Section 5: Environment template (REF5)

a. Overview.

The UoA 35 Research Group at the University of Sunderland represents a modest research area with just three members of staff submitting work for assessment as 'outputs' or for 'impact': Dr Roy Connolly (Drama), Professor Phil Ellis (Drama) and Mr John Kefala Kerr (Music). Despite the UoA's size, its members are, nevertheless, highly active in research and scholarly activity and, since 2008, have produced a range of work including journal articles, book chapters, conference presentations, performances and participatory arts projects.

The main research interests of staff focus in the areas of twentieth century theatrical practices; musical composition; teaching, learning and the curriculum; sound and music therapies, and regional and community arts with this research being disseminated in a range of forms including practice as research, creative and critical writing and performance work.

The UoA's research activity is notable for demonstrating a high degree of integration with teaching with much of the research work carried out by staff having direct relevance to the undergraduate curriculum (e.g. recent research work includes investigations of dramaturgy, applied theatre practices, the acting techniques of Brecht and Stanislavski, and creative musicology). The team are also highly active in collaborating with external partners and institutions, including Durham University, Edge Hill University, the National University of Lesotho, and local arts organisations such as the Northumberland Theatre Company, Origin Theatre Company, Skimstone Performance Company, the artists collective Rednile, the Customs House, the Washington Arts Centre and the Sage, Gateshead.

The Research Group has developed and submitted a range of funding applications in recent years and has been successful in attracting funding from PALATINE, the Arts Council, North Tyneside Borough Council, Culture Ireland and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation

The teams other activities include peer review for AHRC and PALATINE, external examining of several research degrees and script consultancy for the Live Theatre in Newcastle.

Members of staff within the team collectively demonstrate many years of varied experience in educational contexts, in long-term research and in the professional world, and as a result the research culture within the Drama and Music departments is more dynamic than the size of this UoA submission may suggest. In addition to the work of the members of staff submitted here, it should also be noted that, since 2008, the departments' research culture has been enriched by the work of Professor Phil Ellis (Music Department 1999-2011), Dr Rosalind Haslett (Drama Department 2009-2011), and staff who are research active but not submitting outputs for assessment on this occasion, such as Nigel Watson, and Lesley Younger and Judith Hills, who are currently project managing a study of participatory arts with a budget of £250,000.

b. Research Strategy

Staff research actively promotes and intertwines these strands of activity and demonstrates a persistent concern with the effects and value of creating dialogue and promoting collaboration between disciplinary, academic, community and professional contexts.

I. Developing research that enhances the student experience by being integrated with or having an

impact on teaching and the curriculum

Evidence of the strategic alignment of staff research and teaching can be seen in a range of recent research outputs that deal with topics that are central to the undergraduate curriculum in Drama and Music. In this regard, the following outputs are particularly worthy of note.

Roy Connolly

- Connolly, Roy, and Richard Ralley (2008) 'Brecht and the Disembodied Actor', Studies in Theatre and Performance, Intellect, August, Vol 28 (2);
- Ralley, Richard and Roy Connolly (2010) 'In Front of Our Eyes: Presence and the Cognitive Audience', About Performance (2010) University of Sydney Press;
- Connolly Roy, and Richard Ralley (2010) 'Something real is needed: constructing and dismantling presence', Studies in Theatre and Performance, Intellect.

John Kefala Kerr

- "Reading Music: Further Adventures in Creative Musicology" Paper presentation, 42nd Baltic International Musicology Conference, Latvia, October 2010.
- Kefala-Kerr, John, 'WKD2', Friction Magazine and Journal: deploying the short story form to articulate the elements of a critique of Rachmaninov's Vocalise. December 2010
- Kefala-Kerr, John, Creative Musicology, Invited Seminar presentation at the International Centre for Music Studies (ICMuS), Newcastle University, November 2010

Nigel Watson

- Watson, Nigel (2011). Postmodernism and Lifestyles, in Stuart Sim (ed.). The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism. London: Routledge.
- Practice as research project Lesotho 2005-2014

Rosalind Haslett (Drama 2009-2011)

- Haslett, Rosalind (2011) 'The architecture of the National Theatre and National Theatre play selection. *New Theatre Quarterly*, Spring 2011

II. Developing research that addresses issues in educational policy, pedagogy or teaching and learning

Staff members approach their teaching in a highly analytical and reflexive fashion and this has led to a number of recent research outputs concerned with curriculum issues, the student experience and/or widening participation. In this regard, the following outputs are particularly worthy of note. Ward, Sophie and Roy Connolly, (2008) 'Let them Eat Shakespeare: Literature and the National Curriculum', Curriculum Journal, Routledge, December, Vol 19

- Connolly, Roy and Sophie Ward (2010) 'Enacting Metalearning: using performance based research to develop HND/FD students' awareness of the self as learner', http://www.palatine.ac.uk/files/enactingmetalearning.pdf
- Ward, S.C., Connolly, R. & Meyer, I.E.. (2011) 'Performance Based Research and students' understanding of their learning'. Paper presented at the symposium, 'Deepening our understanding of the deep approach to learning'. European Association

for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) 2011 Conference, 'Education for a Global Networked Society', University of Exeter, 30th August - 3rd September 2011.

- Ward, S.C., Connolly, R. & Meyer, J.H.F. (2012) 'The Enactment of Metalearning Capacity: Using drama to help raise students' awareness of the self as learner' Innovations in Education and Teaching International.

III. Developing research that seeks to innovate through interdisciplinary collaboration

The outputs cited above document a range of interdisciplinary research projects completed with colleagues from departments at other institutions including the Psychology Department at Edge Hill University, the Education Department at Durham University, the National University of Lesotho, the State University of New York. An important feature of the Research Group's work is thus its emphasis on interdisciplinary work, and engagement with research that draws upon, or extends its focus beyond performance into, other disciplines (e.g., as in the examples above, education and cognitive science).

IV. Developing research that enhances the University's role in civic and community engagement by working with a range of external partners in professional, voluntary and academic settings at local, national and international level

The most significant area of overlap in staff research is in the area of regional and community/participatory arts. In carrying out this work, staff members are active in collaborating with, not only, the external partners and institutions already noted, but also Newcastle University and the National University of Lesotho, and performance companies such as the Northumberland Theatre Company, Origin Theatre Company, Skimstone Performance Company, and the local artists collective Rednile. Students also regularly undertake projects that are linked with professional activity in the region in local venues and with local community groups (e.g. Washington Arts Centre, the People's Theatre, the Customs House, the sage Gateshead).

The Subject Area's contribution to artistic activity in the region is evidenced in its role as regional co-coordinator of nationwide project: *ArtWorks NE: Developing Practice in Participatory Settings*. The ArtWorks NE pathfinder project is, one of five such projects across the UK funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation with the aim of reviewing and improving the opportunities for career progression for artists working in participatory settings; improving training and continuing professional development infrastructure in higher education institutions and arts organisations; building a community of practice on and offline, organizing events and producing publications to generate enhanced quality and deeper understanding of what is required from artists in generating successful participatory projects. ArtWorks aims to develop new routes to support progression at all stages of an artist's career, as well as enhancing the experience of participants working with artists, embedding participation and engagement into the design of the projects; sharing and building on good practice, and working across art forms and different settings. The Subject Area will be overseeing the activity of the Northeast 'Pathfinder' for the next five years and during this period play a key role in initiating and sustaining dialogue between a wide range of local artists, theatres, music venues and galleries including the region's major venues Northern Stage, the Live Theatre, The Baltic Arts Centre and the Sage Gateshead.

Other activity worthy of note in the area of regional and community arts includes:

John Kefala-Kerr's work in participatory arts and community music which includes a number of recent projects in collaboration with local partners, commissions from local organisations and site

specific compositions.

- Kefala-Kerr, John (2011) Eight Bells: Elegy for Violin and Soundtrack. [Performance]
- Kefala-Kerr, John (2011) Uncommercial Plainsongs of the 21st Century. [Performance]
- Kefala-Kerr, John, Webster-Saraamets, Claire and Bennett, Tim (2011) Fish and the Yesterday Song. [Performance]

Nigel Watson's work in local community theatre and in theatre for development in Lesotho. Nigel Waston has been taking students from the university to Lesotho for the last six years to participate in community theatre projects and has also published a number of articles about this work.

Roy Connolly's work on regional theatre, which includes a book and a number of articles on Northern Irish Theatre e.g.:

- Connolly Roy (2010) 'Knowing Their Place: The Ulster Literary Theatre and the Northern Irish Theatre Scene', Journal of Theatre History Studies,

Rosalind Haslett's (Drama 2009-2011) work while at the University including a number of plays written in collaboration with local theatre companies, e.g.:

- Haslett Rosalind, The Ballad of Minnie and Doxer, InterACT, Northumberland Theatre Company, 2010 Performance;

Phil Ellis' work establishing iMUSE rooms in a range of other institutions (such as special schools, specialist institutions for autism, day care centres, and an NHS intensive care centre) and in knowledge transfer to enable partner organizations to use the techniques he has developed, along with appropriate supporting technology.

SUSTAINABILITY

The research documented above is an essential and integral part of the overall academic activity of staff and therefore implicitly sustainable. The Research Group's ongoing research activity and applications for funding will thus place particular emphasis upon:

- Maintaining existing links and developing new links between teaching and research
- Maintaining existing links and developing new links with other institutions, local artists, performance companies and other relevant partners
- Increasing collaborative research projects and funding bids within the Subject Area with a view to building upon the Subject Area's shared interests and strengths.
- More clearly articulating how research within the subject area impacts locally through students and graduates and enhances local arts practices.

Recent initiatives in support of these strategic aims include:

- **An application for a £30,000 Teaching Development Grant in the Higher Education Academy Departmental Grant Scheme, December 2011**
- **The Subject Area's award of £250,000 from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and role as coordinator of the North East Pathfinder for the nationwide Art Works project, 2011-2016. This project will provide an opportunity for the extension of the Subject Areas research into participatory arts and will foster further expansion of the Subject Area's partnerships and collaboration with local artists, community groups and venues.**

c. People, including:

   i.   Staffing strategy and staff development

In collaboration with the Universities of Northumbria and Teesside, Sunderland developed and piloted a Leadership Foundation funded programme "Leading on Research Excellence", a tailor-made strategic leadership programme for Readers and Professors across the region.
Each member of the Research Group is able to apply to the University's Creative and Cultural Practices Research Beacon for funds to support their work via the Unit Leader and the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Design and Media.

This support can take the form of funding to attend and present at conferences, to undertake study trips, to be released from teaching, to provide time for preparing research outcomes for publication or to cover a percentage of the costs associated with the production of a specific research outcome.

All members of staff are required to produce an annual research plan, identifying proposed research activities and possible funding sources to support this research. These research plans then provide the basis for assembling a case to support any given research activity.

Colleagues new to research are given support to develop their research ideas documented in their annual personal research plans. They also have the opportunity for mentoring by the Unit Leader, to take advantage of in-service courses provided by the University's Academic Development Service and relevant external courses for which funding can be available. The timing and use of contracted research days is negotiated (e.g. one day a week, whole weeks or longer periods, as appropriate to the task) and a balance in workload is sought between research activity and non-research duties.

The UoA 35 Research Group receive regular information regarding funding opportunities for research at local, national and international level and enjoy the support of the wider research culture provided by the Faculty of Arts, Design and Media and the University including invitations to attend and contribute to regular research seminars.

The Graduate Research School (GRS) of the University provides training programme of lectures, seminars and workshops for all research students across the University. This includes formal instruction in research methods, project management, presentation skills, literature searching and thesis preparation. Support with writing research grant applications is provided by the Unit Leader, the Associate Dean for Arts and Design, Graduate Research School and Academic Development Services. The University also provides particular support and funding for research activity that is linked to the University's Civic Arts Strategy and which is designed to stimulate and facilitate exchanges between academic, business, and/or public bodies; to create links with the City and its communities; to enhance the creative industries, or to contribute to creating SME opportunities.

ii. Research students

Central Graduate Research Support provides administrative support for PGR students, their supervisors and procedural aspects. Central Academic Services provide a comprehensive offering of PGR student training programmes which spans the VITAE researcher development framework. All PGR students are required to attend this programme, and annual reviews of their progress.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

Central support for research is provided by a Research Support team, within Research, Innovation and Employer Engagement. This team provide support for postgraduate research students, for research active staff, research project managers, and senior management through the provision of management information. Central support is also provided for the identification of funding opportunities, and bid writing and submission.

The Research Group has developed and submitted a range of funding applications in recent years and has been successful in attracting funding from PALATINE, the Arts Council, North Tyneside Borough Council and Culture Ireland. These applications include:

Phil Ellis
The Linbury IMUSE Development Project, 2008-2010: £20,000,
Music CETL, 2005-2009: £229,500

Roy Connolly
PALATINE Teaching Development Award, 2009-2010: £5,200
Application to the Higher Education Academy for a Teaching Development Grant in the
Departmental scheme, 2011: £30,000

Judith Hills/Lesley Younger
Art Works North East: Developing Practice in Participatory Settings, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2011-2016: £247,016

John Kefala Kerr
Commission for Skimstone Performance Company, Arts Council England, November, 2011: £9500

Scholarly Infrastructure

As the co-ordinator of the regional 'Pathfinder' for *Art Works: Developing Practice in Participatory Settings* the Subject Area is firmly embedded in the national research network concerned with participatory arts. The Art Works initiative is itself provided with support and funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Creativity Culture & Education (supported by Arts Council England) and the Cultural Leadership Programme.

The Research Group conducts its activity within the context of the University's Creative and Cultural Practices Beacon. The Beacon actively supports the development of research in the UoA and regularly provides opportunities for members of the Unit to bid for awards to support their research activities including research trips, conference attendance, off campus performance work, study leave or release from teaching.

The Research Group also receives regular advice and assistance from Graduate Research Support (GRS). This is a University wide service which brings together all levels and types of support for research within the University into one office and which provides assistance in promoting the research efforts and activities of staff, matching these activities to the needs of the outside world, and providing a focus for cross-Faculty developments and activities. GRS produces a weekly blog with news about funding opportunities and highlighting issues and trends of significance in both national and international contexts. GRS also provides weekly mailings from the Research Professional website, ongoing information about funding opportunities from the European Union and

the UK Research Office, pre-award research proposal support, help with costing and pricing, and advice on research proposal approval and submission.

The University also provides an electronic repository for staff research (SURE) that allows staff to catalogue and maintain their research output - including book chapters, theses, reports, conference papers and many other items – online in digital form. SURE is the digital collection of the research output of the university,

University Library Services, (ULS), support research and researchers through the provision of high quality library environment and facilities, appropriate print and electronic information resources and support from professional staff. ULS subscribes to over 20,000 print and electronic journal titles. Researchers can also make up to 65 Interlibrary loan requests each academic year for items not in library stock. ULS subscribes to Journal Citation Reports for journal ranking and ISI Highly cited and Web of Science citation analysis tools. Researchers may join the Sconul Access Scheme, enabling access and borrowing from other Higher Education (HE) libraries. ULS also subscribes to the British Library's EthOS service where an increasing number of UK HE theses are available in full text. As well as a library website for researchers, ULS professional librarians provide support to researchers via the "library buddy" service. ULS also contributes to the university's training programme for new researchers and deliver sessions on accessing, searching and retrieving information from online databases and using the Internet to communicate ideas and research outputs via social media tools.

e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

As noted in Section two and four collaboration with external partners is at the heart of the departments' research. Staff members are active in collaborating with external partners and institutions including Durham University, Newcastle University, Edge Hill University and the National University of Lesotho, and performance companies such as the Northumberland Theatre Company, Origin Theatre Company, Skimstone Performance Company, and the local artists collective Rednile. Other recent collaborators and partners include Diabetes UK HMP Frankland, Durham City Arts and Durham International Brass Festival. Students also regularly undertake projects that are linked with professional activity in the region in local venues and with local community groups (e.g. Washington Arts Centre, the People's Theatre, the Customs House, the sage Gateshead). Nigel Watson's work involves collaboration with academics in three continents. John Kefala Kerr's work involves collaboration with local communities and contexts. Roy Connolly's work involves interdisciplinary collaboration with colleagues in other institutions.

The Research Group's other activities include peer review for AHRC (Roy Connolly 2011) and PALATINE (Roy Connolly 2010), external examining of several research degrees (John Kefala Kerr and Roy Connolly) and script consultancy for the Live Theatre in Newcastle (Rosalind Haslett). The members of the Research Group also regularly attend and present papers at national and international conferences, and submit work for peer review and publication. The UoA Leader is also a member of the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee and the Postgraduate Research Degree Subcommittee.