



# **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AWARDS 2019**

**LONDON'S EVENING UNIVERSITY**



The Public Engagement Team provides advice, opportunities and funding for engagement with research. The team was established to support Birkbeck's commitment to making research results available to society, working with external partners and organisations and creating opportunities for knowledge exchange. We work together with researchers to encourage and foster new engagements and to better support existing work.

Birkbeck's Public Engagement Team is funded from three sources: Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Funding; an UKRI Strategic Support to Expedite Embedding Public Engagement with Research grant; and the College's own commitment which matches the Wellcome and UKRI funds.

If you would like to develop your own research engagement work, please get in touch with the team.

Website: [www.bbk.ac.uk/research/public-engagement](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/research/public-engagement)

Email: [public-engagement@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:public-engagement@bbk.ac.uk)

UK Research  
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## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AWARDS 2019

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*Birkbeck's radical founding principles continue  
– nearly 200 years later – to guide our mission  
to engage with people outside academia.*

This mission, along with Birkbeck's unique foundation of evening teaching, not only enables students from diverse social and educational backgrounds to access a research-intensive learning environment and high-quality research training. It is also expressed in our engagement through research with publics outside the academy.

We understand public engagement with research to include both making our research and knowledge accessible to the public and working with publics to produce that knowledge. Birkbeck is a place where we connect, collaborate, challenge received wisdom and build on the expertise of life and work, as well as 'official', knowledges. We see our public engagement as sitting within the heart of our values, as a core part of research, enabling us to interact with a wide and diverse range of people for the betterment of our research and our researchers.

Birkbeck academics make our public engagement with research mission more than aspiration – they take that mission forward through their work. And these public engagement awards give us a chance to recognise, celebrate and reward researchers' achievements in communicating research, and in using collaboration and engaged practice to transform culture and public life.

*Julian Swann, PVM Research*

# PHD/EARLY CAREER

*This award recognises the inspiring public engagement work undertaken by researchers in the early stages of their research career. Applications to this category span a range of engagement styles, with applicants coming from disciplines across the College. The commitment this group of early career scholars show, undertaking engagement work alongside their research, is particularly of note.*



*From A History of Women’s Prisons and the Myth of Reformation: An Artwork Exhibition. 4 Women by Fabiana Vigna. Acrylic on wood.*

## A HISTORY OF WOMEN’S PRISONS AND THE MYTH OF REFORMATION: AN ARTWORK EXHIBITION

*Dr Susanna Menis, School of Law*

*Noriko Hisazumi, artist*

*Fabiana Vigna, artist*

The core of Dr Menis’ PhD thesis was the question of ‘prisoners’ reformation’. Feeling that academic writing failed to capture the emotions present in some of the primary historical sources used in her research, she collaborated with the artists Noriko Hisazumi and Fabiana Vigna. Together they have worked on an exhibition that will bring to the surface intangible human emotions that may be hidden in the literal representations of historical record. The results of the project will be publicly exhibited in the evocative Crypt Gallery, London. There will be private viewings for students, academics and artists facilitating discussion on interdisciplinary collaboration and reflection on personal academic practice.

## NOISE ANNOYANCE IN SCHOOLS: IS IT A FATALITY?

*Jessica Massonnié, Department of Psychological Sciences*

*Professor Denis Mareschal, Department of Psychological Sciences*

*Dr Natasha Kirkham, Department of Psychological Sciences*

*Philippe Frassetto, Académie de Corse, school teacher*

*Tommy Lawson, Association Zone Libre, artist*

*Marie Frassetto, Association Pace Salute, yoga teacher*

*Bruno Antoniotti, sound engineer*

Teachers in elementary schools often complain about noise levels. However, very little is known about children’s perception of classroom noise: how annoyed are they? Working in close collaboration with artists and elementary school teachers, Jessica designed child-friendly interventions with the potential to improve children’s wellbeing while also aiding the gathering of data on noise in the class room.

## COMMUNICATING THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING TO TEACHERS

*Dr Annie Brookman-Byrne, Department of Psychological Sciences & Centre for Educational Neuroscience*

*Shane McCracken, Mangorolla*

*Sabine Gysi, Jacobs Foundation*

Dr Brookman-Byrne sought to share scientific research with teachers, to empower them to use the latest scientific findings in their teaching practices. To do this she managed the Learning Zone, an online platform, where she facilitated communication between teachers and 63 expert scientists about current issues in educational neuroscience. She also worked with the Jacobs Foundation’s blog BOLD and the NPJ Science of Learning Community writing online articles about the science of learning for teachers.



*From Utopian Acts. Visual notes made by Paul Fisher Davies at the conference during sessions delivered by Davina Cooper, Rose Simpson, Michael Robertson, Helena Esser and Chelsea Haith.*

## UTOPIAN ACTS

*Katie Stone, Department of English  
and Humanities*

*Raphael Kabo, Department of  
English and Humanities*

Utopian Acts 2018 was a one-day event designed to interrogate the role of utopia in contemporary academia, activism, and art, with the goal of generating lasting engagement between academics and activists outside the academy. The event, attended by 120 people, included academic papers, film screenings, workshops and live music. It has since expanded into an ongoing blog series called Exploring Utopian Acts, an active Twitter account and an upcoming special issue of *Studies in Arts and Humanities Journal*. This project allowed the researchers to move beyond research texts and turn an understanding of utopianism as a theoretical tool into practice.

## UNEARTHING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN VISUAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE MODELS

*Ajitesh Ghose, Department of  
Psychological Sciences*

*Robin Nash, Market Research Society*

*Steven Yule, Sky*

Human biases perpetuate gender inequality in society, such as associating men with sciences and women with liberal arts. Many people believe that when machines make decisions, they are entirely unbiased. However, Ajitesh's research has shown that machine learning algorithms trained using Google Images can preserve traditional gender prejudices and even amplify these stereotypes.

# COMMUNICATING RESEARCH

*This award recognises excellence in communicating research projects and ideas through stimulating or innovative activities. From creating installations for festivals and museums, to working with school groups, to fostering and engaging in dialogue with public stakeholders and writing books and articles for non-academic audiences, projects in this category have use an incredible range of communication styles to share their research with a wide range of non-academic publics. Researchers in this category use their research to inspire wonder and curiosity among their chosen publics.*

*From Colonial Afterlives.  
Front cover of the  
exhibition catalogue  
featuring Trinity III,  
2014 from the Polari series  
by Christian Thompson.  
C-type print.*



## EMPOWERING RESILIENCE IN WOMEN AFFECTED BY BREAST CANCER

*Professor Nazanin Derakhshan,  
Department of Psychological Sciences*

*Breast Cancer Care, charity*

*Maggie’s, charity*

Breast Cancer is the most common malignancy in women, with a woman being diagnosed in the UK every 10 minutes. Professor Nazanin and her team at Birkbeck Research Centre for Building Resilience in Breast Cancer (BRiC) have applied cutting-edge neurocognitive interventions for women with breast cancer. This has helped reduce longer term emotional vulnerability in these women and has empowered their cognitive and emotional resilience. BRiC engages and educates thousands of women with breast cancer through online weekly interactive discussions and exercises. They also communicate as a “collective voice” to the public and to professionals, to promote ways to build resilience in women with breast cancer.

## TB OR NOT TB? A DYNAMIC APPROACH IN TACKLING ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE IN SUPERBUGS

*Professor Sanjib Bhakta, Department of Biological Sciences*

*Arundhati Maitra, Department of Biological Sciences*

*Nimerta Virdee, Department of Biological Sciences*

Tuberculosis (TB), if left untreated, lasts for years, allowing the “super-bug” to spread while developing resistance to antibiotics. Professor Bhakta and Arundhati Maitra engaged with local school students to investigate how to tackle this global health emergency. Pupils undertook a laboratory experience using several microbiological techniques. The school acquired over-the-counter medicines which the students then investigated for their antibiotic action. Though many of the drugs selected are non-antibiotics in the strictest sense, some demonstrated antibiotic-resistance reversal properties and could potentially be useful clinically in tackling

antibiotic resistance. Not just a valuable learning experience for the students, this exploratory project could inform laboratory research and is a low-risk strategy to identify potential research questions or provide essential proof-of-concept results.

## COLONIAL AFTERLIVES

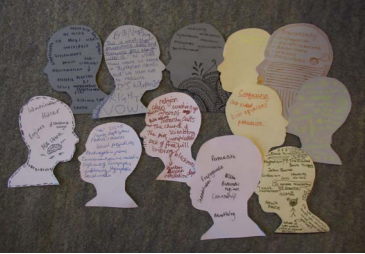
*Dr Sarah Thomas, Department of History of Art*

*Rosemary Miller, Salamanca Arts Centre*

What is the nature of postcolonial identity in an increasingly globalised world? Colonial Afterlives was a contemporary art exhibition that considered a range of responses to British colonisation from artists living in Australia, New Zealand, Jamaica, Barbados, Canada and Britain. While the artists were all finely attuned to the histories and politics of their own region, the exhibition revealed profound and sometimes surprising confluences. It challenged attitudes and values, demonstrating the ramifications of British occupation still felt by those living in former colonies today. It toured three states of Australia and was visited by nearly 40,000 people.

# COLLABORATION

*This award recognises outstanding engagement work based on an active collaboration and a two-way working relationship with an external partner or partners. The projects in this category feature an impressive range of collaborations between our researchers and non-academic practitioners and institutions. Whether working with artists, charities, galleries, museums or professional societies, each of the projects in this category are based upon meaningful, two-way working relationships.*



*From Open Minds: Exploring Hidden Persuasion in Modern Society. The Hidden Persuaders team asked students to record their immediate associations and ideas about the word ‘brainwashing’ on paper. This is a selection of their responses. Photo by Dr Lizzie Burns.*

## CARE EXPERIENCES WITHIN A HOSPITAL: HOW PATIENTS AND THEIR SUPPORTING NETWORK PERCEIVE HEALTH SERVICE EXPERIENCES, AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PATIENTS’ WELL-BEING

*Dr Benedetta Crisafulli, Department of Management*

*Professor Jaywant Singh, Kingston Business School, Kingston University*

*Professor Sabine Benoit, University of Surrey*

*NHS Hospital Trust in South-East England*

How do patients and their supporting network evaluate health service experiences at UK hospitals? This is a topical question for academic researchers and healthcare professionals for delivering high-quality patient care. Through entering into a partnership with a large NHS Hospital Trust and by engaging patients and their network through focus groups and field surveys at the hospital’s accident and emergency ward, the research team conducted pioneering

research and tested theories across disciplines. The project findings have generated interest among the hospital management staff and will inform decision-making on patient satisfaction and well-being in the long-term.

## OPEN MINDS: EXPLORING HIDDEN PERSUASION IN MODERN SOCIETY

*Professor Daniel Pick, Dr Sarah Marks, Ian Magor, Dr Charlie Williams, Department of History, Classics & Archaeology*

*Bartek Dziadosz, Dr Lily Ford, Bea Moyes, Edmund Bolger, The Derek Jarman Lab*

*Dr Lizzie Burns, Public Engagement Consultant*

*Bernie Jones, Parliament Hill School*

*Oliver Rosen, Acland Burghley School*

*Olivia Camillo, The Camden School for Girls*

Cold-War-era ideas about ‘brainwashing’ and mind control still shape contemporary perceptions, cultural responses, policies and advertising campaigns in ways that profoundly affect young people today. The project team ran a series of assemblies and workshops enabling 16-17 year-old students from three state schools to learn about the team’s

research and create their own five-minute visual essays, exploring influence and hidden persuasion in their own experience. This led the teenagers to produce films on social media, peer pressure, music, gangs, advertising propaganda, and body image. The outputs captured will be used at future events and will feed back into future research.

## DEFRA’S FUTURE PROOFING FRAMEWORK: COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION

*Professor Raymond Caldwell, Department of Organizational Psychology*

*Dr Darrell Jaya-Ratnam, Visiting Lecturer, Strategy,*

*Ant Green, Department of Organizational Psychology*

*Claire Logan, PA Consulting Group*

*Gerri Clement, Defra*

*Pramal Lad, PA Consulting Group*

Professor Caldwell has a longstanding research interest in practice-based approaches to learning, especially team-based learning processes in organisations. Partnering with PA Consulting, a team of Birkbeck MSc students worked in collaboration with the UK Government’s Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on a Consultancy Challenge project.

This provided an innovative and intense learning experience for the students while delivering an outstanding project of enormous practical value to Defra. Through workshops, learning sprints, proof of concept activities, and visualisation modelling, students devised a methodology that can be used to evaluate the use of new technology and enhance the capabilities of Defra.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*This award recognises projects that engage and empower communities and wider society, celebrating how local, national and international communities shape our work. These projects have a specific community at their core and are aware of the nuances that come with working with them. These projects prize inclusion and consideration, knowing that the community is both a partner and beneficiary, and so collaboratively address issues that impact the well-being of that group.*

*Photo by Daniel Funes Fuentes*



## NORTH KENSINGTON ARCHIVE AND HERITAGE PROJECT

*Dr Julia Laite, Department of  
History, Classics and Archaeology*

*Dr Jessica Hammett, Department of  
History, Classics and Archaeology*

*Christina Sealey, Kensington  
Narrators*

*Lisa Nash, project mentor*

*Amanda Fernandez, FerArts*

*Julian Chapman, Kensington  
Narrators*

*Stefan Dickers, Bishopsgate Archive*

Responding to the longer-term aftermath of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, Dr Laite and her team are seeking to engage and empower the local community to preserve their history and develop their own narrative. They are working with the Bishopsgate Institute to create an archive of the community’s response to the fire that also reflects their vibrancy and resilience.

Volunteers will deposit items and catalogue the archive in their own words. The project is also working with schools and organizations to run a series of local history workshops. This will provide local groups with support to develop their own capacity to deliver heritage and history programmes, that they will continue to build the archive after the life of this project.

# ENGAGED PRACTICE

*This award recognises high-quality research that uses participation and involvement of publics as a core approach to the creation of research. Researchers in this category undertake projects from a range of different disciplinary perspectives, but they all engage with non-academic publics throughout the lifespan of their research projects. These projects are built on a foundation of dialogue and deliberation with public participants, which consequently empower or improve the lives of those involved.*



## WAITING TIMES: MESSAGES IN BOTTLES

*Professor Lisa Baraitser, Department of Psychosocial Studies*

*Dr Michael J Flexer, Kelechi Anucha, University of Exeter*

*Professor Laura Salisbury, University of Exeter*

*Maggie Draper, Hospiscare*

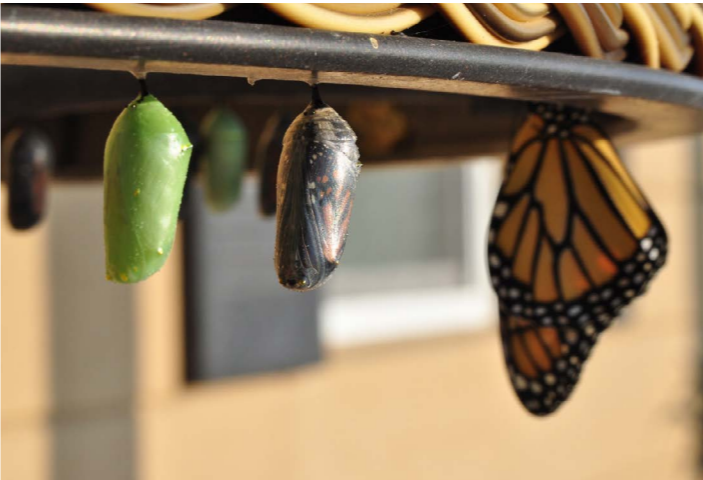
The Waiting Times project is a multi-stranded research project into temporalities of healthcare. The project itself has four core strands, one of which, ‘Speaking of Waiting’, is a piece of publicly engaged research creating and sharing stories of waiting and time in relation to healthcare.

The workshops were co-created in collaboration with the participants. The workshop programme evolved naturally, as each session combined feedback and consultation elements with story-telling and sharing in response to visual, audio, written or other forms of prompts. These prompts were initially brought by the researchers, but then as the work progressed, participants took the lead.

*From The Waiting Times project. From a “Messages in Bottles” story sharing workshop. Photo by Dr Michael J Flexer.*

# TRANSFORMING CULTURE OR PUBLIC LIFE

*This award recognises exemplary research engagement activities which aim to stimulate change within our culture or society. Projects in this category tackle a range of societal challenges, often working with organisations and policy makers to highlight the voices of those their research affects. Researchers in this category use their work to challenge conventional wisdom, encourage scrutiny and debate and ultimately to press for societal change.*



## SIBLINGS, CONTACT AND THE LAW: AN OVERLOOKED RELATIONSHIP?

*Professor Daniel Monk, Department of Law*

*Dr Jan Macvarish, Department of Law*

*Family Justice Young People’s Board*

Siblings are routinely separated in the public care system, resulting in the absence of or lack of contact between them. Professor Monk and Dr Macvarish sought to learn more about this emerging area of concern and to enhance engagement with key stakeholders working in family justice.

The project recruited members of the Family Justice Young People’s Board, who have direct experience of child law proceedings, to act as both advisors and participants. Their contribution was essential, ensuring that the research incorporated the voices of young people and enabling them to work on materials with practitioners.

*Photo by Suzanne D. Williams*

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