

Institution: Queen Mary University of London (QMUL)

Unit of Assessment: C17 (Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology)

a. Context

The School of Geography at QMUL engages with a wide range of research users, policy makers and the public to ensure that our research has major impact – in scope and significance – from the local (often in east London) to the international. Our long-term, strategic approach to maximising the impact of our research involves (i) establishing and sustaining collaborative frameworks for research; (ii) applying research in practice through committee membership and engagement with policy makers and practitioners; and (iii) broadening the audiences that engage with our research.

Collaborative frameworks for research provide us with ways of working with research users to shape the direction of ongoing and future research. The School has joint initiatives with non-HEIs (e.g. the Centre for Studies of Home in partnership with the Geffrye Museum; and the London Women and Planning Forum seminars organised through The City Centre). Funding has been secured from private, public and voluntary sector bodies whose operational interests coincide with the research priorities of the School. We have research contracts with Natural England, the River Restoration Centre, the Environment Agency, Environment Canada, Friends Provident Charitable Foundation, Poplar HARCA, Trust for London, and several NHS Primary Care Trusts. Congdon's post is funded (0.2 FTE) by Barking & Dagenham and Havering NHS PCTs for research into population health, primary care provision and health inequality in NE London. These PCTs have also funded 4 visiting research fellows in the School. RCUK funding has been awarded to partnerships with research users, e.g. AHRC funding for work with the Museum of London Archaeology Service, and PhD studentships via ESRC/NERC CASE and AHRC CDAs since 2005 with the Geffrye Museum (5), V&A Museum of Childhood (3), National Maritime Museum (2), Kids Company, British Museum, Natural History Museum, Ragged School Museum, Arcadis UK, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, Runnymede Trust, and Sandwell and Barking & Dagenham PCTs. The School's research is, therefore, often undertaken in close collaboration with users with whom we establish meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustained research partnerships. For example, the ESRC Global Cities at Work project advisory board included the Migrants' Rights Network, UNISON, the GLA, Inclusion and London Citizens, which was also vital to ESRC-funded research on the London living wage campaign. The SMART PhD programme and MSc IMFE enhances training and develops collaborative applied research projects with the agencies on the advisory board (e.g. Atkins, Environment Agency, Natural England and Wessex Water). Another strand seeks partnerships with organisations and individuals concerned with the arts, multimedia, museums and urban public space. Examples include AHRC-, ESRC- and Leverhulme Trust-funded research in collaboration with the Geffrye Museum via Centre for Studies of Home; curatorial work with Glowlab and the annual Conflux Festivals in New York; dissemination work on the AHRC-funded Irish border project with The Nerve Centre in Derry; and AHRC Creativeworks London funding for research with Spitalfields Music. A Clore Social Leadership Fellow was based in the School 2011-13 for a project on citizen schools.

Applying research in practice. The School pursues a range of opportunities to contribute to public, private and voluntary sector initiatives, including membership of key advisory committees, working groups and other public bodies. Examples include Wills' long-term work with London Citizens; Ogborn on the Advisory Committee (2004-10) and Working Group (2007-10) for the new 1666-1850 gallery for the Museum of London, and (2010-) the Research and Collections Committee of the National Maritime Museum; Wharton as Chair of the River Restoration Centre's Board of Directors (2010-); McIlwaine as Chair of the management committee (2006-8) of Carila Latin American Welfare Group and trustee of Children of the Andes (2010-); Datta and McIlwaine's work with UN-Habitat; Carr's membership of Forest Fawr management group (2006-) and strategic steering group for the GeoPark (2011-), Brecon Beacons National Park; Gurnell's leadership of the hydromorphology assessment work package in the FP7 project REFORM and Blunt's role as trustee and Council member of the RGS-IBG (2012-). Our PhD programme has produced researchers who are having impact via their subsequent careers, eg Anderson: International Transport Workers' Federation; Cock: Migrants' Rights Network; Cockel: Brent and the Thames

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Rivers Trusts; Gibbs: Atkins; Jamoul: London Citizens; Owen: Museum for African Art, NY; Paynter: Science Museum; and Shuker: Environment Agency.

Reaching a broader audience. QMUL geographers operate across the range of popular media in order to broaden the audience for research. Highlights include Reid-Henry's book *Fidel & Che*; Owens' *Living in Victorian London* film for BBC London; Gurnell on 'Nature' and 'Saving Species' on BBC Radio 4; and Horne in *Geology Today*, *Astronomy Now* and *BBC Wildlife Magazine*. Curation and contribution to exhibitions includes Nash's *Who once lived in my house?* (AHRC, Geffrye Museum, 2013), Parry's *Mind Over Matter* (Wellcome Trust, Shoreditch Town Hall, 2011), Nash's catalogue for Kathy Prendergast's *Black Map Series* (2010), and public lectures and discussions at venues including the ICA, Glasgow Centre for Contemporary Arts, Metropolis Festival (Copenhagen), National Archives, National Maritime Museum, National Portrait Gallery, Nottingham Contemporary, South Bank Centre, Urban Design Service, and World Women's Forum. Feedback to research collaborators and users, including policymakers, has been via workshops and public lectures on: work-life balance in the new economy to employee networks, unions and IT employers in UK and Ireland (James); economic restructuring and livelihood protection to governmental and civil society organisations in Slovakia and Poland (Smith); and estimates of diabetes prevalence for the US Centre for Disease Control (Congdon). Research is also disseminated via reports for non-academic audiences eg *Making the City Work* (2005), launched with London Citizens at Wandsworth Town Hall; contributions to OECD (2006) *OECD Territorial Reviews: France*; OECD (2005) *Detecting regional challenges and potentials in France*; OECD (2005) *OECD Regions at a Glance*; UN-Habitat *State of Women in Cities Report 2012-13*; and Environment Agency R&D Reports. On-going work with museums and galleries translates research into displays for a broad audience, eg exhibitions on geographies of home at the Geffrye Museum (from AHRC, ESRC and Leverhulme Trust projects) and the display on pleasure gardens at the Museum of London (2010-) directly informed by Ogborn's (1998) work on Vauxhall Gardens.

b. Approach to impact

The School's research strategy includes the enhancement of impact in accordance with the research areas and priorities of the School. The following structures and mechanisms are in place to enable staff to achieve impact as part of the research process:

College structures: **QMUL Public Relations** provides expert advice and builds tailored strategies focused on impact and connecting research with the right audience via press releases, Twitter and RSS feeds, podcasts, iTunesU and a Youtube channel. An active record of staff research expertise is maintained for external users ('Find an Expert') and media appearances are archived centrally. Media training is provided by QMUL's Centre for Academic and Professional Development. **QM Innovation and Enterprise** (QMI) is QMUL's technology transfer and business office. Its Business Development Managers are responsible for identifying and managing all intellectual property (IP) generated from research at the College. All research projects are required to consider potential IP issues. QMI supports the development of knowledge transfer and pathways to impact. Its annual Prospect Fund (£100k pa) invites bids for up to £10k for knowledge transfer activities. In 2010 the School received £9000 for the scoping exercise that led to the establishment of the Centre for Studies of Home, and in 2011 £17k for 3 projects, including initiatives in citizen science. **The Centre for Public Engagement** at QMUL, led by a Vice-Principal for Public Engagement (with Wills on its board), aims to set a new international standard for the ways HEIs engage with the public. Using a c£300k grant from RCUK and £1m HEIF5 funding (2011-15), the Centre provides training, support and funding for new and existing public engagement activities for academics, PGRs and ECRs. It awards over £100k pa, including £19k to Geography in 2012 (corporate social philanthropy; alien plant invaders) and £11k in 2013 (living wage week; symposium on a play inspired by QMUL research; film about our collaboration with museums). **Creativeworks London** (CL) is a QMUL-led consortium of 38 universities, museums, libraries and archives bringing new collaborative research opportunities to London's creative businesses (AHRC £4m, 2011-15). Blunt and Owens sit on its 'audiences' steering group. CL builds on the success of the London Centre for Arts and Cultural Enterprise (LCACE) to offer continuing professional development, business advice and mentoring to arts and culture professionals, and to enhance networking and collaboration between HEIs, industry and the wider community. The School received £2k LCACE funding for the London Women and Planning Forum (2007-8) and £15k from CL (2013) to fund a

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project with Spitalfields Music on the ways in which participation creates and shapes community.

School structures: The School's five **Research Centres** (£15k pa QM funding) – the Centre for Studies of Home, The City Centre, the Centre for Global Security and Development, The Centre for Aquatic and Terrestrial Environments and The Centre for Micromorphology (see REF5) – provide vehicles for engaging with partners within and beyond the university sector via collaborations, training courses, workshops, public events and community engagement. School **Research Theme Funding (£5k pa)** is bid for by its four research themes to develop research initiatives and to enhance the impact of existing and new research, eg to publicise the launch of the Irish Borderlands website, to organize an event on children and migration in museums at the V&A Museum of Childhood, and to make a promotional film on collaboration. The School's full-time **Research and Teaching Officer** role includes developing the impact of the School's research by identifying opportunities for impact, organising events and maintaining a database of research users and partners. This role will be strategically developed alongside work by the new Marketing and Communications Officer (2013-).

c. Strategy and plans

The **School's strategy** has six objectives:

- i. to embed impact in the research process through staff training, knowledge sharing through impact seminars and internal peer review of grant applications;
- ii. to enable impact via the School's targeted Research Theme Funding;
- iii. to develop the role of (a) the Research and Teaching Officer to generate and archive information on and evidence of impact and (b) the new Marketing and Communications Officer to target press releases and publicise research via the website and social media;
- iv. to promote and support applications for internal and external Knowledge Exchange funds;
- v. to consolidate existing research partnerships with external organisations and to use Research Theme Funds and the School's expertise to generate new partnerships; and
- vi. to identify and support key areas for current and future impact across all research themes.

The **School's plans** for impact include consolidating its long-term partnerships with museums, achieving impact via collaborative research, exhibitions and the development of learning resources (at the Geffrye Museum, V&A Museum of Childhood, National Maritime Museum, Natural History Museum, Ragged School Museum, Museum of London and Hunterian Museum). Other priorities for future impact include work with Homerton University Hospital and GP practices to raise breast cancer awareness; English Heritage-funded research on the early human presence in Britain, with significant future impact on heritage management and public engagement; the policy impact of the new localism agenda; ongoing work with the Living Wage Foundation and third sector support organizations working with migrants; extending information exchange and best practice in river assessment and management via the extension of the Urban River Survey website; and public engagement work on the Anthropocene via collaborations with artists, museums and super-mines.

d. Relationship to case studies

The four case studies are on the Living Wage (CS1), Urban River Management (CS2), Latin London (CS3) and the Regulation of Forensic Bioinformation (CS4). Their impact emerged from collaborative frameworks established with London Citizens, the Environment Agency, and migrant support groups in London. Fundamental research has been put into practice – to support the living wage campaign, to provide tools for the assessment and restoration of urban rivers, to aid migrants gaining official recognition, and to change UK policy on the use of DNA – through active and long-term engagement between the School's researchers and its partners/users. In each case, the research reaches a broader audience via various media (websites, publicly accessible reports, media outlets, public presentations). The impact has been supported by the School's research centres (CS1 and CS3: The City Centre; CS2: CATE), using funding from the School's Research Themes Fund and QMUL sources (to develop web-based information system on urban river activities (CS2); to publish reports for user groups in English, Spanish and Portuguese (CS3)), and by maintaining the School's research partnerships (eg School membership of London Citizens, £1k pa). The case studies will be further developed through funding from the QMUL Centre for Public Engagement (CS1); in association with the UK Environment Agency and through the EU FP7 REFORM project 2011-15 (CS2); and funding applications to Trust for London (CS3).