

## Impact template (REF3a)

<b>Institution:</b> Edge Hill University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 36 - Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management
<p><b>a. Context</b></p> <p>The research activity of the unit is focussed on three research groups: The Media Industries and Policy (MIP) Research Group, the Transnational Film, Television &amp; Media (TFTM) Research Group and the Digital and Creative Practice as Research Group (DCP). Each group has established strategic research plans that recognise the importance of carrying out research that makes a contribution to public discourse, interprets cultural capital in public fora and informs professional practice within our specialist fields. REF3b presents two case studies drawn from the Media Industries and Policy Research Group and the Digital and Creative Practice as Research Group, respectively.</p> <p><b>The Media Industries and Policy Research Group:</b> Edge Hill University set out its intention to make a research contribution to informing and influencing film and media policy in 2007 with the appointment of <b>Shannon</b>, Executive Producer at Swish Films (Birmingham). <b>Shannon</b> brings to the unit his long experience of senior roles at the BFI, the UK Film Council, Screen Yorkshire and Scottish Screen. More recent appointments (e.g., <b>Witts</b>, 2010; <b>Molloy</b>, 2012; <b>Drake</b>, Hoey, 2013) have strengthened the group's expertise in media and cultural policy, leading to commissions (e.g., <b>Witts'</b> programmes commissioned by the BBC for broadcast on Radio 3 in 2011 [repeated 2012] and 2013) and consultancy (<b>Molloy's</b> policy advice for The Green Party and the Vegan Society).</p> <p><b>The Transnational Film, Television &amp; Media Research Group</b> is the Unit's largest group and the one most productive in terms of research monographs in the census period. It contributes impacts principally within civil society and cultural life. <b>Genz's</b> work on postfeminism has led to her being interviewed in the media. <b>Trandafoiu's</b> work on the cultural difficulties facing the Romanian diaspora in the UK has led to an invitation for her to advise the Romanian government. <b>Evans'</b> work on film festivals has resulted in several international media appearances.</p> <p><b>The Digital and Creative Practice as Research Group</b> has emerged from our strategy of appointing practising artists, film-makers and performers, often on fractional contracts, to enhance our students' experiences. The group engages with diverse public audiences through film festivals, e.g., Keswick (Heney &amp; Hunter) or Ann Arbor (<b>Snazell</b>); independent cinemas such as FACT, Liverpool (<b>Jukes</b>, <b>Snazell</b>), The Cornerhouse, Manchester (<b>Snazell</b>); NGOs, e.g., The Reader Organisation, Liverpool (Heney &amp; Hunter); schools and hospitals, e.g., Alder Hey, Liverpool (Heney &amp; Hunter); galleries and museums, e.g., Museum of Science &amp; Industry, Manchester (<b>Jukes</b>); and through bringing the public on to campus for exhibitions, screenings (e.g., the first ever UK screening of the Ann Arbor showreel, 2012) and performances, thus contributing directly to local and regional cultural life.</p> <p>So the users of our research can be categorised as policy makers, practitioners, cultural entrepreneurs (e.g., festival organisers) and the general public as consumers of media.</p> <p><b>b. Approach to impact</b></p> <p>The Unit has developed professional relationships with policy makers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Shannon's</b> hosting and chairing of two Film Policy roundtable debates at Edge Hill University in 2012. These events responded to a national consultation exercise on film policy and brought together key academics, film directors and producers, representatives from arts and international film festivals (London and Ann Arbor), and senior policy figures (BFI, Creative England and Liverpool Film Office), to examine the government's film policy review. As a direct result, <b>Shannon</b> was invited by Alison McGovern, MP, to lead a discussion about the state of the film industry in Liverpool (Sept 2012) with film industry representatives, the BBC Trust and national politicians;</li> <li>• <b>Trandafoiu's</b> work on Romanian migration and has informed public debates at the Contemporary Urban Centre (Liverpool, 2008) and the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice (Budapest, 2013), bringing together academics and policy-makers on diasporic policy across the EU. <b>Trandafoiu</b> advises the Romanian Government on issues of immigration and in October 2013 received a special award from the Romanian ambassador to London for her Outstanding Intellectual Contribution to the Romanian community in the UK;</li> <li>• <b>Molloy's</b> expertise on the ethics of human-animal interactions has been taken up by policymakers, leading to an invitation to join a collaborative project on the National Ecosystem</li> </ul>

## Impact template (REF3a)

Assessment, which included Defra, AHRC, ESRC, NERC and the Welsh Assembly Government. **Molloy** is a specialist advisor to the Animal History Museum, Los Angeles, on the development of permanent and rotating exhibitions. She has also been invited to advise the Vegan Society on sustainability issues and to speak at The Green Party conference (2013).

We have engaged with practitioners through:

- Bringing film-makers together with policy makers and academic experts in order to stimulate debate at Shannon's Round Table events (2012) which serviced the North West of England;
- Engaging with issues of identity and wellbeing around migration and social integration (**Trandafoiu**, Heney, Hunter) leading to better-informed practice in NHS Trust Alder Hey and The Reader Organisation.

We have engaged with cultural entrepreneurs through:

- An event on campus in 2012, organised by **Evans**, focused on Film Festivals (including the Keswick Film Festival to which Heney and Hunter contribute as judges), and also hosted the UK premiere of the Ann Arbor Film Festival's 2012 showreel, with a public lecture from its Director Donald Harrison. **Evans'** work on the cultural and social capital of film festivals led to interviews on the Voice of Russia.
- Our engagement with Bay TV as their academic partner in their successful bid for the Liverpool local TV franchise. We look forward to working closely with Bay TV from when it begins transmitting in May 2014, engaging with the company both in terms of advice and consultancy and providing research-led content for its programmes.

We have engaged with the general public through:

- **Witts'** commission by the BBC to write and present a series of four scripted radio programmes on the history of the Music Appreciation Movement (1890-1980s), for *The Essay* programme on BBC Radio 3, first broadcast in August 2011 and repeated summer 2012, with a further commission for an essay on Paris 1913, broadcast in January 2013;
- **Jukes'** and **Snazell's** Practice as Research (PaR) has been exhibited at venues including MOSI, The Royal College of Art, Hockney Gallery, The Cornerhouse Manchester, FACT Liverpool and UNIFOR, Brazil. This work has led to a forthcoming Creative Animation Knowledge Exchange (CAKE) festival with the China Academy of Art, Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication and Beijing Film Academy, centrepiece of the International Festival of Business, Liverpool, summer 2014;
- **Shannon's** research on independent film production in the UK which has led to the rediscovery and digitisation of neglected work from the Birmingham Film and Video Workshop, a major exhibition at the Vivid Gallery;
- Hunter's and Heney's research actively engages with social issues, especially those involving migrant communities, holding therapeutic photography workshops with school-children. Their collaborative, multi-award-winning public project *The Unforgotten Coat* investigates community engagement with immigration, and *The Coast of Soap Ships*, an award-winning film responding to representations of the Cumbrian working-class in *Secret Millionaire* (Channel 4) was exhibited on the Channel 4 website. Channel 4's viewers' editor commented: '*Complaints don't come more eloquent than this.*'

Staff were encouraged and supported in these activities by the University which financed the Round Table events, funded the visit of the Ann Arbor Festival director and funded staff visits to the USA and to China. Large-scale events at the University are routinely supported by the conference team in Facilities Management.

### c. Strategy and plans

The Unit's goals are (1) to become a regional centre of excellence for policy research in media and communications, (2) to be a known and trusted brand as an interface between excellent academic research and excellent professional practice in a variety of settings, and (3) to make a distinctive contribution to improving the quality of life, especially for the socially excluded, through the potentially restorative powers of media, culture and creativity.

The establishment of cross-institutional research institutes, including the Institute for Creative Enterprise (ICE) is central to our strategy for generating impact from our best research. The institutes will have external advisory boards, drawn from industry, policy and practice and we will

## Impact template (REF3a)

use this mechanism to ensure that fledgling research projects mesh with research questions which are pertinent outside the academy. For this Unit, ICE (directed by **Molloy**) will be the principal interface with the outside world.

Most broadly our approach to impact is aimed at **inculcating and equipping researchers with awareness and understanding of impact**. Our strategy draws upon and feeds into the wider research strategy outlined in REF 5b; it is founded on (i) our assessments of our current and emerging expertise, (ii) the needs of research users, (iii) the needs and ideas of our researchers established through consultation and staff appraisal, (iv) our assessment of the research funding landscape, (v) a structured review of recent, current and emerging research within the Unit, and (vi) the development of new interdisciplinary research institutes and centres within the University. Through our developing activities we are ensuring that genuine value is attached to impact - we emphasise and articulate impact considerations at every stage of the research planning process and our internal procedures reflect this. Internal research funding requests must include consideration of the non-academic applications, and where appropriate, set out how potential for impact will be maximised. This also aims to **ensure pump-priming supports impact activities**. Researchers are encouraged to track and monitor any emerging impact by staying active in relevant non-academic networks. Staff update academic managers on their work with user groups through the Annual Academic Review process and this will be facilitated by the roll out of recently acquired tools to identify, record and track the results of work with users.

We will continue to draw on **institutional support through the Research Capacity Building Programme** which includes sessions addressing engagement, influence and impact. ECRs are, in particular, encouraged to attend the sessions which include building network presence, use of social media, and media training. Person-centred support is available through faculty and departmental staff development resources for the development of key external audience engagement skills. Colleagues from a background in practice, rather than in academia, are given the opportunity to engage with end-users on projects being developed by more senior staff, so that they become familiar with this core part of the research planning process as part of their own Continued Professional Development.

Practice-based staff relatively new to HE require careful mentoring and support for them to venture beyond the relatively safe and familiar territory of their practice into framing, in academic terms, the research questions which preoccupy them. The key is support and encouragement to allow them to develop a research portfolio with applied *and* theoretical strands, to establish themselves in networks with research users whilst continuing to meet academic-career milestones.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

The case studies result from the approach and strategy outlined above and focus on the transformative engagement with audience and community experiences across different settings (pioneering film-workshops, archive creation, collaborative work with external artists, and media literacy in children). Both case studies exemplify the embedding of impact into the research strategy. Hunter and Heney's collaborative award-winning project, *The Unforgotten Coat*, explores the creative dialogue between text and photographic image and was commissioned and supported by The Reader Organisation, a charity/social enterprise that brings about social change by sharing literature with people of all ages and backgrounds. 50,000 copies of the resultant book have been used on literary programmes in prisons, as part of therapeutic workshops with children at Alder Hey Children's hospital, and by schools. *The Unforgotten Coat's* representation of the fate of immigrants from Mongolia, deriving from ethnographic research undertaken for the Family Refugee Project, builds on Faculty-wide research in migration, race, racism and ethnicity. Shannon's research on the legacy of the pioneering Birmingham Film and Video Workshop (BFVW) fed directly into his collaboration with the digitisation of neglected productions from this diverse collective, making them available for the first time for public exhibition and circulation, thus drawing attention to their important impact on British culture. Alongside the case study, Shannon exemplifies our strategic approach to recruitment of high-level expert practitioners, informing impact by research, and engaging in regular impact activities including through professional production/practice.