diverse programme of events across campus, our cultural impact extends beyond the region with collections being loaned to other museums and galleries across the UK.

More than 262,000 people attended public events at the University in 2014–15

Our academics have given 2,280 days of their time (the equivalent of more than six years!) to supporting public engagement and cultural activities

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF BUAFTA STARS!



Staff from across the University came together in February to celebrate the tenth annual Birmingham University Awards for Tremendous Achievement (BUAFTAs).

Shortlisted nominees and guests gathered in the Great Hall to celebrate a milestone ten years of recognising tremendous achievement across Professional Services. The evening was hosted by Rachel New, alumna, radio presenter, and current UoB PhD student, and guests were entertained by the amazing student a cappella group Uptone Girls, and impressive Samurai Stunt Show.

In addition to celebrating staff success, the BUAFTAs support local charities through the BUAFTA raffle. This year's raffle supported research that Professor Arri Coomarasamy and his

team are undertaking to understand and prevent miscarriage. Ticket sales and colleague donations raised more than £4,898; a BUAFTA record!

The BUAFTAs have created many more impressive figures over the past ten years including:

- Over 150 BUAFTA awards won
- Almost 3,000 desserts eaten at the awards ceremonies
- Around 9,000 nominations received
- Over 170 raffle prizes claimed by lucky winners

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR BUAFTA 2017 STARS



Team of the Year: The IT Service Desk

The IT Service Desk does a fantastic job providing IT support to staff, students and visitors. They respond quickly to queries and are always polite, upbeat, friendly and approachable.

Commendation: Cleaning Services Training Team

Exceptional Customer Service: Elizabeth Warner-Davies, Library Services

Liz retired in February after 32 years at the University and helped to shape the fantastic library service we have today. Liz steered her team through a period of considerable change, overseeing the integration of several site libraries and sensitively managing impact on staff.

Commendation: Stella Simpson, Cleaning Services



Project Team of the Year: Lapworth Museum Redevelopment Team

The Lapworth Museum Redevelopment Team delivered a stunning new museum within a tight deadline and limited budget. They put in a huge effort to safely relocate over 250,000 objects and add an extra 25,000 records to the museum catalogue.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF BUAFTAS STARS!

Exceptional Change Leadership: Elizabeth Wragg, College of Arts and Law

As Operations Manager for Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Elizabeth has inspired academics to support the project and managed a wide range of staff to help drive its success. Over 250,000 students have now signed up to MOOCs run by the University.



'Unsung Hero' of the Year: Beverley Davies, Human Resources

Beverley plays an essential role in the University, providing advice to staff on health and safety issues. As a result of Beverley's fantastic efforts, the University successfully passed a recent Health and Safety Executive biosafety inspection with flying colours.

Commendation: Raj Khaira, IT Services



Excellent Support for Education: The Resource List Advocacy Team

This team has transformed the student learning experience by implementing a new Resource List system. This has been a great success, providing students with easy access to course reading and leading to improved student engagement.

Commendation: Heather Ashfield, College of Arts and Law



Birmingham Professional of the Year: Stephen Ashton, Estates

As Project Manager for the New Library Project, Stephen has shown professionalism, and leadership. He has worked incredibly hard to ensure library colleagues have got the best out of their space through his ability to interpret and develop ideas.



The Student Experience Award: Hands Up Fund Team, Development and Alumni Relations Office

Thanks to alumni donations, Hands Up has awarded £60,000 to support a range of projects that have had a positive impact on the student community, including UBRobotics, Mental Health, Badminton and Swimming.



The Vice-Chancellor's Award: QAA HE Review Team

The team coordinated the University's HE Review submission with input from colleagues across the University. This took an enormous amount of time and organisation and resulted in a 170-page document containing 1,400 items of supporting evidence.



Excellent Support for Research: David Boardman, College of Engineering Services

David is the 'go-to' person for a range of highly significant research projects in EPS. He is deeply involved in the bidding and subsequent post-award activity for a range of major projects which have been transformative for the University and will have a lasting impact.



The Principal's Award: New Library Project Team

Staff from across the University worked together on the University New Library Project to deliver a state-of-the-art building on time and on budget. Filling 40 miles of shelving and undertaking a significant change programme for around 250 staff with minimal disruption.



OUR BRUSSELS OFFICE:

YOUR GATEWAY TO EUROPEAN NETWORKING CIRCLES

You may be surprised to know that the University has had an office in Brussels, right in the heart of the European Quarter, since 2010. If not, then great, you're hopefully already a convert having already benefited from this resource. But if so, then you could you be missing out!

We are hosted in Brussels by Birmingham City Council, sharing the space with other regional partners including Warwick University. Since its creation, our Brussels Office has been helping the University optimise the rich and extensive European support landscape for research projects, whilst also providing access to expert intelligence on policy development and connecting us with influential stakeholders.

The office boasts dedicated staff located both on the ground in Brussels and here in Birmingham to help you make the most of the facilities and services on offer, and we like to think of it as a home from home for visiting staff providing a relaxed networking environment for the purpose of holding project meetings with partners, small or large meetings, through to events and conferences or even to carry out research. Our team have the knowledge to make the right connections for you to give you and your research the best opportunities to get yourself noticed; whether for the purpose of demonstrating impact, informing policy or preparing to apply for funding.

We can also use the resource to position ourselves ahead of Brexit, and post-Brexit our presence will offer new

opportunities to build relationships with partners from outside of Europe who will be keen to use Brussels to make European connections.

Providing University staff with:

- Intelligence
- A place to build network
- A place to host events
- Internal travel funds to help you connect

A route for:

- Reputation and network building
- Increasing recognition and diffusion
- Impact pathways
- Bringing collaborators to you
- Influencing EU policy and regulation

Get involved and use the office for:

- Individual visits
- Short stays
- Seminars and workshops
- Symposia
- Sandpit meetings
- Proposal development meetings
- Project activities

Learn how our Brussels Office has benefited these members of staff:

Gurmit Kler, Head of Business Engagement

'Our Brussels Office facilitated interaction with networks that will enhance our capacity to link up and engage in productive relationships with non-UK companies.'



Dr Susannah Thorpe, Biosciences

'Our Brussels Office connected me with those responsible for the European Union's Zoo Directive and enabled me to feed into a timely revision of their directive.'



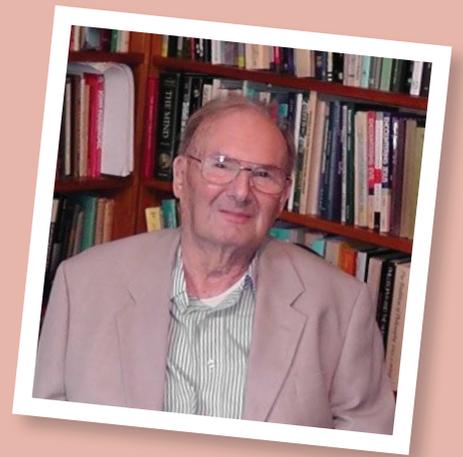
Dr Derek Averre, Centre for Russian, European and Eurasian Studies

'Having a dedicated Brussels Office right in the centre of the European quarter was perfect for organising our postgraduate/undergraduate study visit around. Through the visit our students were able to gain an excellent knowledge of European and international affairs!'



Visit our web page to find out more: www.birmingham.ac.uk/brussels

John Hick: A Philosopher of Religion's Engagement with Racial Issues



Dr Sharada Sugirtharajah, Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the University reflects on the work of the late John Hick.

The fear of the 'Other' is rearing its ugly head in the current volatile political climate in the UK, US and Europe. The Brexit vote to leave the EU and the election of Donald Trump as the US President has created a mood of uncertainty and xenophobia.

The purpose of this short piece is to draw attention to how a world-renowned British philosopher of religion and theologian fought against racism in 1970s Britain. He was John Harwood Hick (1922–2012), H. G. Wood Professor of Theology at the University of Birmingham (1967–1982). Among his numerous publications, the edited volume *The Myth of God Incarnate* provided enormous publicity for the University of Birmingham.

John Hick was probably one of the few British academic theologians to raise the issue of racism. When Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech in 1968 created a political storm, British theologians were debating in abstract language about the implications of secular theology which dominated the theological discourse at that time. Even before expressions such as 'academic impact' and 'community involvement' became trendy university-speak, Hick was actively engaged with what was happening on the ground.

One significant aspect that is missing in scholarly works on John Hick is an account of his practical involvement in anti-racist campaigns and community relations in the Handsworth area of Birmingham in the 1970s, and the close link between his theological thinking and action. At a time when the arrival of new immigrants to the United Kingdom from the Caribbean and the Indian Subcontinent was causing enormous racial and communal tensions, Hick was prompted to act. As the first chairperson of All Faiths for One Race

(AFFOR), and along with John Plummer as its first director, Hick played a pivotal role in facilitating community and inter-faith relations. AFFOR was formed to provide a platform for faith leaders and members of the community to address racial and related issues that affected the newly arrived immigrants. AFFOR campaigned against the 1971 Immigration Bill. Hick, with Leonard Schiff, provided a character witness to a Muslim, in a well-known court case at that time. He played a significant part in helping Ramgharia Sikhs in procuring a redundant church building so that it could be set up as a place of worship.

Hick not only drew attention to the raging racial politics of the time but had the courage to expose the criminal elements within the National Front who were stirring up racial hatred. The two succinct but significant pamphlets he wrote – *The New Nazism of the National Front and National Party: a Warning to Christians* (1977) and *Christianity and Race* (1978) – encapsulated the prevalent white supremacist tendencies, the unfairness of immigration laws, the racial profiling of the West Indian children in schools which disadvantaged them and hindered their integration. Another of Hick's important pamphlets, *Apartheid Observed* (1980), showed his commitment to wider anti-racism outside Britain – the brutal treatment of the blacks by the white South African government. Hick and his colleagues were involved in organising the boycott of an all-white cricket team to England, from apartheid South Africa, who were to play at Edgbaston in Birmingham in 1970. These three short essays were not simply the strident critique of the evils of racism but offered both a theological

critique and practical guidance as to how to change the public perception of the 'Other'.

In his fight against racism, Hick provided leadership and collaborated with both lay and religious members of the community such as John Plummer (committed to social justice), Clare Shore (then MP for Ladywood, later Labour Cabinet Minister), David Jennings (Anglican priest) Anthony and Anne Wilson of the Cadbury Trust, to name a few. Some of the influential local bishops and church leaders were reluctant to support him and were offering the traditional liberal argument that anti-racist pamphlets would be 'counter-productive'. Hick remarked in his autobiography: 'For the attitude of both church and state to the widespread British racism of the time was cautious to the point of being almost entirely ineffective.'

Even before the Twitter troll, some of those who were involved in the activities of AFFOR were not free from verbal attacks in print or physical attacks by racist groups. Hick himself received a physical threat, and one of his anti-racist collaborators, Maurice Ludmer, was brutally knifed by an extremist.

John Hick saw immigrants 'as much part of the contemporary British scene as those whose ancestors came from Ireland more than a hundred years ago, or indeed in the Norman Conquest nine hundred years ago'. The pertinent questions that Hick raised then are still relevant: 'Can the white British integrate themselves into the larger human race which is now represented among us by black and brown faces from the former Empire? Can we accept and learn to rejoice in the human differences which immigration has introduced into our society?'



Chancellor's column

We must stand up for international students in the UK.

In March, I led a debate in the House of Lords, in which the government was defeated by almost 100 votes, on the vital issue of international students.

At Birmingham, I told the House, our international students contributed £160 million to the economy in 2014/15, and they are advocates and ambassadors for Birmingham. They are also ambassadors for the UK around the world.

The 450,000 international students currently studying in the UK add £25.8 billion to our economy and support over 200,000 jobs, according to the latest research from Universities UK.

This is a vital contribution to the life of the University and the wider national economy.

It is essential that we continue to demonstrate the enormous contribution that international students make to our studies and our economy, and that we show the impact that collaboration has on keeping the world-class standards at our universities.

Given the backdrop of Brexit, it is more important now than ever.



What is it?

Ancestor I by Dame Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975), 1970. Campus Collection of Fine and Decorative Art, Research and Cultural Collections. On loan from the Trustees of the Hepworth Estate.

Where is it?

University Square

One of the greatest Modernist sculptors of the 20th century, Barbara Hepworth received an honorary degree from the University in 1960. She chose *Ancestor I* to lend to the University as she felt it would stand up against the campus landscape and architecture.

The piece is part of Hepworth's *'Family of Man'* series, which comprises nine sculptures ranging from a young girl to the 'ancestors'. The four sections of the sculpture can be read as the head, torso, hips and legs of this authoritative figure.

Ancestor I also references pre-historic landscape features. In particular, the sculpture recalls the environment of Cornwall, where the artist lived for the majority of her life. This area features a wealth of prehistoric sites, which include standing stones (*menhirs*), a fascination for Hepworth throughout her career.

Learn more

This sculpture featured in the artistic journey of Liz Hingley, as she explored the experiences of University women, past and present. *Making Space: Celebrating Women at the University of Birmingham* is on display in the Rotunda, Aston Webb Building until 21 July. For more details see www.birmingham.ac.uk/making-space. A guided tour of the campus sculpture collection will be offered on 16 May.

For further details and booking information see www.researchandculturalcollections.eventbrite.com



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.

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

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.

The Vice-Chancellor visited Beijing to open a joint workshop with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, focusing on air pollution, as well as signing a Memorandum of Understanding on rail research with Beijing Jiaotong University. His visit was covered by more than 140 Chinese media outlets, including *Sina*, *China Daily*, and *China News*.

Dr Zongbo Shi was interviewed by BBC Radio 4's *Inside Science* about our research into airborne iron particles increasing the ocean's capacity to absorb greenhouse gases. His research was featured by *The Smithsonian*, *China.org* and *Voice of America*.

The Times and the *Times Educational Supplement* both ran lengthy feature articles on the University of Birmingham School, which included interviews with Michael Roden and Professor James Arthur, and referenced our conference for other institutions that may wish to follow our lead.

Highlighting our drive to increase diversity in higher education, we were mentioned in the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard* and *ITV.com* for our 'Access to Birmingham' pilot scheme, which provides free tuition to A level pupils from poorer backgrounds to help get them into university.

University of Birmingham School, University of Birmingham Institute of Forestry Research (BiFOR), and Birmingham Dental Hospital and School of Dentistry were included in the RICS awards shortlist in the *Birmingham Mail* and *Birmingham Post*.

There was widespread international coverage of research led by Dr Claudio Tennie, which found chimpanzees to be indifferent at best when it comes to altruistically helping a fellow chimpanzee. In the UK it was reported in the *Daily Mail*, *Independent* and *Daily Express*, whilst more than 300 global outlets featured the findings.

Internationally, the launch of our project to help tackle health problems associated with air pollution in Delhi, led by Professor Bill Bloss, was covered by more than 50 media outlets in India including: *Economic Times*, *Indian Express* and *Business Standard India*.

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, find out more at: intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/socialmediaguidelines



feeling social...

Why Did You Say #hellobrum'?

During February we launched a campaign that was designed to help prospective students make the difficult decision of choosing which university to make their 'firm choice'. To help them decide, we asked current students, alumni and staff to share why they chose Birmingham.

We wanted to show prospective students what life is like to live, work and study at the University through the 'Why Did You Say #hellobrum' campaign.

Short video clips and photos were shared across our social channels. People shared the one thing that stood out for them – the course, the campus, the city, the atmosphere, or the reputation for academic excellence? They were then able to download and print out a speech bubble and join in.

A gallery of the video clips and images was shared online. A post on our LinkedIn channel gained 121,000 impressions, and on Facebook our page saw a reach of more than 22,500 people.

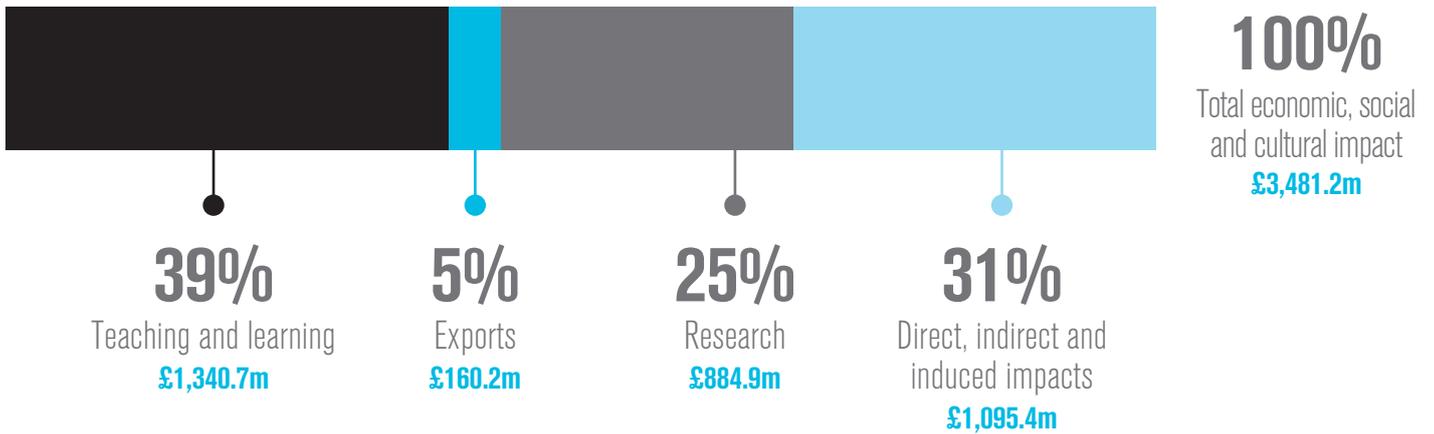
Dr Karen Newbigging's health policy research on the financial cost of poor mental health across the West Midlands featured across regional media, including *ITV Central*, *ITV news online*, *Made in Birmingham TV*, *Free Radio West Midlands* and *Heart FM*.



We contribute **£3.5 billion** every year to the economy

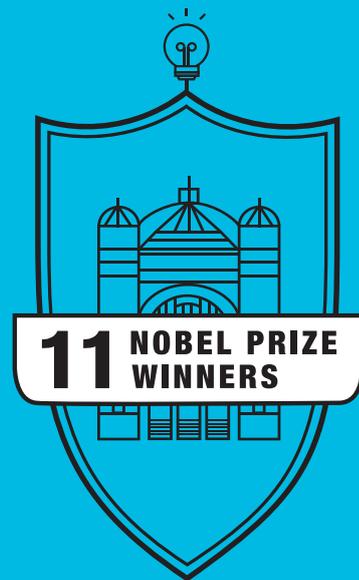
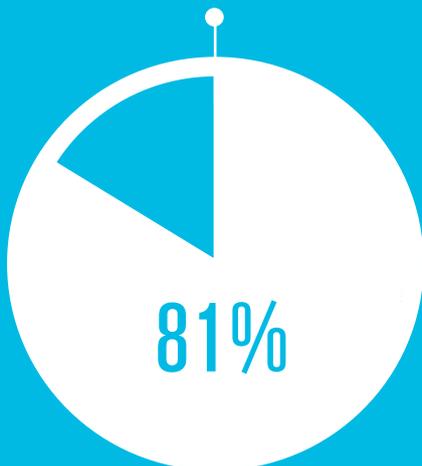
This equates to the cost of building 7 flagship hospitals or 140 state-of-the-art secondary schools

Our Total Impact



Our research is world leading

81% of research rated as world leading (4*) or internationally excellent (3*)



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