



University  
of Exeter



# HASS Research Report 2024-25



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## Introduction from Susan Molyneux-Hodgson

Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research & Impact, HASS

**A huge welcome to our latest annual research report. The contents provide a mere snippet of research that highlights the vast range of exciting work that is underway across the HASS Faculty. The 2024/25 academic year has seen us achieve some major milestones in recognition and awards and preparations are now well under way for the next REF with a wide selection of support activities underway in Departments and at Faculty level.**

We welcomed new leadership in Digital Humanities in the form of Gabriella Giannachi and Fabrizio Nevola. A huge thank you to Leif Isaksen for his time as Director and who continues to work in this key area of strength, particularly in relation to skills development. The Centre for Cultures and Environments of Health is transitioning into an even broader offering under Rebecca Flemming's directorship, continuing to welcome new people and funding success as well as building new cross-faculty initiatives. The Ethical Data Initiative, based in SPSPA, held a major launch in Munich alongside our partner university in this initiative, TUM. Exeter took up leadership, alongside Bath Spa University, of the British Academy ECR Network covering the wider south west region. The next version of the ESRC DTP began, now working across 8 institutions, and we learned of our success in securing the next version of the AHRC DTP alongside a new collaboration with the BBSRC Wessex One Health doctoral scheme.

Amidst the everyday work as APVC, there are always some personal highlights. For example, I had the pleasure to introduce Lynette Goddard, Professor of Black Theatre and Performance at Royal Holloway, University of London, to give the annual Teagarden Lecture in early June. Lynette spoke with wisdom and wit as they led us through their ongoing analysis of Black British queer and trans plays and performances. Being asked to act like "a podcast host" was a new one for me as I

'chaired' the public debate that was part of the Royal Historical Society visit to colleagues in HASS Cornwall (see page 27). The successful delivery of the new 'future leaders' programme (see page 15) was also a delight.

This will be my last 'Intro' of this annual report as APVC R&I as I step down at the end of my 3yr tenure (5yrs if we include ADR time in CSSIS). It's been a tremendous honour to serve in this crucial research leadership role and an absolute joy to meet and work alongside the huge numbers of incredible and committed researchers at all stage of their careers. Working hand and hand with our amazing research support colleagues we have, collectively, achieved amazing things. I need to single out Suzie Masterman as the mastermind of just about everything. Thank you.

I leave the role with the HASS research community continuing to demonstrate real strengths in a difficult wider higher education context. We know that the UK Government Spending Review will not deliver all we desire in terms of financial support for research. But with the immense creativity that resides in our Faculty, I am certain we have a promising future, especially in the capable hands of Catriona Pennell and John Clarke as our fabulous new APVC R&I role-holders.

Best wishes to all  
**Susan**



# Overview

2024-25 has been another great year for the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Science. Across the 10 departments that make up the Faculty we have:

- Secured £9.3m of funding to support research projects (from 1st August 2024 to 31st May 2025). Further projects are subject to contract.
- Submitted applications totalling £71m (from 1st August 2024 to 31st May 2025)
- Supervised 123 students to PhD completion (from 1st August 2024 to 6th June 2025)
- Awarded 18 new PhD studentships totalling ~£1.7m funded by the Faculty, The Wolfson Postgraduate Scholarships, philanthropic funders and research grants. These are in addition to those awarded via Doctoral Training Partnerships.

Our Funders this year so far include:





# Prizes

## University of Exeter archaeologist awarded OBE in the New Year’s Honours List

Congratulations to [Timothy Insoll](#) (IAIS) on being awarded an OBE in the New Year’s Honours List for his services to archaeology in Bahrain and UK/Bahraini relations over the past 25 years.

Timothy is an expert in the archaeology of rituals and religions with particular specialism in sub-Saharan Africa, the Arabian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula. He is the Honorary Archaeological Advisor to the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Bahrain, Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa.

He, Bahraini colleagues, and his research team recently uncovered one of the earliest Christian buildings in the Arabian Gulf in Bahrain – the first physical evidence of a long-lost community who were followers of the Church of the East, sometimes also called the Nestorian Church. The Nestorian church survived in the region until large-scale conversion to Islam began after the religion was established in 610 CE. A museum is now being developed to preserve the remarkable site which will open in 2026.

Timothy Insoll



The Post Office Scandal Project team are Professor Richard Moorhead, Professor Rebecca Helm and Dr Sally Day from the University of Exeter, Dr Karen Nokes, from University College London, and Paul Gilbert, from LBC Wise Counsel. Photo credit: Anthony Sajdler

## National award for researchers working to help Post Office Scandal victims find justice

Congratulations to [Richard Moorhead](#), [Rebecca Helm](#) and [Sally Day](#) (each from Law) who have played a pivotal role in examining the Post Office Scandal and won a prestigious award.

The experts won the “Outstanding Societal Impact” category at the Economic and Social Research Council’s Celebrating Impact Prize 2024. The prizes recognises and rewards ESRC-funded researchers who have achieved impact through exceptional research, knowledge exchange activities, collaborative partnerships and community engagement.

Their work has ensured professional misconduct by lawyers is a primary focus of the ongoing public inquiry, demonstrated the devastating mental health impact of unfair accusations on sub-postmasters, and aided their search for compensation and justice.

The team’s research into why innocent people plead guilty to crimes they did not commit helped lay the groundwork for the blanket exoneration for all convicted sub-postmasters rather than forcing them to each battle a complex appeal process to prove their innocence.

The Post Office Scandal is one of the largest miscarriages of justice in modern English history. Current estimates suggest as many as 1,000 victims were wrongly prosecuted, many more lost their livelihoods, and thousands had money taken from them. For two years the research team have recorded information about the impact on those involved through a survey, research interviews and analysis of Inquiry evidence.

# EU Projects

## EduGRE: Education in Graeco-Roman Egypt – An Intercultural Approach

[Chiara Meccariello](#) (CAHRT), has been awarded €2m for her European Research Council (ERC) funded project ‘*EduGRE: Education in Graeco-Roman Egypt – An Intercultural Approach*’, which is designed to highlight the dynamic interplay and the cultural exchange that shaped educational practices in Graeco-Roman Egypt.

The five-year project seeks to challenge preexisting notions that Greek and Egyptian education operated independently of one another. A specialist in manuscripts of ancient literature, Chiara Meccariello and her team will visit museums and collections around the world

to study specific artefacts written in Greek, Latin and Egyptian. There, they will not only analyse the text but also use techniques such as photogrammetry to capture the physical form of the artefact – from which they will create a dedicated digital platform that will ‘host’ these artefacts, with detailed images and 3D reconstructions.

Chiara said: “Traditionally, research in this area has been split by disciplines, with scholars of Greek or Latin material rarely engaging with Egyptian material and vice versa. EduGRE addresses this gap by studying all the evidence together to reconstruct the bigger picture of how education worked in a multicultural society, and how it evolved over time against the backdrop of societal and religious changes.”



An excerpt of The Iliad written on a wooden tablet © The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International licence.

## HUGERA: Human Genomics Without Racism

[Celso Alves Neto](#) (SPSA) secured a £1.5 European Research Council Starting Grant for his project ‘*HUGERA: Human Genomics Without Racism*’. Running until 2029 the project will help scientists conduct ethically sound research in the field of Human Genomics.

On average, humans are 99.9% identical in their DNA. While the genetic difference among humans is vanishingly small, it is not inconsequential. This difference might help scientists to better understand human evolution and health, which could lead to unprecedented advancements in medicine and care. To unlock these benefits, the field of Human Genomics has received significant public and private funding in recent decades.

The HUGERA project will develop a framework that maps out the ethically sensitive aspects of contemporary genomics research. It will identify the potential risks that could hamper science and lead to harm. Hence, the framework will offer key information for designing ethical recommendations, best practices, and policy decisions. The framework will also motivate new scientific tools, such as new ways to visualize human genetic variation.

## RoadSTEAMer

A research team led by [Kerry Chappell](#) (SoE) have contributed to a significant new policy map for STEAM (Science, Technology, Education, Arts and Mathematics) education in Europe. The 3-year, EU-Horizon funded [Road-STEAMer](#) project sees them partnering with 12 organisations from across Europe. The Exeter team, including [Lindsay Hetherington](#) (SoE), [Lucy Yeomans](#) (SoE) and [Harriet White](#) (SoE), have led on several deliverables and published two research publications so far ([Practice or Praxis?](#) and [A framework for effective STEAM education](#)).

The new [interactive policy map](#), produced as a culmination of [previous work by the project](#), highlights proposed strategies and concrete actions for policy makers to promote the mainstreaming of STEAM education in European Union funding streams, and suggests four key priority areas: Strengthening the STEAM Curriculum at National and EU level; Enhancing Teacher Training and the Learning Environment; STEAM literate citizens – aligning STEAM education and career design with societal and industrial needs; and Transdisciplinary, effective inclusive STEAM education paradigms promoting equity. Whilst it is already being shared with senior-level EU policy makers shaping the next round of Horizon and Erasmus+, the roadmap will undergo further refinement before the final version is completed in August 2025 and disseminated to policymakers across the EU and within the UK.



# Research showcases

**Our departments have been highlighting their fantastic work this year through a series of events, with ECW and LCVS holding their first departmental Research Showcases, and HaSS Cornwall collaborating with the Environment and Sustainability Institute to host a Human Futures Research Showcase.**

The LCVS event included talks and displays from researchers in Portuguese, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and Catalan, as well as a large display of books and other publications from many more LCVS colleagues across the entire breadth of the discipline.

LCVS Research showcase



LCVS Research showcase

HaSS Cornwall collaborated with the ESI to host a Human Futures Research Showcase. Guided by four key HASS research priorities – Environmental Justice; Memory, Identity, and Heritage; Violence, Power, and (De)Colonialism; and Voice, Participation, and Governance – attendees explored how interdisciplinary research into environmental and social sustainability can help us to understand, interrogate, and exist in an ever-unstable world.

The ECW research showcase revealed the breadth of work taking place in the department and highlighted how academics are using their expertise to tackle pressing societal issues. These included areas as diverse as food security, chemicals and pollutants, contemporary publishing, and recovering previously suppressed social histories.

# Research Infrastructure News

## Oral history project preserved in University's Special Collections

Section 28 and its Afterlives, a project co-led by Chris Sandal-Wilson (A&H), Helen Birkett (A&H) and Hannah Young has amassed interviews with people across the South West whose lives were impacted by the eponymous legislation, which made it illegal for local authorities and schools to provide LGBTQ+ people with inclusive information, representation and support out of fear these would “promote” homosexuality.

The project began with an appeal to the public to share their stories about the impact the act had upon their lives in the region. Specially trained students conducted interviews with a dozen LGBTQ+ people who had contacted the project team, and these were edited into digital recordings. At a special ceremony, on the 21st anniversary of the repealing of the law, the interview recordings and written transcripts were presented to staff at the University's Special Collections – the archive that contains a wide range of often unique and rare artefacts and memorabilia. There, it joins other preserved materials that reflect upon the era – some of which were put on display to invited guests from the project. Since then, that exhibition has been hosted by venues in Devon, Dorset and Cornwall, and the project team has facilitated further collage workshops, mapping exercises and educational activities at schools, and at numerous Pride events and in other community spaces.

With National Lottery Heritage Funding, they have interviewed more people, bringing the total number of oral histories to around 30. And the team is now recruiting students to be ‘LGBTQ+ Champions’, who will work to support youth groups in Devon. All this activity has been supported by the leading LGBTQ+ charity in the South West, the Intercom Trust.

Oral history project  
preserved in University's  
Special Collections



## Infrastructure for Future Humanities

A new Working Group was established with an overall aim to understand future ‘infrastructure’ needs for HASS research. Identifying our USPs and potential new projects and external donors has been part of the discussion. The group has met several times with activities including: presentations on existing infrastructure e.g. DH Lab, DAME, SHaRD Lab; an overview of the 22nd Century Library strategy; and insights to philanthropy. The group is well-linked into the Philanthropy team and the University's Technical Services leadership to ensure we can make use of the existing support structures that are available. Members have valued being able to gather to discuss infrastructure needs and challenges, to learn a huge amount from other initiatives and to begin to develop ideas for next steps.

## Centre for Advanced Research Methods (CARM)

The Faculty are proud to have soft-launched The Centre for Advanced Research Methods (CARM). CARM is a virtual resource and small team that provides an interdisciplinary environment to build on our excellent research practice and disciplinary traditions to develop and support new partnerships and explore methodological innovation.

The Centre aims to create a space for collaboration and the development of innovative research approaches, methods and methods training. Work is underway to collate all ‘research training’ forms of provision across the Faculty to provide a repository of for Staff and PGR students.

Under the CARM umbrella, our methodological expertise is divided into three areas:

- Digital Humanities
- Computational Social Science
- Qualitative and Creative

# Cross-Disciplinary Working, Impact and Partnership

## Defence, Security & Resilience network



The event was introduced by University of Exeter President and Vice Chancellor, Professor Lisa Roberts

Cutting edge work by experts in the University's Defence, Security & Resilience network was celebrated at an event with more than 40 attendees from the MoD, the Armed Forces, the Home Office, FCDO, NCA, Cabinet Office, the Intelligence Community and the defence industry, as well as representatives from a range of Government departments.

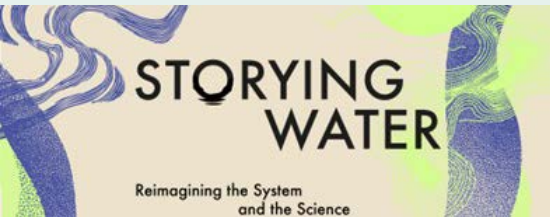
At the event a [compendium of articles](#) was launched on topics including the sustainability of the nuclear deterrent; what happens if Iran becomes a nuclear state; delivering AI at scale; skills shortages in novel and disruptive technologies; understanding the law of armed conflict; the circular economy, the impact of climate change on military readiness and online extremism and self-radicalisation.

Academics in the network work with local, regional and central government partners, businesses and international governments, partners and collaborators. Current partners include Devon and Cornwall Police Forces, the College of Policing, the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Justice, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and key defence industry partners, such as BAE Systems and Thales.

## Storying Water

[Storying Water](#) is an arts-led research project to explore our water system – what it means to people, how it works, challenges involved in maintaining it, species affected by human uses of it, why its future resilience is threatened, and, in the face of environmental emergency, what is needed to improve and protect it into the future.

The project is funded by South West Water and led by [Ellen Wiles](#) (ECW): artist-in-residence at the Centre for Resilience in Environment, Water and Waste. She will collaborate with scientists, and with other experts, to translate their research, experience and ideas into compelling audio storytelling, and to explore new possibilities for arts-based engagement with science research. The project will produce two podcasts: an informative podcast, following the path of the Exe from source to sea, and exploring key elements of the water system on the way; and an imaginative podcast involving fiction and reflecting on the water system from non-human points of view.



Storying Water – Reimagining the system and the science

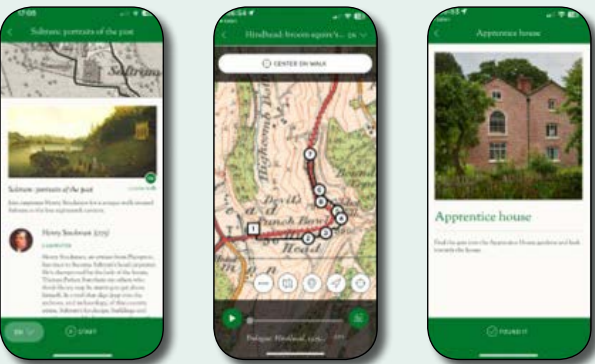
## HistoryScapes storytelling app: 'time travel experience' through voices from the past

Three National Trust properties are the focus of an immersive new app that brings their estates' histories to life through the eyes of ordinary people – thanks to a collaboration with history and heritage experts at the University.

HistoryScapes is a free app that takes users on GPS-triggered trails at National Trust properties to connect people to landscape heritage. Each trail is led by a historical figure and inspired by research into them, offers a 'living history' format to give visitors the sense of having one foot in the past, the other in the present. Saltram in Devon, Quarry Bank in Cheshire, and Devil's Punch Bowl in Surrey, have all been featured on the app, and are explored through the eyes of a carpenter, mill worker, and broom maker.

HistoryScapes is led by the National Trust's Historic Environment and Visitor Experience teams, but builds on the work of a team in the University's [Department of Languages, Cultures and Visual Studies](#), who have created the [HistoryCity apps](#), a series of interactive historical guides to key European cities that can be explored on smartphones.

Each trail has eight stops, hooked to a historic map and triggered by GPS (or by tapping site points off site). At each stop, there is also 'Discover More' audio, commentary from National Trust experts that provides context and a view from the present, along with historical images from the Trust's and other collections. Users can also link from each site to a webpage that offers more information, images and other content. The app is available until the end of 2025. [Download the 'HistoryScapes' app](#).



HistoryScapes storytelling app: 'time travel experience' through voices from the past



# Research Culture & Training

## Enhancing Research Culture and Environment in HASS 2024-25

The *Exeter Writes* initiative has continued to prioritise and embed support across the Faculty whilst broadening our offer to address other forms of research output, such as so-called non-traditional outputs. Book writing and production of other output forms have been placed at the heart of our research culture strategy and supported through:

- Timetabled weekly virtual writing retreats alongside in-person writing retreats on the Streatham campus, with similar events organised by colleagues in Penryn.
- A writing buddying scheme, with the aim to pair colleagues from across disciplines, research areas and career stages where each party can really gain as a writer from their partner.
- Our 'Publishing your book in a series' and 'Pitching a new series to a publisher' hybrid sessions which looked at the publishing of monographs as parts of lists or series.
- A 'Non-traditional outputs assessment' workshop, a hybrid session focused on non-traditional output quality and assessment. Speakers shared their experiences of producing, submitting, and reviewing non-traditional outputs and any lessons learned.
- A 'Revise and Resubmit' session, providing colleagues with practical tips as to how to make the process work for them. This was delivered by two Exeter scholars with a great deal of editorial and publishing experience



which helped all participants gain a clearer understanding as to what editors and journals are really asking for when they invite you to resubmit your work.

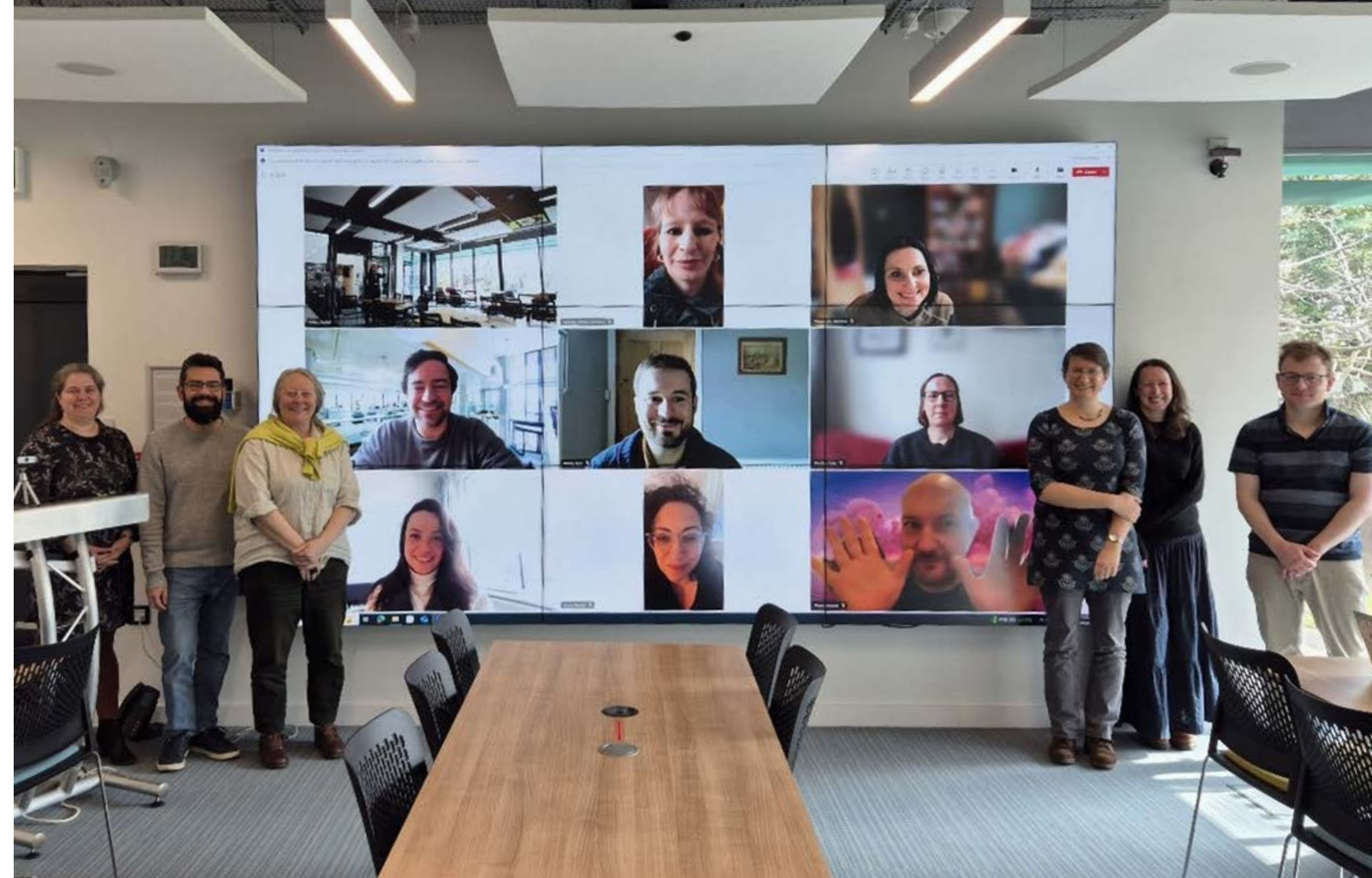
- A session in 'Narrating and evidencing impact' arising from research which produces non-traditional outputs, a session that looked at examples of portraying the cyclical, iterative, and coincidental forms of research/impact in projects that had creative products as their key outputs. We heard from colleagues about their experience of navigating this issue.
- Two multi-day Summer Schools hosted at our Penryn campus, providing writing retreat opportunities and evening lectures/workshops across 2 weeks in July.

HASS colleagues have also played a central role in the University's series of articles describing what great research culture looks like and how some of our departments are promoting this.

Neil Harrison highlighted how SoE is fostering a positive research culture by developing a 'microleave system' to help research colleagues overcome blockages in their workload.

Sanja Djerasic, Research and Impact Fellow, explained why her research into academic identities, ECR challenges and EDI issues is so important for research culture and how it supports our research culture locally and regionally.

Emma Loosley, highlighted what CAHRT are doing to foster a positive and thriving research culture and how it pays to learn from unsuccessful bids.



Some members of the HASS Future Research Leadership Programme cohort with the organisers

## HASS Future Research Leadership Programme

2024/25 saw the launch of the HASS Future Research Leadership Programme, which came to a successful conclusion in April. The Programme was structured over 8 sessions with presentations, discussion and activities. The Programme aimed to provide peer support and constructively critical feedback to a cohort of colleagues from all HASS departments aiming to apply to the 2025 UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship (FLF), European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grant and Wellcome Early Career Award (ECA) calls. Academic and PS staff contributed time to input at sessions, as well as programme members generously supporting each other.

'It was a useful opportunity to get feedback on projects, to interact with the research support team and to get a better overview of what to bear in mind when developing bids etc. The course had a good balance of activities that unpacked different components of the process and thought about a mixture of immediate funding needs and long term career planning, which was really helpful.'



# PGR Community

**We have had a very good year for studentships in HASS, with 18 studentships, representing an investment of ~£1.7m, for September 2025 entry.**

These are funded by the Faculty, Wolfson Foundation, philanthropic donations, and research grants. In addition, we expect to welcome 3 ESRC South-West Doctoral Training Partnership funded students, and 25 funded by the AHRC South, West & Wales Doctoral Training Partnership (as home and co-supervisory institution). We are delighted to have been awarded funding for the next iteration of the AHRC training partnerships, the Doctoral Landscape Award.

Our existing Postgraduate Research Students form an integral part of our Departments and Faculty and building an inclusive research culture is vital. We have undertaken significant work in this area this year, including the appointment of 12 Peer-to-Peer Research Culture Assistants who have been keenly working to foster a strong research culture across HASS and beyond. They have co-ordinated and arranged events and resources which have sat alongside the Faculty-organised research skills and wider training programmes. Some examples from the successful Peer to Peer programme include:

- Writing retreats
- Networks focusing on Gender and Sexuality Research and Disabled and Neurodivergent Peer Support
- Support for Emotionally Sensitive Research
- Interdisciplinary research, learning, and networking

- Research Blog, with contributions on part time research, combining research and parenthood <https://sites.exeter.ac.uk/hasspgrblog/>
- Use of specific software tools to support the PGR journey
- And so much more...

Congratulations to IAIS PGR student [Bryar Bajalan](#) who received a grant from the British Council's Cultural Protection Fund, in partnership with the UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to preserve and teach Mosul's special craft of *Maqam*, a system of melodic modes for traditional story-telling and spiritual ceremonies. ([Major new project will support preservation of endangered Iraqi musical heritage for future generations - News](#)). He also curated a successful photography exhibit in the IAIS street gallery (2025), called "Mosul's witness", the first curated exhibit of Mosul's photographer, Muhammad Jawad Karim.

Mosul's special craft of Maqam, which dates to 750, is even more vulnerable due to the country's conflicts over the past two decades, including the ISIS attack of 2014



# ECR Support and Success

**2024/25 has seen significant HASS ECR grant success, notably with the Wellcome Early Career Award scheme. Excellent co-working with committed Exeter mentors has seen two, new 5-year projects awarded to [Nickolas Surawy Stepney \(IAIS\)](#) and [Aimee Middlemiss \(SPSPA\)](#).**

## Addiction and Deaddiction in India

In India opiate use is three times the global average, and 'de-addiction' services are rapidly expanding across the country. Yet very little qualitative information is available on the treatment, experience, or history of 'addiction' in the country. Nickolas's project will analyse the impact of high rates of drug use in India, and how doctors and charities are treating addiction in the continent.

During fieldwork in northwest India he will examine – through observation and interviews – how healthcare workers in medical settings tackle addictions. This includes 'de-addiction centres' ('nashaa mukti kendr') and a large hospital.

He will also examine archives to trace how addiction has been treated in India in the law and by doctors.

## Containing pregnancies: Cervical cerclage as a reproductive technology

Aimee's project will investigate the reproductive politics of foetal personhood and pregnancy enacted by the use of the cervical stitch (cerclage), in the context of the English National Health Service (NHS)'s attempts to reduce preterm birth. The cervical stitch is an intervention in human pregnancy in which the cervix at the opening of the uterus is sewn shut to prevent a foetal body from emerging. It aims to optimise pregnancy outcomes by averting foetal loss, or the mortality and morbidity risks of premature birth, but medical evidence for improved outcomes is uncertain.

The project investigates the reproductive politics of the cervical stitch through multi-sited ethnography in England, including interviews with clinicians, stakeholders, and pregnant people, and analysis of policy and guidelines. It asks how the cervical stitch is conceptualised and used, and what concepts of foetal personhood and pregnancy are scripted into, and enacted by, this reproductive technology. Engaging theoretically with feminist biopolitics, ontological politics, and foetal politics, the project will use the ambiguities and tensions implicit in the cervical stitch to draw out fundamental understandings of what a pregnancy is, what it does, and how a new person emerges from it, in the context of reproductive politics in England.



# Archaeology and History

**The Department is excelling in showcasing the University's research successes to national and international audiences through widespread press coverage. Among exciting projects to feature are 'Flagstones' an Innovative ancient burial site found to be older than Stonehenge.**

Archaeological research conducted on the prehistoric Dorset burial site known as Flagstones has revealed that it is the earliest known large circular enclosure in Britain. The monument, located near Dorchester, has been redated to about 3,200 years BC – approximately two centuries earlier than previously thought – thanks to advanced radiocarbon analysis of some of the finds discovered there, including human remains, red deer antlers and charcoal.

The new scientific dating programme, led by [Susan Greaney](#) and Dr Peter Marshall, formerly Scientific Dating Co-Ordinator at Historic England, involved collaboration with laboratories at ETH Zürich and the University of Groningen, who provided 23 new radiocarbon measurements. Combining the radiocarbon dates with archaeological information revealed that early Neolithic activity, including the digging of pits, took place around 3650 BC. After a gap of many centuries, the circular ditched enclosure was created around 3200 BC, with burials placed within it immediately afterwards. Intriguingly, a later burial of a young adult male under a large sarsen stone at the centre of the enclosure occurred around 1,000 years or so after its initial use.

The analysis suggests that Flagstones may have served as a prototype for later monuments like Stonehenge. Findings from this collaborative research by the University of Exeter and Historic England, have been published in [the journal Antiquity](#).

## Lost Elizabethan manor house rediscovered in Devon



Aerial photograph, taken by a drone, of the excavations, with the Victorian chapel visible (Laurence Vinnels © University of Exeter)

A long-lost Elizabethan manor house that swapped hands between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians during the English Civil War has been 'unearthed' by archaeology students and volunteers. Excavations on the National Trust-managed Killerton estate in East Devon has found some of the remains of Columbjohn, the mansion that originally sat at its heart, and which once hosted Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell. The project featured on the BBC's Digging for Britain, the episode can be viewed here:

You can find out more about the project on Digging for Britain: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0026rl9/digging-for-britain-series-12-6-lost-mansions-and-impaled-prisoners>



A twisted glass stem from a 17th century fine drinking glass (Steph Vinnels © University of Exeter)

## Research Projects

[Naomi Sykes'](#) project Fair Game: Valuing the bio-cultural heritage of fallow deer won the 2025 Archaeology & Sustainability Award. Fair Game articulates medieval-style principles and archaeological evidence of fallow deer management, processing and venison redistribution, to transform public understanding and sector partnerships and approaches to deer management, creating positive outcomes for biodiversity, climate action and food justice.

[Lucas McMahon](#) joins the department to undertake his project 'Information and Empire in New Rome, ca. 600-1200'. One of only 12 British Academy International Fellowships awarded to outstanding HASS researchers, the project is an anarchist history of information control in the medieval eastern Roman Empire that focuses on the total information regime by which the state watched its neighbours, repressed dissent, and extracted the resources necessary for its existence and reproduction. The aim is to comprehend the lived experience of empire in the distant past while also providing a template for understanding the relationship between information, power, and the state.

[James Clark](#) and [Henry French](#), collaborating with colleagues in Economics and Engineering have secured funding from the AHRC to deliver the project 'Informing contemporary UK land use policy through a sustainability assessment of farming systems in the medieval and early modern period'. The team will provide a systematic sustainability appraisal of land use systems at different historical reference periods, providing insights into changes over time.

## Publications

Based upon extensive archaeological and historical research, including the study of bones and DNA, armour and art, [Oliver Creighton](#) and an Exeter-led team's book, *Medieval Warhorse: Equestrian Landscapes, Material Culture and Zooarchaeology in Britain, AD800-1550* was published by Liverpool University press in 2025. Presenting a complete picture of the development of this iconic animal through the Middle Ages, it is the principal output from a major AHRC grant.

[Marc Palen's](#) book, *Pax Economica: Left-wing Visions of a Free Trade World* was published by Princeton University Press in 2024. While today, free trade is often associated with right-wing free marketeers, Palen shows that free trade and globalisation in fact have roots in nineteenth-century left-wing politics. The book was named one of the Financial Times's 'Best Books of 2024'. It was also named one of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs' Top Ten Reads of 2024, and made the New Yorker's 'Best Books of 2024' list.

[Ryan Hanley's](#) second book, *Robert Wedderburn: British Insurrectionary, Jamaican Abolitionist* was published by Yale University Press in February 2025. Robert Wedderburn (1762-1834/5) was one of the most charismatic, irascible, and radical intellectuals of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Atlantic world. Born to an enslaved woman and a slavemaster in Jamaica, and moving in the radical working-class circles of London, Wedderburn made his name as a fiery political writer and orator—before dying, forgotten, in poverty. An article on Robert Wedderburn by Hanley also appeared in BBC History magazine in April.





# Classics, Ancient History, Religion and Theology

## Research Projects

The Department has had success across the different Leverhulme Fellowship schemes, with [Morwenna Ludlow](#) securing a Major Research Fellowship for her project ‘God and Good Speech in Early Christianity, a critical theological investigation’ and [Martin Pitts](#) being awarded a Leverhulme Fellowship for ‘Contaminating encounters and Roman imperial objects’.

Morwenna’s project asks the question ‘Who can speak with authority, when, where, and how? What kinds of speech are not just permissible but good?’. This ground-breaking project will provide a new framework for analysing early Christian answers to these questions. The examination of key modes of speech (encouragement, boldness, gentleness, simplicity, silence) will uncover crucial relationships between practice, performativity and power. The project will reveal a complex pattern of mutual influence between classical and Christian ideas of good speech. A better historical and critical understanding of these interactions is urgently needed because debates about public discourse make frequent appeals to idealised versions of the past.

Martin’s project examines the thousands of objects placed in c.5000 graves from Roman imperial NW Europe, 100 – 400 CE. By using multivariate statistics to simultaneously compare the funerary ‘consumer’ choices made by ancient people in an area spanning six modern nations and the Roman provinces of Britannia, Gallia Belgica and Germania, the research offers significant potential for multi-scalar insights into the intertwining of people and things in an ever-changing and richly complex cultural milieu.

Congratulations also to [Chiara Meccariello](#) for winning an ERC Consolidator Award for her project ‘EduGRE: Education in Graeco-Roman Egypt – An Intercultural Approach’. For full details see page 8.

## Research Events



Prof Rajani Naidoo (Vice-President and DVC People and Culture), Revd Dr Brandon Crowley (Harvard Divinity School), Prof Susannah Cornwall (Professor of Constructive Theologies and Director of EXCEPT), Prof Helen Berry (Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for the HASS Faculty)

In November, the Societies and Cultures Institute and EXCEPT (Exeter Centre for Ethics and Practical Theology) welcomed Revd Dr Brandon Crowley to Exeter. Dr Crowley is Lecturer in Ministry Studies at Harvard Divinity School and Senior Pastor of the Historic Myrtle Baptist Church in Newton, Massachusetts, one of the USA’s oldest Black congregations founded by formerly enslaved persons and one of its few open and affirming historically Black churches.

Dr Crowley joined a networking lunch for postgraduates, early career schools and scholars of colour at Knightley building to mark the end of Black History Month 2024. He then delivered a lecture on the themes of his Oxford University Press book *Queering Black Churches: Dismantling Heteronormativity in African American Congregations*. This was followed by a response from EXCEPT research associate David Nixon and some lively questions and discussion with attendees from Exeter, other universities and the local community, chaired by EXCEPT’s Director, [Susannah Cornwall](#). The visit took place in the same week as the US presidential election and the questions and conversation covered topics including the politics of fear and how Black theologies might interrupt these discourses, the influence of slavery on African American Christians’ identity, and the potentials of LGBTQI+ people’s affirmation in faith communities.

## Ancient Medicine in Macedonia, Thrace and Northern Greece: New Approaches to the Classical and Hellenistic Periods

This hybrid workshop, coordinated by [Rebecca Flemming](#), was organised by the Centre for the study of Science, Technology, Ancient Medicine and Philosophy (STAMP) at the University of Exeter and the Antigonid Network. Speakers included Dr Despina Ignatiadou (Hellenic National Archaeological Museum Athens), [David Leith](#) (University of Exeter), and Dr Effie Photos-Jones (Glasgow University).

Recent archaeological finds of surgical instruments and other medical items, as well as the Hippocratic writings themselves, put the spotlight on northern Greece and neighbouring locations—on Thessaly, Thasos, Macedonia and the Black Sea, for example—as key sites, if not centres of medical activity in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. The workshop combined old and new evidence, old and new techniques of analysis, to investigate the culture and practices, organisation and materials, of health and healing in these places, and asked how that shifted geographical focus might change our view of ancient Greek medicine more broadly.

## Publications

2025 saw the launch of [Emily Hauser’s](#) new book, *Mythica: A New History of Homer’s World, through the Women Written Out Of It*, published by Doubleday. The launch event in Exeter was a wonderful evening, with Emily talking about the book to an audience in Waterstones.



Launch of Emily Hauser’s new book, *Mythica: A New History of Homer’s World, through the Women Written Out Of It*



# Communications, Drama and Film

## Research Projects, events and centres

### Centre for Critical AI Studies launched

The new Research Centre for Critical AI Studies (CrAIC) has had an exciting first year. In February, lead researchers [Patrick Gildersleve](#), [Andrea Medrado](#), and [Brett Zehner](#) travelled to Amsterdam to share their work and spark collaborative conversations with colleagues and the postgraduate community at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Looking ahead, CrAIC is preparing to officially launch the centre with a two-day event on 7–8 October 2025.

### EPSRC-funded project “The Social Foundations of Cryptography”

[Andrea Medrado](#) serves as the Exeter Principal Investigator on ‘The Social Foundations of Cryptography’ Project which has secured £1m from the EPSRC as part of a consortium between King’s College London, Royal Holloway, and Exeter. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork with activist groups in adversarial contexts, the project aims to reshape cryptographic security notions based on real-world practices and experiences.

### Leverhulme Research Fellowship: Performing Gardens: Land, planting and colonialism in places of leisure



(Photo:Uday Shankar at Dartington Hall: Dartington Archives DHTA/MC/S4/39/A, Shankar: playbills)

[Cathy Turner](#) has been awarded a Leverhulme Research Fellowship to research ‘Performing Gardens: Land, planting and colonialism in places of leisure’ (Springer, *Performing Landscapes* series). She will explore a series of case studies,

ranging from the beginning to end of British colonialism in India and at home, to identify cultural performances of land, nature, power and resistance in gardens. The project is the first extended study to analyse gardens as performance spaces.

### Russian Arctic Media: Contemporary Indigenous Media Advocacy in the Russophone Far North

[Adelaide McGinity-Peebles](#)’ ESRC-funded Polarities and Regions Network Plus Fellowship project investigates how Russian Arctic Indigenous peoples advocate on behalf of their lands and peoples in the wake of the existential threats of Russian ethnonationalism, industrial pollution, and climate change. It focuses on the significance and use of media – broadly defined – in Russian Indigenous peoples’ fight to preserve their cultures and heritages. The Arctic is of key geopolitical and economic importance to Russia: melting ice caused by climate change has opened up new possibilities for hydrocarbon extraction and a Northern Sea route. Such policies are detrimental to the 250,000 Indigenous peoples that are the custodians of Russia’s Northern lands.



Russian Arctic Media: Contemporary Indigenous Media Advocacy in the Russophone Far North

### Woman with a Movie Camera Summit



(Photo: Helen Hanson (l) and Wendy Russell (r) at the BFI Southbank, photo by Isabelle Hill)

The AHRC-funded ‘Women’s Screen Work in the Archives Made Visible’ Project was featured at the BFI Southbank National Film Theatre as part of the ‘Woman With a Movie Camera’ Summit in January 2025. Members of the project team (Wendy Russell – BFI, [Helen Hanson](#) – Exeter (Project Lead)) gave talks about tracing the work of Script Supervisors within the archival collections of the British Film Institute, they also led a session with archival materials: ‘Show and Tell: What Archives Teach Us about Continuity Work’

### Publications

2024–5 saw the launch of three Communications books: [Aditya Deshbandhu](#)’s book, *The 21st Century in 100 Games*, was published by Routledge in 2024; [Sanja Vico](#)’s book, *Doing Nation in a Digital Age* was published by Routledge in 2025; [Zizheng Yu](#)’s book, *Consumer Activism in China: Video and Beyond*, was published by Springer in 2025.

Film books include: [Benedict Morrison](#)’s book, *Eccentric Laughter: Queer Possibilities in Postwar British Film Comedy*, was published by SUNY Press in 2024, which argues that postwar British film comedies’ representations of eccentricity offered a set of possible queer futures for a Britain that had been destabilized by years of conflict and social upheaval; [Fiona Handyside](#)’s book, *Girls’ Hairstories: Sparkle and Resilience in Contemporary Screen Cultures*, was published by Edinburgh University Press in 2025, which shows how across different cultural levels and audiences, girls’ hairstyles in film provide a complex dynamic site of interpretation and interaction; [Joe Kember](#) and [John Plunkett](#)’s book, *Popular Visual Shows 1800–1914: Picturegoing from Peep Shows to Film*, was

published by Oxford University Press in 2025, which tells the story of the growth of picture going as a popular habit between 1800 and 1914.

In Drama, monographs include [Rebecca Loukes](#)’ book, *Radical Sensing and Performer Training: Elsa Gindler’s Embodied Translations*, was published by Routledge in 2025. This book explores the pioneering radical sensing work of Elsa Gindler (1885–1961), and the practices of five women inspired by her. This is the first book length study of Gindler’s pedagogy in relation to performance, bringing Gindler’s unique practice into dialogue with philosophies drawn from pragmatism and phenomenology. This monograph sits alongside four other longform publications: [Adrian Curtin](#)’s book, *The Theatrical Orchestra: British Music Ensembles Experiment with Performance*, was published by Manchester University Press in 2025; Jerri Daboo’s book, *Jatinder Verma*, was published by Routledge in 2025; [Rebecca Hillman](#) edited, *Willy Russell’s Blood Brothers*, published by Bloomsbury in 2025; and Victoria Hunter and [Cathy Turner](#) edited *The Routledge Companion to Site-Specific Performance*, published by Routledge in 2025.





# English and Creative Writing

## Research Projects

[Gabriella Giannachi](#) has had a fantastic year, with funding awarded from the AHRC for a three-year BRAID Demonstrator project led by the University of Nottingham, [Responsible use of AI in the creation, archiving, reactivation and conservation of artworks and their archives](#). She also a Co-I on the EPSRC funded [Somabotics: Creatively Embodying Artificial Intelligence](#) led by Professor Steve Benford from the Mixed Reality Lab at the University of Nottingham. Finally, Gabriella leads a team, including Lizzy Williamson (ECW), [Susan Molyneux-Hodgson](#) (SPSPA) and colleagues in Computer Science and Psychology, awarded an AHRC Curiosity Grant that will explore how AI could aid conservators and archivists deal with the burgeoning field of performance and new media art documentation.

## Shakespearean Graves: Literature and the Anglophone Way of Death

The influence and inspiration that William Shakespeare has had upon the practice of writing epitaphs is to be the focus of a new research project. The three-year project, worth more than £450,000, has been funded by a prestigious Leverhulme Trust Research Project Grant and will be led by [Philip Schwyzer](#) and [Elizabeth Williamson](#) from the [University's Digital Humanities Lab](#).

The team will study epitaphs and obituaries dating back to the 18th century to explore how Shakespeare's words have shaped these elements of funerary practice. It will employ advanced word recognition and pattern-matching software to look for direct quotations and inspirations from Shakespeare's plays, in online databases and other sources such as newspaper archives. The project will also incorporate a special case study of more than 400,000 graves of those who fell in the two World Wars fighting for countries in the Commonwealth.

## AHRC Catalyst Awards



Dr Arun Sood

The department has secured two £300,000 AHRC Catalyst awards. [Arun Sood's](#) 'Plants, Plantations, and the Anglophone Caribbean: Exploring Indigenous and African-descendent knowledge through text, archive, and orality' will explore and recover indigenous and African-descendent knowledge with a specific focus on the ecology of plantation and post-plantation landscapes in the Anglophone Caribbean. It develops an approach which brings archival methods into dialogue with oral cultures through collaboration with partners in Saint Lucia and Barbados, including students and community groups from the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and the University of the West Indies.

Starting later in 2025 [Kate Wallis's](#) three-year project 'Nairobi's Literary Networks 1963-1978: Locating Publishing Histories.' will produce a new account of and approach to Nairobi's literary and publishing histories from 1963 to 1978. The research will locate and analyse the exchanges which forged, connected and sustained new arts spaces and literary initiatives. Working with Nairobi-based project partners including Book Bunk, Saseni!, and the University of Nairobi, the project will employ collaborative methods (including oral history interviews, community engagement and writing workshops) to transform approaches to the literary canon. Planned outputs of Kate's research include public events, podcasts, journal articles, and a monograph.

## 100 Years of The Well of Loneliness

The famously banned novel, *The Well of Loneliness*, is the focus of a new £1m AHRC funded international project that will bring together generations of readers to uncover how it reached and touched so many people around the world.



Cover image of *The Well of Loneliness*, Oxford World's Classics.

Written by British author Radclyffe Hall and often referred to as "the Lesbian Bible", the novel was banned as obscene in the UK following its publication in 1928. Now, in the build-up to the centenary of that ban, a team of experts in late 19th and early 20th-century culture, led by [Jana Funke](#) at Exeter, will carry out new research and create the first oral history of the novel's reception, interviewing 100 readers of the book from different communities and generations to record their interpretations of it.

## Exhibitions & Publications



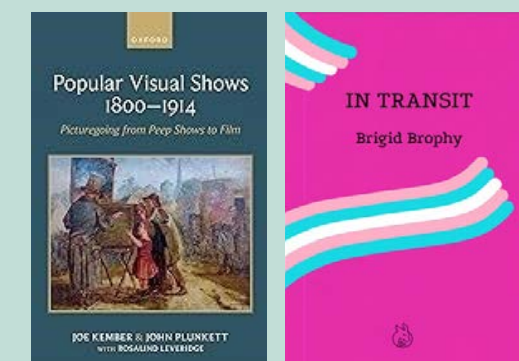
Arun Sood's five screen moving image installation *Shankha*

[Arun Sood's](#) five screen moving image installation *Shankha* was shown from January through March 2025 at The Box Museum Plymouth: "Shankha creates a narrative and collective memory between two different archival films: a post-partition missionary documentary shot in various parts of India; and a 1972 news feature about the relocation of displaced Indians or 'Ugandan Asians' to resettlement camps in Heathfield, Devon. Arun draws on the conch shell (*Shankha*) as an auspicious sonic vessel to explore interconnected and conflicting narratives of partition, displacement, class, and nation. The work features spoken word and new musical compositions spliced with original archival audio, creating a sonic memory between different communities affected by partition and its consequential legacies.

## Publications

[John Plunkett](#) and [Joe Kember](#) (CDF) have co-authored *Popular Visual Shows 1800-1914: Picturegoing from Peep Shows to Film*, published by Oxford University Press in May 2025.

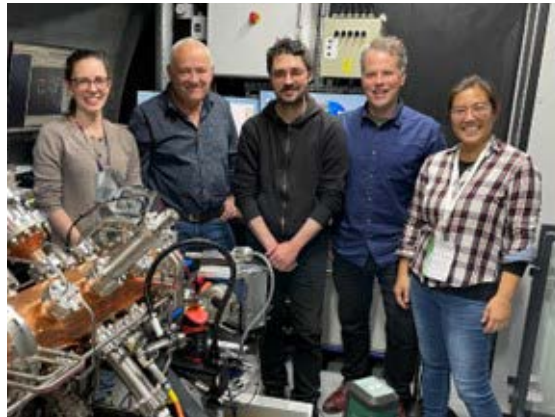
[D-M Withers's](#) Lurid Editions continues to publish forgotten queer books from the twentieth century and beyond. *In Transit*, by Brigid Brophy, was published in May 2025.





# HaSS Cornwall

## NoMAD – Non-destructive Mobile Analysis and imaging Device



Dr Tessa Charles, Dr Serge Mathot, Dr Maxim Korostelev, Prof Jamie Hampson, and Dr Courtney Nimura

The development of the world's first portable particle accelerator designed to be taken to remote parts of the globe to study rock art and other cultural heritage is underway thanks to an interdisciplinary research project. NoMAD – Non-destructive Mobile Analysis and imaging Device – is seeking to create a mini version of the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, to scan rocks to reveal invisible works of art that might have faded over time.

Funded by a £225,000 grant from the BBSRC, designed to bring together STEM and humanities disciplines, NoMAD is being co-led by [Jamie Hampson](#) and archaeologists at the University of Exeter, and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, with physicists at the University of Liverpool and ANSTO (Australian Nuclear Science Technology Organization).

The project formally began work in November 2024 with three days of testing at the world-famous CERN laboratory in Geneva.

## Investigating individual and contextual role of religion in British electoral politics

[Ekaterina Kolpinskaya](#), [Daniel Stevens](#) and [Stuart Fox](#) secured an ESRC Secondary Data Analysis grant for their work on the influence and impact of religious beliefs on political attitudes and voting behaviour in Britain.

The project will combine individual level data from Understanding Society, the British Election Study and the ESRC/JSPS Covid19 Study with aggregate and spatial data from the 2021 Census, places of worship directories and school censuses to produce the first multi-level dataset of religion in Britain. The team will use this new data to study the relationship between religion and voting behaviour in the 2024 general election but also expect the dataset to be a valuable resource for future social research.

## UKRI Critical Minerals Challenge Centre

HaSS Cornwall continues to be a vibrant place for ECRs with two new Research Fellows appointed, including [Christie van Tinteren](#), HASS Innovation Fellow working on the new UKRI Critical Minerals Challenge Centre in collaboration with Camborne School of Mines and several mining companies and civic partners across Cornwall and the wider South West. Christie will be working closely with partners Cornwall Community Foundation and the South West Trades Union Congress on BEI-focused projects around job creation, communities and industrial policy.



Visit to Cornwall Resources

## Research Events

### Eco-Humanities Conference

In March 2025, the Centre for Environmental Arts and Humanities hosted the inaugural Eco-Humanities Conference, [The Stories We Tell Ourselves: Reimagining Ecologies](#), with attendees from Asia, Europe, North America and Australia joining multidisciplinary research panels, creative practice workshops, networking opportunities, and sharing sessions. Professor Greg Garrard (University of British Columbia), one of the best-known figures in environmental criticism worldwide and award-winning author and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, Philip Marsden, delivered a keynote speeches at the event signalling the importance this conference had to HaSS Cornwall involvement in building links with Creative Industries.



Images of the inaugural Eco-Humanities conference

### Royal Historical Society visit

HaSS Cornwall were delighted to welcome the Royal Historical Society's President and Council in 2025. The visit was part of a competitive outreach scheme whereby university historians can apply for a visit from the RHS Council to discuss the work of a department as well as wider disciplinary matters, and to conclude the event with a public lecture. The event was based on the increasing trend in UK HE towards multi-discipline departments and how, as historians, we navigate that.

"We were hugely impressed by the work undertaken by historians at Exeter's beautiful Penryn campus, both in terms of the rigorous yet innovative research that we saw, but also the thought put into delivering a high quality historical and interdisciplinary curriculum for the students there." – RHS President, Professor Lucy Noakes

### Publications

Congratulations to colleagues in the department who have either produced monographs ([DeWaal](#)) or secured monograph contracts ([Kluge](#), [Ogbumgbada](#), [Pennell](#), [Scown](#)), which is testament to the focused support at Faculty and Departmental level that has been offered around monograph writing and book proposals. [Jeremy DeWaal's](#) book, *Geographies of Renewal: Heimat and Democracy in Postwar West Germany*, was published with Cambridge University press in 2025.





# Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies

Experts from IAIS, led by [John Cooper](#), have teamed up with Indian craftsmen to recreate a vanished traditional boat hailed locally as “king of the waves”. While documenting disappearing craft skills, the project has also charted the environmental and social changes behind its disappearance.

Until about 30 years ago, *chhot* boats were widely used as fishing boats in the estuaries and inshore waters of the Indian state of West Bengal, where they were renowned for their superior handling, particularly in challenging estuary conditions. But the building of barrages upstream has made estuaries shallower and calmer, prompting fishers to switch to round-bottom dingies, which permit a wider range of fishing techniques.

Now, a collaboration between academics from Exeter and India and the local Mondal boat-building family in the village of Dihimandalghat, West Bengal, has resulted in the [most detailed documentation to date](#) of a *chhot* boat, as well as of the unique Bengali tradition of joining hull planking together using staples. The project documentation—including [a feature-length documentary film](#)—has been deposited in [an open-access repository](#) at the British Museum run by project sponsor the Endangered Material Knowledge Programme.

Preparing for the chhot-boat handover ritual



## Publications

The department had a bumper year in terms of monograph publications with five coming out in the last twelve months. [Laleh Khalili](#) published two of her own with *The Corporeal Life of Seafaring* published by Mack Books in 2024, and *Extractive Capitalism: How Commodities & Cronyism Drive the Global Economy*, published by Profile Books in 2025. [Adam Hanieh](#)'s book, *Crude Capitalism Oil, Corporate Power, and the Making of the World Market*, was published with Verso Books in 2024. [Ilán Pappé](#)'s book, *Lobbying for Zionism on Both Sides of the Atlantic*, was published with Oneworld Press in 2024. And [Billie Jeanne Brownlee](#) and Maziyar Ghiabi's book,

*States Without People: Revolt and Defeat in the Middle East*, was published with McGill-Queen's University Press in 2025.

Colleagues also published four edited volumes and a textbook. [Katie Natanel](#) and [Ilán Pappé](#) published *Palestine in a World of Fire*, with Haymarket Books (2024). [Ross Porter](#) published *A Political Anthropology of Yemen: Concept and Critique*, with Syracuse University Press (2025). [Sajjad Rizvi](#) co-edited *Islamic Perspectives on God and (Other) Monotheism(s)*, with Wahid Amin and Aaron Hughes, published by AMI Press in 2025. And [Ilán Pappé](#) also published his *A Very Short History of the Israel-Palestine Conflict*, with Oneworld Press in 2024.



## Research Events

### European Network for the Study of Islam and Esotericism (ENSIE) Conference

[Emily Selove](#) and the Centre for Magic hosted the 2024 Meeting of ENSIE, whose theme the European Network for the was 'Dreams and Visions in Islam.' The Conference brought together over 30 early career and senior scholars from across the world for this three-day conference ([2024 Conference of the European Network of Islam & Esotericism \(ENSIE\)](#)). The Centres for Gulf Studies (CGS) and Study of Islam (CSI) were very active with their regular virtual seminars and *majlis* which have an international audience. The Centre for Gulf Studies also hosted its 34th Exeter Gulf Conference (2024), with the theme being “Lifeworlds of Energy and Environment in the Gulf,” with over 16 different papers presented by colleagues from China, the Middle East, Europe, UK and USA.

### ECR achievements

The department's early career researchers have been integral to the success of IAIS this year. [Asma Abdi](#) was awarded the [Political Science Association](#) (PSA) Elizabeth Wiskemann Prize for the best PhD dissertation in the field of (in) equality and social justice.

[Farangis Ghaderi](#) has secured funding through the Endangered Archives Program grant for conservation work at the Slemani Awqaf Ministry in Iraqi Kurdistan.

[Kumail Rajani](#) received the Templeton Religious Trust Fellowship for his project on 'Merchant Castes and Spiritual Interchange in the Western Indian Ocean.'



# Languages, Cultures and Visual Studies

Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), Portrait of Wolfgang Wilhelm of Pfalz-Neuburg, Boughton House, Northamptonshire (c) Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust



[Meredith Hale](#) broke the Exeternet with the media flurry around her research into a stolen Van Dyck sketch and its curtain-conscious thief – this story made [the Guardian](#) and the [BBC website](#) as well as [Art History News](#); You can read all about Meredith’s historic heist on the University website [here](#).

## Research Projects

‘Queer Natures: Animals, Environment and Modern Sexual Knowledge Production (1860s to 1930s and today)’ an AHRC funded Catalyst project led by [Ina Linde](#) explores how German-speaking artists, scientists, and writers between the 1860s and 1930s mobilised knowledge about non-human animals and their environments to shape fresh ideas about the place of LGBTQ+

people in a just society. In this transformative period in German culture, groundbreaking ideas about sex, gender, and sexuality took root. This project uniquely reveals how these critical thinkers navigated complex and deeply politicized conversations about sexual identity by drawing on the interconnectedness of human and non-human worlds.

Through a critical-creative approach, “Queer Natures” seeks to bring the cross-cultural histories of queerness and nature to a wider English-speaking audience. Today, this work resonates strongly as environmental and gender politics have become battlegrounds for right-wing populism, which frames them as inseparable aspects of progressive agendas. By examining how these issues were entangled over a century ago, the project aims to shed light on why they remain so politically charged today.



Image credit - Ezra W Smith

The Department is delighted to welcome Marie Curie Fellow Daniela Nunes Pereira, mentored by [Fabrizio Nevola](#). Her project ‘FORUM: Formation and Organization of Markets in Ibero-American Cities – Regulation and Adaption of Iberian Urban Models (15th-17th Centuries)’ will investigate the formation and regulation of spaces designated for commercial exchanges in Iberian and Ibero-American cities during the height of global trade, between the 15th and 17th centuries.

## Publications

[Hugh Roberts](#) and [Helen Vassallo](#) have continued their work with the Ukrainian community in Exeter and with contemporary Ukrainian poets. They recently co-edited a 2024 anthology by the Ukrainian soldier poet Artur Dron, *We Were Here*, published with Jantar Press, in 2024, edited by the Ukrainian poet Yuliya Musakovska. Read more [here](#).

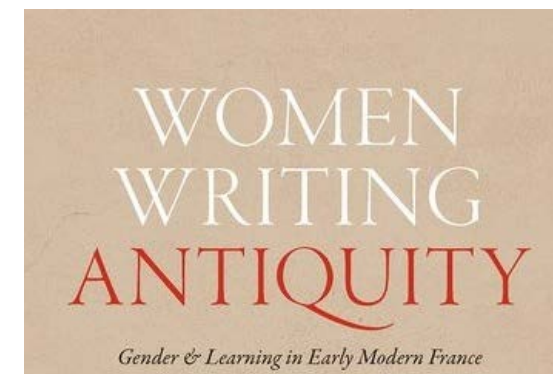
## Research Prizes, Awards and Events



Daniel Fountain

Daniel Fountain, Senior Lecturer in Art History and Visual Culture, has been included in [Apollo’s annual ‘40 Under 40’ list for 2024](#) by its international panel of judges. Each year, the international art magazine invites nominations from around the world on the most influential leaders working in the arts today, before compiling its list around a different theme or geographic focus. This year, Apollo is focusing on those working ‘in the space between art and craft’ from across the globe. Our congratulations go to Daniel for this prestigious achievement.

Congratulations go to [Helena Taylor](#), whose book, *Women Writing Antiquity: Gender and Learning in Early Modern France*, which was published with OUP in 2024, was joint runner-up in the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender book prize, receiving a co-honorable mention.



[Richard Mansell](#) was elected a member of the Institut d’Estudis Catalans, the Catalan academy. Created in 1907 to research and promote all aspects of Catalan language and culture, it now comprises five sections: History and Archaeology, Biological Sciences, Science and Technology, Philosophy and Social Sciences, and finally Philology, the section that performs the IEC’s institutional role as academy of the Catalan language, and also the section to which Richard has been elected as *member corresponent* (foreign member). This role is an immense honour, held for life, and Richard is one of only 27 foreign members of the section worldwide.

## Research Centres

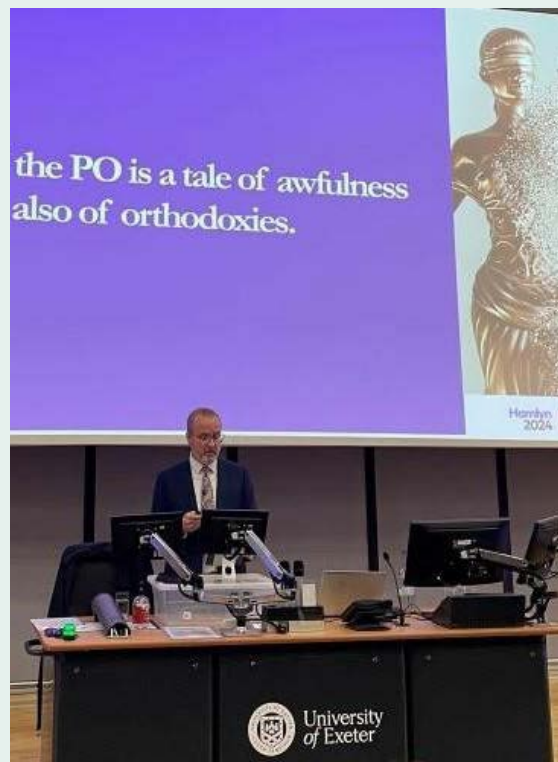
[Muireann Maguire](#), working with co-directors [Catherine Owen](#) (HaSS Cornwall) and [Nelly Bekus](#) (A&H) has established a new research-based network, the Exeter Centre for Eastern European and Eurasian Studies (ECEES). ECEES is an interdisciplinary community of Exeter scholars working on various countries of the region as a crucial historical and contemporary nexus for global interactions. The launch event, “Reimagining Area Studies for the 21st Century: Perspectives from Eastern Europe and Eurasia”, took place in Mat, with keynote talks from UK and international scholars on gender illiberalism in Hungary, corruption and kleptocracy in Russia, and other urgent topics.



# Law School

## Research Events

Alongside his work with a team to secure the ESRC impact prize (see page 7) [Richard Moorhead](#) delivered the prestigious [2024](#) Hamlyn Lectures on the linked topic of ‘Frail Professionalism: Lawyers’ ethics after the Post Office and other cases’.



Richard Moorhead at the 2024 Hamlyn Lectures

## Prizes

Under the directorship of [Andrea Wallace](#), the GLAM-E Lab, a collaborative project with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery and NYU Law’s Engelberg Center, won the Wikimedia UK Partnership of the year. Funded by the AHRC and an Impact Accelerator Account, the project developed a toolkit for the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museum) community designed to help cultural organizations develop their own open access strategy and release collections for free public use. In its first year the 63 images released by RAMM received over 6.16 million views online and it has gone on to upload over 900 public domain images onto Wikimedia Commons, sharing Exeter’s rich cultural heritage worldwide.



The toolkit is helping nations to translate complex international legal principles into the cyber context

The [Cyber Law Toolkit](#) developed by [Kubo Macák](#) was awarded the Jus Gentium Award by the American Society of International Law. This is an annual award recognizing outstanding non-commercial online public resources that provide coverage of international and non-US law for public use. The Toolkit is a unique interactive online resource consisting of 32 hypothetical scenarios, which of which contains a description of cyber incidents inspired by real-world examples, accompanied by detailed legal analysis. It is a key reference point for governments, militaries, international organizations, and academics wishing to explore the application of international law to a variety of cyber contexts.

## ECR achievements

Early career researchers in Law have been awarded funding for exciting new projects, helping to shape a fair, socially just and inclusive society. [Swati Gola](#)’s project, entitled ‘Colonial Apathy and Epistemic Injustice in NHS? Scoping the Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine Usage by Minoritized Ethnic Communities in the UK’ was funded by the British Academy. [Raawiyah Rifath](#) was Co-Investigator on a project entitled ‘Promoting Social Unity while Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of Displaced People: A Rapid Evaluation of Local Authorities’ City of Sanctuary’, funded by the National Institute for Health Research. [S D Lulz](#) led a project entitled ‘[Ghosts in the Machine: Rethinking Posthuman Agencies for Digital Policy through Divinatory Play](#)’, funded by an ESRC-IAA award.

## Research Centres

2024-25 has seen the department’s interdisciplinary research activities going from strength to strength. Law School colleagues are steering group members of three University-wide networks: [Justice and Violence Studies](#), [Routes: Mobility, Migration, Displacement](#), and [Global Authoritarianism](#). The Law School has enhanced its partnership with the [Institute for Data Science and Artificial Intelligence](#) (IDSAI) to create opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration focused on artificial intelligence in the areas of justice, security and sustainability. This year, the department held the first Law/IDSAI collaborative workshop aimed at showcasing the research of our colleagues in the Law School and developing interdisciplinary collaborations with IDSAI researchers. [The Human Rights and Democracy Forum](#) (HRDF) continues to collaborate with the Centre for Political Thought, launching the inter-university [Observatory of Representation: International Centre for the Study of State, Citizenship and Democracy](#) in October 2024. The HRDF, Centre for Political Thought, Centre for European Studies, and the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies organised a workshop on 6 March 2025 on ‘The Long Year of Elections.’



# School of Education

## Research Projects

The department has secured a number of large grants this year, with further awards pending final funder agreement.

Heather Wren has secured an ESRC South West Doctoral Training Partnership Fellowship for her project ‘Addressing the climate crisis through the empathetic ruptions in environmental education’, arguing for a reconceptualisation of empathy as affective and embodied that encompasses both human and more-than-human entities, essential for fostering ethical global responsibility. Her research will then inform a pedagogical design, which will be used to set up transdisciplinary learning gardens. These will create a space for communities and students to gain a rich understanding of the environment whilst learning to think relationally with their world, whilst addressing climate issues relating to growth of food and plants.

## Inclusive practices in Sharjah Schools

Colleagues from SoE and Sharjah Education Academy (SEA) successfully collaborated on a research project exploring inclusive practices in Sharjah Schools. The study found a strong commitment to SEND support but varied understandings of inclusive practice. Teacher training, financial models, and low SEND identification pose challenges to schools in the privatised system. These findings highlight the need for policy adjustments to ensure equitable and effective inclusive education in the Emirate. A final report is being published in English and Arabic, colleagues are drafting journal articles, and [Li Li](#), [George Koutsouris](#) and [Darren Moore](#) attended the Sharjah International Summit on Improvement in Education to present the work with alongside co-investigators from SEA.



Images from the Sharjah International Summit on Improvement in Education

## Teaching narrative writing with digital resources and apps

This BA funded project has illustrated how teachers have used digital resources and apps to promote children’s enjoyment and engagement in their narrative writing.

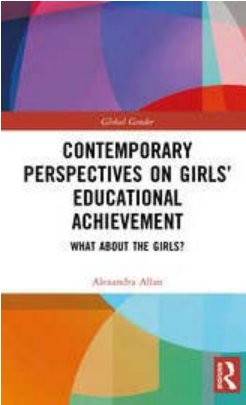
Using three research approaches: a teacher survey, a participatory teacher workshop, and the construction of two ‘telling case’ studies, this project specifically investigated how digital resources and apps, for example ‘Padlet’, can support the narrative writing process, and promote enjoyment and engagement amongst pupils in Key Stage Two, within a targeted unit of work, where the outcome is a written narrative that aligns with National Curriculum expectations for competence in transcription and composition. Key findings and examples of classroom practice are presented as two telling case studies on the project website for dissemination to Partner Schools and literacy research colleagues.



Teaching narrative writing with digital resources and apps

## Publications

We saw the publication of [Sandy Allan’s](#) major new book ‘*Contemporary Perspectives on Girls’ Educational Achievement*’, which was published with Routledge in 2025. It offers fresh insights into girls perceptions and experiences of educational achievement in the contemporary context.





# Social and Political Sciences, Philosophy, and Anthropology

## Understanding health and wellbeing among farm women: a life-course approach



Women in UK agriculture are likely to face a range of both gender and farming-specific challenges

A major, £800,000, ESRC funded project, led by [Rebecca Wheeler](#) from The Centre for Rural Policy Research, working with The Farming Community Network, will provide crucial insights into farming and gender-specific stressors that can affect women in agriculture, as well as barriers to accessing relevant support.

Women in UK agriculture have rarely been the focus of health-related research but are likely to face a range of both gender and farming-specific challenges. Previous studies show a significant number of women in UK agriculture suffer from poor mental health – though the reasons underlying this are poorly understood

The project will include surveys and detailed interviews to provide insights into the farming and gender-specific stressors that can affect women in agriculture – and the impacts on both their physical and mental health and wellbeing. It will also explore the ways in which women experience and understand their health through, and in relation to, their bodies – with a focus on how this may change across the life-course, during periods of high stress or trauma, and in relation to their reproductive lives.

## In the Press



Michael Winter OBE

[Michael Winter OBE](#) (Centre for Rural Policy Research) has been appointed to a reconvened panel to examine new evidence about bovine TB. The work will ensure that a comprehensive new bovine TB strategy for England benefits from the latest science. They hope to report their findings by the end of June 2025.

The panel will review recent evidence and analysis published since 2018 that is relevant to bTB control in England. It will consider and advise on any new opportunities for improved application, enhancement or acceleration of the interventions set out in the 2018 Strategy Review and advise on gaps in the available evidence and disease control tools.

[Tom Rice](#), hosted a fabulous episode of *Illuminated* on Radio 4 talking about how ways of listening shape our relationship to other people and the world around us. You can listen to '[100 ways of Listening](#)' online now.

## Research Events and Publications

It has been a busy year for book launches and events. Following on from the sessions on [John Dupre's](#) work at the [anniversary conference in April 2024](#), Egenis held a book launch for [John Dupre's \*Everyone Flows: A Process Philosophy of Human Life\*](#), published by OUP in 2025, based on the 2023 Gifford Lectures.

The Centre for Advanced International Studies hosted Mike Williams (Ottawa) and Jean-Francois Drolet (QMUL), who presented their new book *The World of the Right* (CUP 2024) to a packed audience.

The Centre for Political Thought and the *EU Horizon REDIRECT* project, hosted the 2023-2024 President of the American Political Science Association, Professor Mark Warren. [Professor Warren gave a lecture on democratic innovations](#).

The department is excited to be hosting the EPOP conference in September. The Elections, Public Opinion and Parties specialist group is one of the largest in the Political Studies Association and hosting the conference is testament to the strength of our public policy cluster at Exeter, across HASS Cornwall and SPSPA





# Further Information

The extensive Research Lifecycle resources can be found [here](#), and information about many of the projects featured in this report, along with others can be found on the University's [Research and Innovation](#) pages.

There is additional information for HASS colleagues on the [HASS intranet site](#)

# Funder Guidance

Links to applicant guidance from some major funders are below. Please be aware individual schemes will have different and specific rules and guidance.

British Academy - [Funding](#) | [The British Academy](#)

European Research Council - [Funding](#) | [ERC: European Research Council \(europa.eu\)](#)

Horizon Europe - [Horizon Europe](#) | [European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Leverhulme Trust - [Our approach to grant-making](#) | [The Leverhulme Trust](#)

Nuffield - [Research Funding](#) | [Apply for Funding](#) | [Nuffield Foundation](#)

UKRI - [Before you apply](#) - [UKRI](#)

Wellcome - [Funding Guidance](#) | [Research Funding](#) | [Wellcome](#)





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