

Institution: University of Wolverhampton

Unit of Assessment: History

a. Context

We are committed to ensuring that our research has a benefit beyond the confines of higher education. To this end, since 2008 we have supported research that has had an impact on a wide range of fora outside the university sector: governmental and non-governmental organisations, the armed forces, museums and libraries, local and specialist history groups and media outlets. The wider dissemination of research and its impact are central features both of our research activities and of the university's monitoring and appraisal procedures.

Main non-academic users

Governmental and non-governmental organisations: Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission; Derby Diocese; West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit; UK Ministry of Defence; European Consortium for Political Research; Guardia Civil, Intelligence Division, Madrid; Ministry of Public Order, Athens; Association of Children of War, Poland; Local Democracy Agency, Subotica, Serbia; United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Armed forces: Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst; 15 Psychological Operations Group; Territorial Army (143 Brigade); National Institute for Defence Studies and Department of Defence, Japan; Chief of Army, Canberra, Australia; Combat Studies Institute, US Army Combined Arms Center.

Museums and libraries: Victoria & Albert Museum; Imperial War Museum; People's History Museum; Working-Class Movement Library; Black Country Living Museum; Royal Armoured Corps Tank Museum; RAF Museum Cosford; The National Memorial Arboretum; Walsall Museum; Shaw House, Newbury; Site Gallery, Sheffield; National Trust, Knole, Kent; Wilderstein Historic Site, New York state, US; the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia; Airborne and Special Operations Museum, Fort Bragg, US; the Mariners' Museum, Virginia, US; Falstad Centre, Norway.

Local and specialist history groups: Bridgnorth Research Group; Sealed Knot; Western Front Association; Battlefield Forum; Battlefields Trust; Buckinghamshire Historical Association; Flintshire and Denbighshire Historical Societies; Clwyd Family History Society; Midland Catholic History Society; North Wales Miners Association Trust; Battle of Naseby Community Project.

Media outlets: BBC; Channel 4; ITV; Channel 5; Discovery Channel; Military Channel; History Channel; SKY; Al-Jazeera; ABC National Radio, Australia; France 24; RTE; Australian National Radio; RIA Russia News and Information Agency.

Main types of impact

Our research has had particular impact on policy making (e.g. informing British and European anti-terrorism strategies; changing practices for preserving the interiors of historic houses), public services (e.g. supporting the claims of former Polish child forced labourers for equal treatment in law; advising on the development of democratic institutions in Serbia), education (e.g. providing training for clergy from Derby Diocese on historical and contemporary consumer culture and their implications for the ministry; informing the location and preservation of mining artefacts and sites) and public debate (e.g. media interviews on radicalism and terrorism; advising programme content on the history of retailing).

Relationship to research activities/groups

Research in the Conflict and Peace cluster on military history, terrorism, conflict resolution and child forced labour has had impact mainly on policy making and public services (see Impact Case Studies). Research in the Consumption, Identity and Class cluster on retailing, consumer and labour history has had impact mainly on education (see particularly the collaborations with museums and libraries, and with local and special interest history groups). This impact has been achieved through a range of activities such as public events (e.g. annual Holocaust Memorial lectures; historic textiles workshops) and events organised in conjunction with external partners

Impact template (REF3a)

(e.g. conflict resolution workshops, Falstad Centre, Norway; retail history conference, Marks & Spencer Company Archive, Leeds), in an advisory capacity (e.g. Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham's Historical Commission; Battle of Naseby Community Project) and through consultancies (e.g. BBC Learning Zone; Libertine Advertising Agency, London).

b. Approach to impact*Interactions beyond HE*

Since 2008 we have intensified our efforts to disseminate our research in a range of fora in order to maximise our impact beyond higher education. We have both approached and been approached by non-academic users active in cognate research areas. For example, staff working on textile history made contact with the National Trust and Walsall Museum, while staff working on German history approached the Imperial War Museum, with proposals to establish research collaborations. In other cases, external bodies such as the United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict contacted staff working on child forced labour to propose membership of a UN advisory board and joint organisation of international conferences.

Evidence of interactions

The success of these and other initiatives can be seen in the number of relationships that have developed. For example, we have worked with Walsall Museum to secure the award of an AHRC collaborative doctoral studentship and acted as advisers and consultants for organisations such as the BBC and the Brandenburg regional office for political education in Potsdam. We have also provided briefings and workshops for NGOs and UK, Australian and Japanese governmental defence institutions. The link with the Imperial War Museum has resulted in four international conferences on 'Beyond Camps and Forced Labour', attended by academics, archivists and practitioners from museums and memorial sites, while that with the UN has led to a joint conference on 'Children and War: Past and Present' attended by academics, policy makers and field-workers from both governmental and non-governmental organisations.

Identifiable impacts

The success of these interactions with non-academic user groups can be assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Impacts can be identified, for instance, in exhibition attendance, funding for staff initiatives from public and charitable bodies, consultancies and advisory roles, press coverage and citations, and policy engagements. Examples include:

Exhibitions

The opening ceremony of the exhibition on Vietnamese contract workers in the German Democratic Republic, held at the Brandenburg regional office for political education in Potsdam in 2009, attracted over 100 visitors, including representatives from German and Vietnamese government departments and NGOs. Although total attendance figures are not available, the exhibition's success is demonstrated by its subsequent transfer to Erfurt and Chemnitz and revival in 2013 in Potsdam.

Funding

The German Embassy and the Austrian Cultural Forum, London, have funded receptions on their premises (the German Embassy in 2009, the Austrian Cultural Forum in 2012) for delegates and speakers to the 'Beyond Camps and Forced Labour' conferences in 2009 and 2012. The Austrian Cultural Forum also funded the participation of speakers from Austria at both conferences. EU – Leonardo schemes funded three projects engaging non-academic groups and the semi-governmental foundation 'Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung, Zukunft, Berlin, provided a major grant for the research project on 'Polish Child Forced Labourers'.

Consultancies and advisory roles

We have acted as paid consultants to the Libertine Advertising Agency, London, for a report on the relationship between fashion consumption and 'value for money' since 1945, have worked with the National Trust to inform the re-interpretation of Knole interiors during a 7.75 million pound Heritage Lottery Fund project, developed research materials for the Battle of Naseby Project, and received

six-years' funding from the Pasold Research Fund to co-edit the Fund's journal, *Textile History*.

Press coverage and citations

Staff publications are listed on the website of the Memorial Site Bergen-Belsen; research on child forced labourers has received mention in the Annual Report 2012 of the International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen; staff roles in the 'Beyond Camps and Forced Labour' conferences are highlighted in the brochure 'The Holocaust Exhibition', published by the Imperial War Museum, London, 2010; and staff collaborated with Word of Mouth Films to produce a documentary on Wolverhampton-based Second World War Burma veterans.

Policy Engagements:

The EU-funded 'Local Partnerships for Tolerance' training workshops, held in six community centres in Subotica, Serbia, in partnership with the Local Democracy Agency, Subotica, in 2007 and 2008, sought to increase the capacity of elected officials and civil society organisations to deal with the challenges of a post-conflict society, while in 2010 the EU-funded workshop on 'Preventing Violent Extremism', in collaboration with CIDOB Foundation, Barcelona, brought together 30 police, counter-terrorism and local government officials, as well as community and youth workers involved in preventing violent extremism in the West Midlands, encouraging a review of local responses to extremism.

Support / Facilities

Through the Centre for Historical Research we have assisted staff in achieving impact from their research with targeted timetable remission, financial support and administrative assistance. Drawing on the expertise and advice of the Office of the Vice Chancellor, the University's International Office and the Research Hub, we have invested in national and international projects assessed as having high impact potential. This has been achieved through support for: staff attendance at over twenty planning meetings with external partners; the discussion and signing of five formal agreements and memoranda of understandings; the organisation of eight workshops and conferences aimed specifically at attracting non-academic participants; the development of four joint applications for external funding, all of which have been successful.

c. Strategy and plans

We will continue to consolidate the impact of our research beyond the current REF. We will ensure that 'impact' forms part of all staff research plans, assessed through bi-annual research monitoring (see REF5 for details), annual appraisal and workload allocation. This process will continue to inform the allocation of resources to projects assessed as having high impact potential. All internal applications for sabbaticals and research funds will require an impact plan on the model of the 'pathways to impact' required by the AHRC in its grant application process. This will ensure that even where the 'impact' of research is not immediately obvious, staff will outline potential areas and identify organisations where the research could contribute to knowledge and practice.

We have already identified three projects, based on staff research, with high impact potential:

- A Centre for First World War Studies, with international public events planned, as well as the development of local history networks focusing on issues of commemoration.
- The on-going conferences on 'Children and War: Past and Present', co-organized with the University of Salzburg, with new collaborations with organizations engaged in the field.
- A research hub on historic dress and textiles held in museums and historic houses, with new research collaborations with heritage organisations with relevant collections.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies demonstrate the effectiveness of our strategy of using our monitoring and resource allocation procedures to identify and promote the development of projects with significant impact potential. They show the value of our approach to engagement with e.g. public sector agencies and NGOs ('Forced Labour' and 'Conflict Management'), the third sector ('Forced Labour') and think-tanks ('Conflict Management'). The case studies exemplify the importance of planned interactions, targeted funding and the development of long-term, sustainable partnerships.