Institution: Nottingham Trent University
Unit of Assessment: D36: : Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

a. Context

The Unit produces inter- and multi-disciplinary research across the broad field of media, communication and cultural studies. Our longstanding reputation for excellence is based on our intellectually rigorous approach to theorizing and analyzing contemporary cultural practices across a range of scales. Within the Unit, the Centre for the Study of Inequality, Culture and Difference (CSICAD) acts as a focal point for many of our impact activities. Informed by NTU's mission to undertake research that shapes lives and society, and that addresses the needs of communities, our impact activities demonstrate a number of key strengths. Our researchers have influenced the policies and practices of NGOs, public sector bodies and community groups at a range of scales, from international organizations such as UNESCO to city councils and community groups such as the African Women's Empowerment Forum. Drawing on the research strengths located in CSICAD, staff use the media and open events to shape public understanding of cultural identity and discrimination. Our researchers also help professions and organizations adapt to cultural changes and their findings inform and shape expert systems and professional practices.

b. Approach to impact

Since 2008, the approach to impact has matured and become more systematic. An initial inventory and evaluation of impact activities revealed that it was essential to recognize that these were already embedded in our research culture and that approaches to impact occur in a variety of ways. Three key approaches to developing impact were identified in the Unit's existing practices.

First, approaches to impact may be diffuse and non-linear. This is evident in the 'Globalization and Culture' case study in which Tomlinson's research generated a series of invitations to provide expert presentations and consultations to high-level international bodies such as UNESCO, contributions which have shaped policy at an international level. Other staff have also been asked to share their findings to help shape policy. For example, Morrish was invited by Baroness Morris (former Secretary of State for Education) to discuss the implications of the commodification and marketization of higher education in a meeting on higher education policy at Portcullis House (2010). Other researchers act as consultants and use their research to shape and inform professional practice. For example, Cummings' approach to studying communication disorders has engaged practitioners (e.g. via *Bulletin: the Official Magazine of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists.*) She is regularly consulted by members of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists on the use of clinical pragmatics in communication interventions. Williams utilized his expertise on histories of immigration in the UK to enhance probation professionals' understanding of migrant experiences which fed into their working practices (2009).

Second, in other cases, potential users and beneficiaries have been closely involved in the research and dissemination process and have played an active role in shaping the nature of the research. For example, Connell worked with Charity Shop DJ Productions (CSDJ) on the Talking About Old Records Project, a form of research based on intergenerational community arts practice. The project created intergenerational rapport and understanding among participants and, as Norman Smith (Deputy Head of Youth Services, Derby City Council) noted, 'improved communication between the generations'. Connell's research also shaped the subsequent strategies, practices and policies of public and voluntary sector agencies. For example, Richard Talaska (former Engagement Officer for Adults and Health, Derby City Council) states that the project 'had a large impact on our intergenerational strategy'. The impact of the research extends beyond the Midlands and provided CSDJ with a model of intergenerational practice which has been used in their on-going community arts work.

Third, between these approaches, some researchers have taken a proactive role in identifying potential beneficiaries and audiences for their research and identifying routes through which impact can be achieved. As the 'Diaspora and Migration' case study demonstrates, Bailey's research findings inform the strategies for agency and power utilized in the development of the African Women's Empowerment Forum. A similar approach was taken by Morrish in transforming professional practices (2009-12). Recommendations from Morrish's analysis of university diversity

statements (with Kathleen O'Mara) were implemented by two universities to transform equality and diversity training and policy. Their research was fundamental in shaping policy changes in relation to the 'trans* community' at Canterbury Christ Church University. At SUNY (Oneonta), Morrish's findings formed the basis for diversity training which contributed to diversity becoming one of the pillars of 'the College's Strategic Plans (2011)'. As SUNY's Professor Compton further commented, 'The campus gains from trainings, faculty research, and an increase in faculty and student consciousness would not have been possible without your [Morrish's] involvement with Oneonta.'

The inventory of impact activities clearly demonstrates that the team takes a variety of approaches in using its research findings to contribute to public understanding of questions about identity, culture and difference. Researchers regularly use media outlets such as local radio (e.g. Braber and Connell) and professional magazines (e.g. Cummings) to engage with non-academic audiences. Public talks in arts cinemas, galleries and museums at local, national and international levels also shape public understanding. Examples include Needham's talks on Andy Warhol at the Hayward Gallery (2008) and the John Hansard Gallery (2011); Williams' contributions to events at Nottingham's New Art Exchange and the Bonnington Gallery on issues around art and politics in the Middle East; and Cakirlar's introduction to the work of artist Taner Ceylan at the Preview of his Lost Paintings Series at the Paul Kasmin Gallery in New York (2013). (Cakirlar also co-wrote the catalogue to accompany this exhibition.) Wright engaged broader audiences by exploring questions about nation, landscape and identity through his contributions to (inter)national media such as the *Guardian*, BBC Online, BBC World Service and Radio 3. He also discussed his research at public events such as the Hay Festival (2008), Aldborough Festival (2008) and Cheltenham Festival (2010); gave talks at the National Portrait Gallery (May 2011), Pages bookshop (February 2010), the BFI (November 2010) and the Architectural Association (February 2011); and contributed to debates in openDemocracy.net, *3am* magazine and *Architecture Today* (Wright was employed at NTU until September 2011). By organizing public events such as festivals and exhibitions, staff also use their research findings to engage a range of publics. For example, Needham represented NTU as a co-organizer of the Broadway Cinema Nottingham's Korean Film Festival (November 2009) which promoted public understanding of this particular national cinema. With colleagues in the School of Art and Design, Needham was also a co-organizer of Fashioning the East-Asian Screen, a collaboration with Nottingham Castle (May 2012). Finally, as the latter activities suggest, we enjoy close working relationships with regional cultural industries and institutions. One of the most significant of these is GameCity, the annual videogame festival (and a range of associated year-long events), led by NTU in partnership with a range of private and public sector partners including Nottingham City Council and the Broadway Cinema. The unit is formally represented in this partnership through Simons' role as Festival Director. Building on these partnerships plays a central role in our future impact strategy.

While recognizing the strengths of these existing approaches, from Autumn 2011 we adopted an increasingly strategic approach and implemented policies to embed the impact agenda more systematically within the research culture. First, we recognized that, while dissemination and engagement activities are valuable ways of changing public understanding in their own right, we could also build on these activities, and the relationships they established, to produce more structured and tangible impacts. As a result, formal partnerships such as GameCity will be given an increasingly central role. Second, we also recognized that a developmental strategy was necessary to embed impact activities more firmly within the research activities of the unit. An Impact Champion (Tomlinson) was appointed in September 2011 to act in an advisory capacity to other colleagues. Approaches to impact also were made part of the Unit's mentoring scheme. As a result, an Impact Workshop was held in November 2011 in which staff shared examples of their own practice and discussed mechanisms to transform engagement into impact, work developed in a further workshop in March 2013. Finally, we recognized that the research clusters within the Unit provide a crucial foundation for developing future collaborative impact. This has been strengthened by the launch of the CSICAD in 2012 which operates as a focal point for impact activity. The case studies fall within the remit of the Centre. The development of these approaches has been enabled by both the NTU and School impact strategy. Support for developing impact has been enhanced by the appointment of a School Research Development Officer in 2009 who advises on external funding bids and also by ringfencing of QR money to support impact activities by the School.

c. Strategy and plans Building on these existing approaches and activities, the Unit developed an impact strategy which aims to increase the quantity and reach of impact activity from 2013 onwards and to integrate impact within the wider research strategy. This strategy includes:

Intellectual and financial support for impact. Impact is now a key element of all mentoring and research review processes. This enables identification of future staff training and development needs in relation to impact. The strategy recognizes that the economic costs of supporting and developing impact activities and constraints on staff time are the major barriers to impact. As a result, 25% of the Unit's 2012-13 research budget has been earmarked to support impact activities and similar levels of support are envisaged for future years. While a small part of this budget is dedicated to ongoing training and staff development, researchers with clear plans for developing impact can apply for the Unit's Impact Support Grant and the School's Impact Support funding (e.g. Bailey organized a workshop aimed at refugee action groups in May 2013). This enables impact to be an economically and temporally sustainable element of our research practice.

Anchoring impact within the wider research process. While research questions should not be driven by impact alone, staff will be supported in identifying the potential impacts of their research from early in the research process. This is built into mentoring processes and in internal research applications (e.g. for sabbaticals). A future impact workshop is planned for 2014 which focuses on embedding evidence of impact within the wider research process. A systematic evaluation of modes of evidence gathering is currently in process within the School to identify the most effective ways of supporting evidence collection on an on-going basis.

Building collaborative and collective impact. We recognize that collaborative and collective impact strategies (whether based on individual or collaborative research) offer greater potential for sustainability in the long-term. Teams of researchers can share expertise in developing impact as well as working on collaborative impact projects. A priority is to build on existing formal partnerships and develop new ones to enhance the sustainability of impact activity.

Highlighting strategic areas for development. Our strategy highlights key areas for development which build on collective interests, strengths and/or experience. 1) 'Cultures of Display' involves four staff (Cakirlar, Needham, Williams, Simons) who use their research expertise to work on different projects with local, national and international partners in museums, archives, galleries and auction houses. Their research will not only be used to develop contents for aesthetic display but to shape exhibition and reception practices. For example, Cakirlar's current research on queer and Turkish art is central to his co-curatorship of a planned exhibition on ideas of proximity and intimacy in queer digital media at the Künstlerhaus, Stuttgart and to on-going commissions to write catalogue notes for Sotheby's, assessments which are crucial to the economic value of works in the art market. Needham is currently organizing a series of events with Nottingham Contemporary based on his research on Warhol. 2) Based around the core research themes of CSICAD, we aim to build on our existing expertise (Bailey, Connell) in developing self-empowerment among disadvantaged groups, shaping public policy through working with various agencies and/or contributing to economic prosperity. The March 2013 Impact Workshop developed these strategies. Planned work includes the application of Cross's research on humour and 'madness' in comedy workshops that will empower psychiatric service users to combat stigma and shape mental health professionals' understanding of these issues. 3) Impact will be developed through more strategic use of existing formal partnerships (e.g. GameCity) and developing new ones (e.g. building on Hollows, Jones and Taylor's existing links with We Are Nottingham, the Business Improvement District for leisure businesses in the city).

d. Relationship to case studies
The case studies exemplify some of the approaches to impact that have been adopted. They also represent the work of CSICAD and emerge from areas of research expertise judged to be world-leading in RAE2008. The case studies demonstrate how members of the unit have provided expert evidence that influences international policy (e.g., Tomlinson's work for UNESCO). They also demonstrate how our research has empowered disadvantaged communities (e.g., Bailey's work with the African Women's Empowerment Forum) and contributed to public and professional understanding of contemporary cultural processes arising from globalization (Tomlinson).