

Institution: Birmingham City University
Unit of Assessment: UoA 35 (Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts)
<p>a. Context</p> <p>Birmingham Conservatoire operates as a School of the Faculty of Performance, English and Media, Birmingham City University. The primary mission of the Conservatoire is to provide professional practice-based and academic training for the world of music, in all its diversity. With our strong public-facing ethos, our research therefore reflects this breadth of scope, target audiences, and modes of dissemination, which together generate cultural, intellectual, aesthetic and economic impacts across a wide demographic, with significant international as well as national and regional dimensions.</p> <p>Notable impacts have been achieved in all our main research groupings of music technology, composition, performance and musicology. In Technology the internationally disseminated research of the Integra project, enhancing the interaction of electronics with live performance, and subsequent software development of Integra Live (Coccioli, Bullock (ECR)), have created direct and far-reaching impacts (technical, artistic, educational, economic) for the benefit of collaborating organisations, composers, contemporary music specialist performers and ensembles, concert promoters, publishers, and audiences in Europe, North America and the UK (see (b) below). Impacts of Composition research have been extensive both geographically and aesthetically. Long-standing partnerships have been built up between Cutler, Hall, E. Johnson, Koller, Roxburgh, Skempton, Wolters and performers, arts organisations, broadcasters and recording companies across Europe and the UK. These have fostered new audiences, often in the context of non-traditional performance arenas, as part of a radical aesthetic agenda. Dissemination has involved leading new music CD labels such as NMC and Quartz. Such impact creation is now taken up by the next generation of Conservatoire composers: Bennett and Clancy (ECR) are already developing high profiles in their native Ireland and internationally. An increasing cluster of research-active Performers, producing high-profile CDs of new works, world premiere recordings, or exploring neglected repertoires and issues of performance practice, bring distinctive impacts of artistic innovation and cultural enrichment to audiences, from the recordings and their associated live concerts, as well as economic benefits to the organizations and regions concerned (Fingerhut, Knight, Sangiorgio, Skidmore, Thwaites). Our research in Musicology, while driven primarily by academic need or intellectual curiosity, is increasingly being nuanced from a planning stage, where appropriate, to maximize benefit to non-academic end-users. For instance, our editorial expertise, especially in early music, maps on to the demands of publishers and performers, hence audiences, recording companies and broadcast media (Churnside (ECR), Dean, Perkins (ECR), Sadler, Thompson, Woodley). Others result from specialist historical and critical expertise brought into the public arena through non-academic publications, lectures (e.g. opera, orchestral, chamber concert talks), magazines (e.g. <i>BBC Music Magazine</i>) and broadcasts, in parallel to its academic influence (Dingle, Sadler, Thompson, Woodley).</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>Although an explicit impact agenda has surfaced only relatively recently for research assessment purposes, the Conservatoire, as an essentially public-facing institution, has long believed in the crucial importance of the end-user, in the broadest sense, in its research activity. We have always sought to maintain an alert responsiveness to external opportunities for creating impact, whilst acknowledging that in our research groupings, whether practice-based, technological or musicological, it is very often individual, personal imagination and vision that generate the widest and most durable benefits. Selective but indicative examples of clear cultural, artistic, technical or economic impacts include:</p> <p>The Integra project (Phase 2, 2008–12: Coccioli and Bullock; Case Study 1) delivered high levels of impact in (a) transforming the creative practice of musicians working with live electronics; (b) re-enabling the performance of older works involving obsolete technologies, through the development of commercial-quality software, Integra Live (over 12,000 downloads since release in July 2010), now developed by Integra Lab. Partner institutions have included professional new music ensembles and research centres across Europe (Austria, Norway, France, Spain, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, and Poland) and Canada. The project resulted in numerous performances, commissioned works and related performer-centred workshops and Integra Festivals (Birmingham 2008; Copenhagen 2011), placing the Conservatoire at the heart of a far-reaching nexus of artistic and technological influence. Particularly innovative and transformative has been the project's self-</p>

reinforcing circles of creation, research, heritage and education: the functionalities required to support the composition of a new work or the modernisation of an old one have been fed back into the research, to become features of the Integra Live software developed. Since 2008 the project has enabled renewed performances in the UK, Europe and the US, of older, technologically otherwise unsustainable, works by prominent composers, migrated to the new software: Boulez, Harvey, Nono, Murail, Reynolds, Saariaho, Smalley among others. It has directly commissioned works for ensemble, live electronics and other media (interactive video, dance, music theatre) from Leroux, Curran, Lanza, Paredes, ter Schiphorst. Direct economic benefit is provided to publishers (e.g. Faber, Boosey & Hawkes, Ricordi, Gérard Billaudot) in absorbing modernisation costs; to concert promoters and performers through greatly reduced equipment and set-up costs (e.g. BBC SO in Harvey's *Madonna of Winter and Spring*, London: Barbican, 2012); and to new music commissioners in reducing purely technical costs in favour of a more musician-focused approach. The Integra Live software is now employed worldwide in HE institutions for music technology teaching as well as by composers and performers for directly creative purposes, and the project as a whole has attained a reach and depth that ensure long-lasting impact in the fields of composition and performance with technology. In **Composition** we have demonstrated breadth and depth of impact through both geographical spread and aesthetic range. **Cutler** and **Wolters** lead a Composition Department whose mission, at all levels of study, is explicitly to foster artists who challenge and transform notions of artistic practice and its consequent impact (Case Study 3). Their own creative research work exemplifies these goals: along with **Skempton**, they each received commissions for [New Music 20x12](#) (Cultural Olympiad), delivered by PRS Foundation for Music, with BBC R3, placing new music at the centre of the wider Olympic celebrations, all now distributed on NMC. Cutler's [Ping!](#) explores compositional relationships between string quartet and table tennis playing, first performed at/as a music and sports event, and bringing experimental music to a new audience. Wolters' *The Voyage* was conceived in collaboration with the artistic company [Stan's Cafe](#): a reflection on the media hype surrounding sports figures, the work again brings together new audiences and new conceptions of performing space; the unexpected musical sonorities of microtonal recorders add a further transhistorical dimension to perceptions of the music. Skempton's 20x12 commission, [Five Rings Triples](#), brings together traditional change-ringing and experimental music to produce a genre-transforming work heard by millions through its use by BBC radio to herald the 2012 and 2013 New Years. His work represents an impressive lineage of socially engaged music, dating back to the Scratch Orchestra of the 1960s. Cutler's other work has been performed throughout Europe and the UK (especially creative relationships with ensembles in the Netherlands, such as Orkest de Ereprijs), plus tours of Korea and China, and Bang on a Can Festival, New York, involving numerous professional ensembles and organisations. His artistic influence is evidenced by a 2008 NMC CD portrait album *Bartlebooth*, a British Composer Award (*Folk Music*, for Smith Quartet, 2008), and nomination in 2012 (*Chanticleer and the Opera Fox*). Wolters' work again often extends conventional bounds of audience reach for new music, such as with his [BBC FOUR World News Today](#) (2008), created by the artists' collective New Guide to Opera in collaboration with the BBC News team, watched by an estimated 500,000 viewers, and his European tour of [Danserye](#), created with the choreographer Sebastian Matthias, again experimenting with venue and audience positioning (see Case Study 3). Many similar events, involving conventional and unconventional venues, by other widely performed, broadcast and recorded Conservatoire composers include **Bennett** [My Broken Machines](#) (NMC portrait album: Time Out Chicago No. 1 Best Classical Album 2011), [Dzama Stories](#) 2009, *E!* 2010, *Jackie's Taxi* 2012; **Clancy** *Changing Rates of Change* 2011 (to be [featured composer](#) at Horizons 2014, Dublin, also showcasing Cutler, Wolters, Bennett, Skempton); *Findetotenlieder* 2011. Bennett's rising reputation and influence (also now as Composer in Residence, Royal Holloway) is evidenced by his award of a Philip Leverhulme Prize in 2011, and that of Clancy by his appointment as BCMG/SAM Apprentice Composer in Residence, 2010–12. A different category of direct therapeutic impact, in the context of healthcare, is generated by the work of **Liz Johnson** in her AHRC- and ACE-funded research, in collaboration with Birmingham hospitals, into the use and development of [Soundbeam](#) for adults with physical restrictions. Johnson also leads the partnership project '[Imagine Compose](#)' (BCMG and Birmingham Music Service with local schools), generating new creative approaches to composition and improvisation among beginner instrumentalists. **Roxburgh** has been closely involved with the research and creative/technical development of the new [Howarth-Redgate Oboe](#), leading to his

Impact template (REF3a)

pioneering work *The Well Tempered Oboe* (2011). **Hall** has achieved wide cross-domain impact in sound design, visual media and drama with [Approaching Apocalypse](#) (BBC TV and radio as well as live performances). Other commissioned work, reaching far beyond conventional musical outlets, includes the soundtrack to the [award-winning Hearing Ragas](#) (BBC R4, 2012), and [Playing the Form](#) (BBC R3, 2011); he also produces and engineers for NMC Recordings. Our regular Frontiers Plus festivals and other residencies, directed by Cutler (co-founder, Nozferatu) and Wolters, with Bennett (Decibel Ensemble) and Clancy, bring internationally prominent composers to Birmingham for a concentrated period of artistic events which generate consistently high levels of impact in terms of public engagement, cultural enrichment, musical challenge and reassessment, through applied research and knowledge exchange ([Boulez 2008](#); Matthews 2008; [Andriessen 2010](#); [Goebbels](#) and Turnage 2012). **Performers** generate international artistic impact through high-profile, critically acclaimed CDs, often involving world premiere recordings (**Sangiorgio**, with major UK orchestras: Dutton, Naxos, Collins, ABC; **Fingerhut**: Chandos; **Skidmore**, with Ex Cathedra, also collaboration with Alec Roth and Vikram Seth: Hyperion, Signum). Some also bring new early music research to a wider audience through CDs and published or open-access online editions (**Knight, Perkins, Woodley**), or commissions of, and new insights into, chamber repertoires (**Thwaites**, e.g. with Maxwell Davies). Impacts of **Musicology** reaching beyond academia (other than standard reviewing, CD notes, journal committees, etc., all widely represented) include artistic and policy influence on national and international bodies: advisory/editorial committees and collaborations include Boston University Messiaen Project (**Dingle**); Rameau *Opera omnia*, Bärenreiter; GRIMAS, Paris-Sorbonne; Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles (**Sadler, Thompson**); *Computerized Mensural Music Editing*, University of Utrecht; *Texts on Music in English*, University of Nebraska (**Woodley**); Executive Officer, RMA (**Dean**); Board of Handel Institute (**Churnside**). Knowledge exchange activities: scriptwriter and presenter, BBC R3; *BBC Music Magazine* awards jury; pre-concert talks (e.g. BBCSO, BBCPO, Philharmonia, Proms), and as editors of published musical texts for performers, etc. (**Dingle, Perkins, Sadler, Thompson, Woodley**); professional book design, typesetting and publisher consultancy (**Dean**). Our online catalogue of the Historical Instruments Collection (AHRC-funded: **Perkins**) is publicly available with podcast, and from this Collection (with **Hall**) an innovative software sample library for early music has been commercially distributed and widely used by composers in, especially, film, television and games production (Case Study 2).

c. Strategy and plans

The strength and reach of our impacts have been until recently generated largely as a natural outcome of the research itself rather than as a response to an external agenda. Increasingly, however, this is being nuanced more strategically by University policy to seek pathways to impact and knowledge exchange as a proactive part of project planning. Such strategic planning and resource allocation will be implemented and monitored from the ground up, through staff discussion, at the regular meetings of Conservatoire Research Forum, feeding into Research Management Committee (both chaired by **Woodley**) and Faculty Research Committee, with experienced bid and infrastructure support from the University Research Innovation and Enterprise unit. Specific impact-rich advanced project plans include: establishment of Birmingham Record Company (collective record label for new music: 2013–, **Bennett, Clancy, Cutler, Hall, Skempton, Wolters**); Frontiers Plus March–April 2014: major celebration of Robert Ashley and Downtown New York (ACE-funded); early music collaborations with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Les Arts Florissants (Rameau 250-year celebration: **Sadler, Thompson**, 2014); new software for medieval music notations, for publishers and performers, arising from current AHRC Tinctoris project, 2014– (**Woodley, Dean**); new French Music Research Hub, for widespread collaborations within and beyond academia, linking musicology with performers, arts organisations and audiences (**Mawer, Dingle, Sadler, Thompson**).

d. Relationship to case studies

Case Study 1 (Integra - Fusing music and technology) is a detailed account of the wide-ranging and international impacts of the Integra project and Integra Live software outlined here. **Case Study 2** (The Conservatoire Collection: A Software Library of Digitized Historical Instruments) profiles a specific commercial application of collaboration between the research fields of historical musicology, early music performance, and music technology. **Case Study 3** (Composing Beyond Concert Practice) provides specific evidence of impact from the core, experimental research focus of our Composition Department outlined here.