

**Institution: University College London**

**Unit of Assessment: 24 - Anthropology and Development Studies**

**a. Context**

UCL Anthropology's broad-based founding vision has established a distinctive commitment to applied anthropology and an enduring tradition emphasizing impacts beyond academia. The range of both our research impacts and their beneficiaries is wide, deriving from our continual dialogue with groups from grassroots users throughout civil society to local, national and international government and industry. Our research informs **governmental and intergovernmental policy-making and practice** around the globe, for example through our provision of multi-faceted policy advice to bodies such as the FCO and World Economic Forum. It also provides the basis of the development of new tools shaping practice for intergovernmental agencies such as the World Bank. We also provide expert advice, training and consultancy services to **NGOs** dealing with health, employment, the environment and development and influencing civil society in the UK and abroad. The Unit's pioneering emphasis on Medical Anthropology has provided a foundation for extensive work with **health practitioners**, and ultimately improved standards of healthcare and patient wellbeing. Staff work with **industry** to improve regulatory frameworks and enhance corporate social responsibility practices in fields such as tropical forestry. Our research has also underpinned innovative and inclusive **educational initiatives**, including by informing the design of curricula and teaching methods across a range of disciplines in international HEIs. Through wide-ranging, intensive engagement with **museums and exhibitions, artists, designers, and filmmakers**, our research provides reusable teaching and learning tools, enhances visitor and audience experiences, and enriches cultural life in the UK and beyond. Our contributions to **media** discourse and provision of and contribution to public-facing events has likewise enhanced public awareness of anthropology's importance and of specific social issues relating to our work.

**b. Approach to impact**

The Unit's approach to forging sustainable relationships with key research users is especially underpinned by its commitments to public engagement and knowledge transfer. Since 2008, we have made particular use of our SRIFII-funded workshop and conference space and of online publicity and display facilities both to connect potential research users with our work and to help them fully realise its benefits. Each Research Section in the Department includes an inherently outward-facing cluster which serves as a conduit for the transmission of key research findings with strong impact potential. The broad range of our many Research and Reading Groups also ensures that both staff and research students engage with the dynamic landscape of contemporary concerns to which the Unit's research is relevant. The following activities exemplify our approach.

*End user engagement through user-led research, action research and advocacy:* The Unit has allocated resources to support and protect research involving sustained, in-depth field engagement and lasting partnerships with user groups of many types across the world. This approach entails support for research leave and administrative support for applications to research funding bodies likely to fund such work. This relationship between researcher and *informants as research users* is at the core both of good ethnographic practice and of the Unit's conception of anthropology. Stewart's work on MyStreet, for example, uses an 'extreme citizen science' model which has significantly informed our approach to impact. In such work we seek to go beyond explaining to others how useful our ideas are for them to achieve impact, instead **enabling public participants to carry out research, collect data and analyse it themselves** to shape professional anthropological practice. Such user-centred approaches have often fostered **action research**, in which staff actively facilitate and participate in institutional and behavioural change while conducting their research. In some cases this has merged into **advocacy**, with research engagement actively shaping user perspectives. This is characteristic, for example, of Lewis' work on forest governance in the Congo, and of M. Stewart's work, which has provided new opportunities for higher level educational study for Roma in eastern Europe.

*Production of new educational materials and contributions to development of curricula:* Our innovative Material Culture paradigm has influenced curricula and teaching methods in many HEIs across disciplines around the globe. Illustrative examples include its use as the basis for the development of a programme teaching digital ethnography at RMIT Melbourne, and an entirely new anthropology programme at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, both of which courses

are led by graduates of this UoA. The Unit also makes **innovative use of digital technologies** to maximise both engagement with and the benefits of these collaborations. The *Materialworld* blog (a collaboration between UCL and NYU) founded by Miller and Geismar has become a central public space for the dissemination of research on Material Culture. Unique visits since 2008 have exceeded 250,000, with significant traffic from Brazil, South Africa and SE Asia. Lewis' Extreme Citizen Science project (in collaboration with UCL Engineering) has developed soft- and hardware to facilitate the independent use by non-literate participants of scientific tools for monitoring natural resource use. Skinner's Virtual Anthropology Lab (2011- ) similarly uses digital tools to teach anthropology at all levels, whilst M. Stewart's ethnographic film project 'Doc in a Day' has been used by secondary school students to produce 89 films about London locations.

*Transfer of expert knowledge and provision of consultancy services:* Since 2008 we have supplied expert advice on a wide range of topics to policymakers and practitioners in many UK and overseas government and intergovernmental agencies. That expert knowledge has been used to effect changes in policy and practice in Myanmar through the UN: post-Nargis cyclone assessment (Napier) and to increase stakeholder engagement (Homewood 2009: UN-OCHA "University of the Bush"). Littlewood's research has informed the chief US psychiatry manual DSM-IV and DSM-IV-TR, shaping North American psychiatric diagnosis and clinical guidelines until 2013; and Randall's work has been used by the World Bank to develop its household survey methodology. In the UK, Kilshaw's work has influenced MOD thinking and practice on Gulf War Syndrome and Homewood's research on outcomes of Maasai pastoralist cattle vaccine uptake has fed into the development of FAO livestock disease control guidelines. Empson's provision of advice to the FCO on British investment in Mongolia has both contributed to UK policy and informed the Mongolian government's discussions with investors. Miller provided a driver document for the UK Government Office for Science: Changing identities in the UK – the next 10 years. Sommer's work has led to the infrastructural upgrade of Nigeria's largest national park through border demarcation, installation of wide-ranging radio-communication, and GIS facilities for park management.

*Enhancing visitor experience and engaging public audiences through contributions to exhibitions, performance and media discourse.* Unit staff have made significant contributions to museum exhibitions and/or associated catalogues, many of which reach large readerships and support educational programmes. Examples include Miller's public video comment at Tate Britain's 'Collections' (May 2009) and involvement with exhibitions in Basel and Seoul (April 2013); contributions to IOM3 (Tilley, Kuechler, Buchli, 2011); Whitechapel, Haus Der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, (Pinney 2011, 2012); Shonibar Studio, London, Kulturzentrum St. Elisabeth, Berlin; and Freud Museum, London (Sommer 2008–2009, 2012–13 & Holbraad 2013). The V&A exhibition 'The Power of Making' (2011), to which Miller contributed the lead essay, attracted more than 320,000 visitors, and its blockbuster 'Postmodernism' Exhibition (2011), to whose catalogue Buchli contributed, 114,900 visitors. Institutional and Unit space, equipment, research time and training also support our engagement with **performance arts** and **film** practitioners. Holbraad joined the Board of *Real Circumstance* theatre group (2012) and has worked with the theatre company *Frantic Assembly*. M. Stewart's curatorship of the *Open City Docs* Festival has created new public audiences for ethnographic film and fostered an innovative research and impact methodology. Contributions to **media discourse** also constitute an important part of our approach to **engaging and informing the public**. Unit research features regularly in both national and international media outlets, bringing very wide public audiences into contact with our findings. Miller's work has been reviewed and discussed since 2008 in *The Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Times*, *Sunday Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, and in national newspapers and radio interviews. Sommer's research has featured regularly in *GEO*, *Stern*, *Natur*, *Die Zeit*, *Der Spiegel*, *FAZ*, *Die Welt*, and *Frankfurter Rundschau* among many others, and Sommer was himself the subject of a 45-minute biographical profile co-produced by French-German TV culture channel ARTE (2011). Mace's contribution to Radio 4's *Bringing Up Britain* (2013) reached more than 100,000 listeners and has since been downloaded over 34,000 times. C. Stewart's two public lectures in 2010-11, delivered as Visiting Professor at the American University of Greece (Athens), attracted significant national and international media attention, informing both media discourse and public awareness of social responses to economic crisis. Coverage of the lectures in the Greek national newspapers *To Vima* and *Kathimerini* (April 2011) catalysed national radio discussions of Stewart's key research findings, which highlighted the importance of human dignity

## Impact template (REF3a)

even under conditions of austerity. **Public talks and symposia** are also encouraged to promote direct, and often intensive, public engagement with our research. During the period of assessment, Sommer alone delivered 84 scientific and public talks around the world, and was rated among the most influential intellectuals of the German-speaking world ("Cicero", October 2009:114). Pinney's impact on Indian debates about visual culture was recognised by the award of a Padma Shri, presented by the President of India in 2013.

The Unit encourages a radically inclusive approach to impact and has worked hard since 2008 to **reach and empower marginalised groups** in the UK and elsewhere. These have included inner city schoolchildren (M. Stewart); Black and Minority groups (Littlewood); and Kurdish refugees (Pillen) in the UK, as well as fishing communities in SE Asia (Garaway). These groups have benefitted from extended or improved service provision (e.g. Littlewood's *Banyan*; *Nafsiyat InterCultural Therapy Centre*) and the development of new channels of representation, for example through the creation of a Kurdish television station (Pillen), a Congo basin radio station (Lewis) and Stewart's MyStreet participatory film-making project.

### c. Strategy and plans

In the coming years we will consolidate and, where possible, expand both the range of our beneficiaries and the range of benefits we deliver to them. We plan to support this by:

- (1) Consistently encouraging long-term field-research in which informants become users. Anthropology's core methodology thus provides the basis for sustaining our research impact.
- (2) Raising awareness of impact as a necessary dimension of our professional ethic and emphasising an expectation of impact as a constituent element in the activities of new hires.
- (3) Encouraging strategic involvement in new UCL initiatives enhancing impact, and bids for institutional funding for impact-generating activities, for instance through support from UCL's cross-disciplinary Grand Challenges initiative.
- (4) Encouraging consultancy with industry and regulatory bodies. Sub-section heads within the Department have been tasked with shaping strategic plans for their groups which specifically highlight impact potential.

More specific plans include the establishment of a journal, website and archive of international research in digital anthropology via our planned Digital Anthropology Research Centre. A larger space will be sought within UCL for the visual anthropology laboratory to facilitate expansion of training in anthropological and documentary techniques for wider non-academic audiences. The Sustainable Living Centre will develop a more established and proactive profile in order to promote its utility as a channel for the public transmission of key findings from the Unit's sustainability research. From 2013, findings from Michelutti's major ERC and ESRC-funded *Democratic Cultures* project on politics in India will be shared, including through DfID, as a means of engaging public audiences both in the UK and abroad with the important social and political issues that they raise.

### d. Relationship to case studies

The submitted case studies exemplify the key aspects of the approach outlined above. **Co-research and other forms of user-collaboration** in developing research agendas reflecting users' priority concerns, are central to the case study focussing on Clinical Ethnography (UCL24-CLI). Stewart's MyStreet (UCL24-STE), Lewis' ExCiteS (UCL24-LEW) and Sommer's Gakasha Park (UCL24-SOM) studies demonstrate some of the ways in which we **use innovative digital technologies** both to bring our research to the attention of the widest possible non-academic audience, and to enhance the nature of their engagement with it. As collaborative anthropology, Stewart's work on MyStreet also demonstrates the way in which 'extreme citizen science' models have informed our approach to impact, whilst Stewart's work highlights the centrality of **educational engagement** – including with schools - to that approach. Lewis' FPIC work elucidates several strands of our approach, including **engagement with policy-making organisations** and relevant use of research processes to inform and influence our partners' policies and practice through action research, advocacy, and the **provision of consultancy services**. Drafting the case studies has helped us clarify how we can, in future, further recognise, reward, and encourage the development of research agendas informed by on-going dialogue with end-users, which also uphold Anthropology's professional and ethical obligations.