



**BIRKBECK
INTERNATIONAL
DIGEST 2022**

B I R K B E C K



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FOREWORD



I am pleased to present the 2022 edition of our International Digest, which, as in previous years, richly illustrates Birkbeck's continuing impact on the world. The Digest, inter alia, offers snapshots of the international achievements and activities of our staff, students and alumni, and the exemplary learning opportunities we offer international students.

Birkbeck continues to attract students, staff and partners from around the world based on its outstanding reputation for teaching, research and global citizenship, and it is delightful to see this reputation repeatedly validated, during 2021-22, by high profile external bodies. Notably, Birkbeck was ranked in the top 25% of over 1,600 universities worldwide assessed by the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings in 2022. The QS World University Rankings for 2022 similarly placed Birkbeck in the top 25% of the 1300 universities assessed.

The recently published Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 results further confirmed Birkbeck's world-leading and internationally excellent research. Our overall Grade Point Average rose to 3.22, from 2.97 in 2014, with an impressive 41% of submissions achieving the highest possible 4* (or world-leading) grade, and a combined 83% classified as either world-leading or internationally excellent. English, Theatre and Creative Writing achieved the second-best grade in the UK, which is amongst the best-ever research ranking for a Birkbeck department. 72% of its return and 100% of both impact and environment were assessed as world leading. That result was almost matched by History of Art and Film, Media and Cultural Studies, which had an equally impressive 69% 4* grading and placed 4th nationally. History (Classics and Archaeology) ranked 8th nationally, also with 63% of its return ranked as world-leading, while Birkbeck's Psychological Sciences department confirmed its status as one of the UK's best with 64% 4* grading and a national ranking of 9th, the third consecutive assessment where the department has ranked within the UK's top 10.

Birkbeck attracted several other accolades during 2021-22, including a third-place ranking among UK's non-Russell Group universities for alumni earnings after six months of graduation. This followed analysis of Higher Education Statistics Agency's (HESA) data, which found that 50% of our graduates earn over £30,000 per annum six months after graduation. The School of Business, Economics and Informatics (BEI) additionally received [the Small Business Charter accreditation](#), enabling it to deliver [the government-funded Help to Grow programme for small businesses](#). Furthermore, Birkbeck's new state of the art teaching facility, 373 Euston Road, which opened and welcomed students in Autumn 2021, won the New London Architecture



Award and Constructing Excellence SECBE Award in the Learning and Value category respectively. The former celebrates London's best and most innovative architectural projects, while the latter award recognises the very best companies, collaborations and projects from across London and Southeast. Similarly, the Birkbeck Library attained the Customer Services Excellence (CSE) standard, the nationally recognised measure for organisations providing customer-facing services.

Other milestones of the 2021-22 year include the launch of [The World Needs More Birkbeck campaign](#) in December 2021, which offers an opportunity to mobilise the Birkbeck community for an even stronger role in the College's third century, and the opening of the world's first research centre for studying toddler brain development, the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab. The return of in-person graduation ceremonies in Spring 2022 after a two-year Covid-19 imposed hiatus was also very pleasing.

I heartily salute all Birkbeckians for the rich and varied accomplishments synthesised in this International Digest, and for their direct and indirect contributions to our collective achievements. Special thanks to Professor Julian Swann, the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, and Sarah Lee, Head of Research Strategy Support for leading our successful REF 2021 effort. The International Committee, led by Professor Kevin Ibeh, Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), also merits appreciation for putting together another rich edition of Birkbeck International Digest.

Professor David Latchman, CBE
Vice-Chancellor, Birkbeck



EDITOR'S BRIEF



This 2021-22 edition of the Birkbeck International Digest celebrates the College's continuing sustenance of its internationalist tradition and world class profile. The Digest, the last before the kick-off of Birkbeck's 200th anniversary programme, offers glimpses of the international activities and contributions of staff, students and alumni during the past year and is organised in six sections, respectively focusing on international students and their learning experience; research contributions, accolades and dissemination; global citizenship activities; international collaborations; international events and visitors; and international alumni.

Section 1 briefly introduces Birkbeck's diverse international student body and presents reflections from a few international students. The section also presents some curriculum innovations introduced during the year as well as extra-curricular activities organised to enrich the study experience of international students.

Section 2 offers a picture of the wealth of research international contributions made by Birkbeck staff and students during 2021-22. These include original insights on how plants are responding to climate change, how measuring brain activity could facilitate tailored support for autistic people, how workplace support affects quality of life for breast cancer patients, and how victims' access to language support might affect experience of the criminal justice system. There are also important research contributions on antibiotic resistance crisis, teenage mental health, the immune system's killer weapon, the blurred boundaries of online speech and content moderation, the waiting times crisis in the NHS as well as highly successful creative productions by Birkbeck playwrights. The section further presents a flurry of prestigious accolades and fellowships, research grants, international appointments and invitations, as well as international presentations by Birkbeck staff and students.

Section 3 illustrates Birkbeck's global citizenship profile, by featuring some of the contributions of the College community to major global challenges, notably climate change, mental health, advancing equality and inclusion, and promoting human rights and educational opportunities for forced migrants.

Section 4 offers an indicative view of Birkbeck's international research and academic relationships with several international universities, while Section 5 provides a sample of international events and visitors hosted by the College during 2021-22. The final section depicts some of the significant international achievements made by Birkbeck's international alumni during the review period.



Taken together, this International Digest richly showcases the continuing commitment of the College community to advancing Birkbeck's international standing and culturally inclusive environment.

Hearty thanks to all those whose stellar achievements are reflected in this Digest as well as their many enablers. Colleagues in the College's International Committee, Marketing and External Relations and Alumni and Development teams are also warmly appreciated for their input.

I look forward to welcoming new and returning international students and the entire Birkbeck community to the 2022-23 academic session and our great bicentenary year in 2023.

Professor Kevin Ibeh
Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), Birkbeck
(on behalf of the International Committee)

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE, BIRKBECK, 2021-22:

Naomi Adams (Assistant School Manager, Science)

Professor Alexandra Beauregard (Assistant Dean, International, BEI)

Professor Sanjib Bhakta (Assistant Dean, International, Science)

Professor Bill Bowring (Professor, Law)

Professor Rosie Cox (Deputy Dean, SSHP)

Dr Fred Cowell (Assistant Dean, International and Recruitment, Law)

Julie Crofts (Director of Academic Standards and Quality)

Garmon Ap Garth (Academic Services Manager)

Ben Goodrum (Compliance and Operations Manager)

Lynn Grimes (Director of Marketing and External Relations)

Professor Kevin Ibeh (Pro Vice-Chancellor, International; Chair)

La Young Jackson (Deputy Student Immigration Compliance & Advice Manager)

Fraser Keir (Academic Registrar)

Eoin Lally (Head of Marketing and Recruitment)

Pedro Malheiro (Student Leader, SU)

Dr Ana Parejo-Vadillo (Assistant Dean, Recruitment and International, Arts)

Susan Quarrelle (Assistant School Manager, Law)

Veridiana Ribero (International Marketing and Recruitment Manager)

Eleanor Seale (Committee Support, Registry)

Clare Thomas (Assistant School Manager, Arts)

Andrea Williams (Assistant School Manager, International Partnerships, BEI)

1.0 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE

1.1 PROFILE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Birkbeck’s reputation for research and teaching excellence and its intercultural learning environment attracted an increased number of international students during the 2021-22 academic year. A total of 2226 international, including EU, students enrolled into the College, accounting for approximately a fifth of the overall student population. These international students skew toward undergraduate (56:44) and continuing students (64:36). Over 2 in 5 (specifically 46%) of these international students are in the School of Business, Economics and Informatics, while the School of Arts, School of Science, School of Law and School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy (SSHP) account for 19%, 13%, 12% and 7% of the international student body respectively.

Regarding the students’ nationalities, EU citizens constitute 48% of all overseas students enrolled at Birkbeck during 2021-22, with students from the rest of the world accounting for 52%. Among the main source countries are China, USA, Italy, India, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Germany, France, Poland, Greece, Hong Kong, Republic of Ireland, Brazil, Nigeria, Japan, Canada and Switzerland. Overall, international students for the focal academic year originate from over 100 countries, reflecting the impressive international diversity of the Birkbeck community.





Among the 2021-22 cohort of international students are recipients of the prestigious **Chevening** Scholarships selected based on their leadership potential and academic profile. These Chevening scholars hail from 23 countries, including Paraguay, Ethiopia, Iraq, South Africa, Nepal, Uganda, Sudan, Russia, Philippines, Malaysia, Cambodia, Dominica, Bolivia, Albania, Montenegro, Georgia, Morocco, Santo Domingo, Tunisia, Peru, Ukraine, Guatemala and Laos.



The scholars, funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office and partner organisations, were treated to an in-person reception on 9 November 2021. The event was attended by Birkbeck staff, including [Professor Kevin Ibeh](#), Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), Professor Sanjib Bhakta (Assistant Dean International, School of Science) Dr Ali Guven (Social Sciences, History and Philosophy), and Professor Alexandra Beauregard and Andrea Williams from the School of Business, Economics and Informatics.

Professor Kevin Ibeh, in his welcome remarks, congratulated the new Chevening scholars for emerging through a highly competitive selection process. He highlighted Birkbeck's rich heritage and illustrious history and urged the new scholars to fully embrace the Birkbeck community and leave their mark.

1.2 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Box 1, below, presents some voices from the Birkbeck's international student community during the 2021-22 academic year.

Box 1: International students in their own words

International students at Birkbeck reflect a range of diverse backgrounds, motivations and life experiences. Brief excerpts from insights shared by international students studying at, or graduating from Birkbeck, during 2021-22 are reflected as follows.

"Birkbeck made my dreams happen"

Tasneem Abdur-Rashid who graduated in MA Creative Writing from Birkbeck in 2022 has just landed a two-book publishing deal to fulfil her childhood dream of being an author. Following a seven-year residence in Dubai, working for magazines and government in communications, Tasneem returned to the UK and gained a scholarship from the Aziz Foundation to study at Birkbeck.



Juggling her part-time studies with family and work responsibilities demanded every bit of her wit and imagination, but Tasneem persevered, sustained by her publishing dream. Rejections of her manuscript by literary agents left her frustrated, but unbowed. Taking her Birkbeck tutor's advice about substantially reducing the manuscript's word count and cutting down on subplots and characters proved to be the final piece of the puzzle. Tasneem secured a two-book deal.

She reflected on her experience of Birkbeck as follows:

"Birkbeck is special because everyone is there to make it count. It's a close-knit community, filled with ambitious people. I received so much support and praise for my work, which is when I realised that I could make a career out of writing. If I had to describe Birkbeck in three words, I would say it is *supportive, empowering, and flexible*. I would encourage anyone considering Birkbeck to go for it, it might change your life, like it has mine."

- Tasneem Abdur-Rashid, MA Creative Writing 2022, UAE



“I had a great exposure to leading scholars”



“Given the fact that it’s very expensive to study full-time without an income, I was really happy to learn that Birkbeck offered part-time courses. This allowed me to be employed as a GIS consultant in multi-disciplinary engineering while undertaking my studies. The best part about studying was the fact that my peers were also in full-time

employment and had a vast amount of knowledge and experience in our field of study to share. During my PhD research I also had great exposure to leading scholars and found much inspiration from their work.”

- Cobus Van Rooyen, PhD Geography, Cape Town, South Africa

“I overcame initial language concerns to win dissertation prizes”



“When I got accepted into Birkbeck, I was happy but I was also very worried about the language barrier. My tutor encouraged me every step of the way, eventually suggesting that I convert to studying part-time rather than full-time, which made such a difference.

“When I found out I won the Children, Youth and International Development prize for my dissertation, I couldn’t believe it! Then when I also won the Birkbeck Gender and Sexuality prize, I saw it as proof that my language proficiency did not represent my intellectual capability. I’m so thankful that I had the opportunity to do my master’s over two years, and Birkbeck’s approach to structuring my course options was brilliant.”

- Martina Innocenti, MSc Childhood, Youth and International Development, Italy



“From Argentina with nerves? Not anymore”

“I moved last September from Argentina to the UK without knowing much about how life was going to be here since I had never been to London before...However, soon after I started attending my classes at Birkbeck I met lovely people who shared my common interests, and I even began to understand the British sense of humour a bit more. So, if you are struggling with the social aspect I would recommend to not get discouraged, you will make friends quickly during your classes. Also, there are many clubs in the Student Union that offer a great place to meet new people.



“If you were to ask me how I feel now about this massive change in my life, I would say it was one of the best decisions I’ve made. Knowing that I am living in this huge global city and having so many opportunities gets me excited for what my future here will look like.”

- Valentina Vlasich, BA Film and Media with Foundation Year, Argentina

“Life on Birkbeck campus as an international student was so enriching”

“While selecting universities, I had no doubt I wanted to join Birkbeck. The opportunity to get the daytime to myself, to work and volunteer, all whilst earning a degree was music to my ears. However, like any student moving away from home for the first time I was quite nervous for my big leap. Nevertheless, having come to Birkbeck I was quickly able to make friends at our induction evening and explore the many million things London has to offer.



“In the beginning it never quite occurred to me that there were so many hidden gems on Birkbeck’s campus itself. Along with amazing student services, career hubs and excellent transport links, Birkbeck’s campus offers beautiful study spaces to work and chill with your friends.

“Some of my favourite things include the Farmers Market which offers an array of world foods; Birkbeck Bar and Café, home of cost efficient drinks and lip-smacking food; The great British Museum, only a two-minute walk from Birkbeck campus; beautiful Squares and Gardens like Russell Square that hosts



summertime festivals and pop-ups filled with music, food and drinks; and the Students' Union and Societies and its variety of all-year activities - sports, socials, movie screenings, upskilling activities among others."

- Shweta Menon, BSc Marketing, India

"Birkbeck opened the door to my new life"



"In 2019, I was accepted to study MA Human Rights at Birkbeck. I was so scared to start studying again after 20 years. My children were my biggest supporters and they encouraged me to persevere. I found the lectures so stimulating and especially enjoyed the module on the future globalization of human rights. I was pleased to make friends on the course who

I still keep in touch with now. My application to the Birkbeck Hardship Fund also meant I was given a personal laptop which I'm so grateful for.

"I'm so excited for the future and embarking on a new career in human rights. I was uncertain about doing a degree aged 49 but Birkbeck offers the chance for everyone to study and change their lives, regardless of age, background or circumstance. For others who are my age and wondering if it is the right thing to do, I'd say go for it!"

- Catherine Bourne, MA Human Rights, Georgia

"Thinking of studying at Birkbeck? Go for it!"



"I started my career as a practising lawyer. My passion for sport led me to work with the Nigeria Professional Football League, after completing my first postgraduate programme (in Sports Law).

"Working in the sport industry in Nigeria, with the benefit of my background in law, I realised that the bulk of the problems impeding the development of the industry were governance related.

So, I wanted to learn more about not just sport management but also about sport governance. My studies at Birkbeck have equipped me with a broader



understanding of the framework of sport management and governance, as well as transferrable skills in areas such as research and analysis. I'm now looking to explore career opportunities, preferably in the sports or a related industry. I would encourage anyone thinking of studying at Birkbeck to go for it!"

- Kelvin Omuojine, MSc Sport Governance and Policy, Nigeria

"Learning at Birkbeck doesn't stop in the classroom"



"Birkbeck's lectures are in the evening, so I had my daytimes free to take advantage of everything London has to offer. I made friends quickly with other people my age on my course, and we ended up spending most days together; taking long walks through London, going to operas and plays, visiting free museums and travelling to different cities in the UK, like Oxford. Going to shows in the

Royal Albert Hall was one of my favourite things to do – I felt like I was travelling back in time.

"It was amazing to study and have my lectures in Bloomsbury; a place that has shaped literature and culture. I loved spotting the blue plaques of notable men and women – when I saw that Charles Dickens, my favourite author, once lived in the area I was so excited. Learning doesn't stop in the classroom when you go to university in London – the culture and history is so rich, you really broaden your horizons.

"I feel very happy to have graduated from my BSc Computing degree with a First-Class Honours. I achieved what I aimed for – it's an amazing feeling. My advice to other students would be to socialise with people on your course, and to ask lecturers questions. I would also encourage international students to use Studiosity for their assignments – it's an amazing service Birkbeck offers, especially if your first language isn't English."

- Alin Dinçman, First Class Honours in BSc Computing, Turkey (now working as a software engineer in a Fintech company in Istanbul)

1.3 CONTINUING FOCUS ON INNOVATIONS

Birkbeck's internationally excellent and diverse faculty sustained their record of providing innovative curricula and enhanced learning experience to students during the 2021-22 academic year.

Box 2, below, presents some examples of new innovative offerings and prestigious accreditations.

Box 2: New innovative offerings and accreditations

New flexible study mode for Birkbeck Master's Offerings

A range of new online and blended Master's programmes were offered from October 2022 to enable students to select a study method that best suits their needs. Students now have the freedom to choose whether they learn in the traditional classroom, through online classes, or a blended approach combining both.

This innovative provision, introduced as part of a flexible Master's in Marketing, Law and Human Resource Management and other programmes, meets the changing needs of students while maintaining the vibrant learning community that the university is known for. The programmes have been designed to facilitate rich academic discussion led by world-class teaching staff and the interaction and collaboration with peers that exists in the traditional setting. They are also supported by a full complement of student services, including online learning tools, a personal tutor along with disability, counselling and careers services. Students will also be able to take their assessments online or remotely.

Lynn Grimes, Director of Marketing and External Relations, noted that "learning on our central London campus is still very popular, but we also know that some students prefer the convenience of studying online or combining both experiences, so we have invested in providing both. Whichever mode students choose, they benefit from live, interactive teaching and services that support them in their studies."

The School of Business, Economics and Informatics gains Small Business Charter

The School of Business, Economics and Informatics at Birkbeck has been granted the Small Business Charter accreditation in recognition of its outstanding quality



and capacity to provide growth enterprise and entrepreneurship support to help UK businesses thrive.

This followed a rigorous external process which assessed the effectiveness of the School's business support, entrepreneurship education, and engagement with the local economy. The glowing feedback from the assessors says it all:

"The value Birkbeck adds to their student business owners and the impact on their businesses is an order of magnitude higher than the assessors have seen elsewhere. Furthermore, the stature, relevance, and impact of Birkbeck's research for policy makers is exemplary."

Professor David Latchman CBE, Vice-Chancellor of Birkbeck commented: "I am delighted that our School of Business, Economics and Informatics has been successful in attaining Small Business Charter. The Small Business Charter award is given to business schools that demonstrate excellent support for small businesses, entrepreneurship education and engagement with our local economy. I would like to congratulate Professor Geoff Walters, Dr Pamela Yeow and their team in achieving this milestone that recognises our strengths in delivering an impactful and valuable entrepreneur journey and policy-changing research."

The award will last for the next three years and will enable BEI to deliver [the government-funded Help to Grow programme for small businesses](#)

Birkbeck joins the QE-TNE scheme

Birkbeck has become one of 65 founding UK members of the Quality Evaluation and Enhancement of UK Transnational Higher Education Scheme (QE-TNE), reinforcing its status as a world-class provider of transnational education. The membership also allows Birkbeck and her TNE partners to use the QAA Quality Kitemark (QE-TNE).

The five-year scheme set up by Universities UK and GuildHE to strengthen the reputation of UK transnational education will enable Birkbeck and other scheme members to work closely with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to maintain and promote excellent transnational higher education provision and the mutual interests of collaborating parties.

1.4 INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

Although the Covid-19 crisis disrupted access to outward mobility opportunities, typically available via international exchange arrangements, travel fellowships, fieldtrips, and research visits, several Birkbeck students, mainly those studying languages, still managed to undertake international study trips during 2021-22.

Notably, postgraduate students in the School of Business, Economics and Informatics participated in the Greening Energy Finance (GrEnFin) Summer School held in the Castle of Bertorino, University of Bologna, Italy. The five-day immersive experiential trip, which focused on 'Energy Transition, Hydrogen and Carbon Trading', was supported by an Erasmus grant awarded to Professor Geman of the Department of Economics, Maths and Statistics, who led the trip and taught one of the four Summer School's plenary sessions.

The recent news that Birkbeck received the UK Government Turing Scheme's funding for the second consecutive year to support students' international mobility for 2022-23 points to the sustained availability of such outward mobility opportunities to Birkbeck students.

1.5 ACTIVITIES TO ENRICH THE STUDY EXPERIENCE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The One World Festival programme is a package of social, cultural, networking, skills-enhancing and employability events designed to reinforce Birkbeck's international ethos and priority focus on students' wellbeing, enhanced experience, and sense of community. Cognisant of the persisting effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, a blend of in-person and virtual activities were designed for the 2021-22 academic year. This reflects the need to maintain the unifying vision of the Festival, by enabling international students, whatever their current location, to continue to share experiences and create memories. International students were thus availed of a rich suite of COVID-safe in-person and virtual extra-curricular activities that celebrate the College's cultural diversity.

To kick-off the programme, an in-person reception was held on Friday 15 October 2021, to welcome international students and introduce them to the Festival programme and other extracurricular activities for 2021-22. A separate virtual reception was organised for international students unable to attend in person. These events, which also featured networking and career tips and the launch of the Birkbeck International Digest 2021, were addressed by Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), Professor Kevin Ibeh, who assured the new international students of



the College's resolute commitment to availing them of a top-quality learning experience and great memories.

Colleagues from Academic schools and Central Services were equally on hand to warmly welcome the international students and participate in the much-enjoyed meet-greet-and-interact sessions.

The paragraphs that follow present brief accounts of selected extracurricular activities organised to enhance the study experience of international students, including seasonal celebrations, tours and social events, employability events, and other engagement activities.

1.51 Seasonal celebrations

In the lead up to the Autumn term break 2021, international students, including those studying from their respective home countries, were given a taste of **Christmas at Birkbeck**, through the unveiling of the College's Christmas tree – see below.



The 2021 **Diwali festival** was also marked, with the Birkbeck community extending Happy Diwali wishes to those in our community observing this Indian religious festival, which celebrates the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance.



The celebration featured blog pieces from Shweta Menon (Marketing student) and Bayparvah Kaur Gehdu (PhD student), respectively focused on some of Diwali's culinary delights and Bandhi Chhor Divas, a Sikh festival celebrated alongside Diwali, but with its own distinct history.

The Lunar New Year was similarly celebrated in early February 2022, albeit virtually owing to Covid-19 guidance against in-person activities. This online commemoration of the beginning of the year of the Tiger featured Happy Lunar New Year wishes from the College to Chinese members of our community.

The celebrations equally attracted a number of blog pieces, including one looking at the significance of the Chinese zodiac and the festival's traditions and another by Malaysian MA History of Art student, Valerie Lee, on her favourite aspects of the Chinese New Year festivities. Dr Jackie Lou, chair of Birkbeck's International experience committee and Chinese Student Association, additionally reflected on how students from the broader community marked Dongzhi, the Chinese celebration of the winter solstice.

The month of May additionally saw Birkbeck marking the 2022 **Eid al-Fitr**, or Festival of Breaking Fast, by extending very warm Eid Mubarak greetings to the celebrating members of our community and their families. This festival followed the end of the month-long Ramadan fasting observed by Muslims worldwide.



1.52 Tours and social meets

A number of Covid-safe tours and social events were organised during the 2021-22 year to provide international students with opportunities to interact socially and visit some iconic London and UK locations. These activities include walking tours of the UK Houses of Parliament, excursions to Bath, Cambridge and Greenwich, picnics, afternoon tea and other social get-togethers.

Pictures from some of these events can be seen below:



International students touring the Houses of Parliament



Afternoon tea at Covent Garden



Karaoke by the Student Union



Day trip to Bath



Day trip to Cambridge



Day trip to Brighton



Beatles, London Walking Tour

Summer picnic at the Terrace

1.53 Employability events

Birkbeck Futures, a one-stop service combining the resources of Careers Service, Enterprise Pathways and Birkbeck Talent, offered a number of sessions during 2021-22, aimed at enhancing the employability prospects of international students.

Notably, its Career Summer Boot Camp, featuring an innovative blend of employer-led workshops, thought-provoking expert panels, and interviews with industry leaders, attracted hundreds of prospective and current students and alumni. The event, now in its third year, spanned three days, respectively dedicated to 'talent', 'career', and 'enterprise'. The series of events showcased Birkbeck's impressive



employer network, with representatives from Google, BAFTA, Huel, PensionBee and many more offering career tips and insights to students.



The Birkbeck Career platform and popular mentoring and internship schemes were also placed at the disposal of international students – see Box 3. In addition to sessions on Networking and Personal Branding, focusing on *the importance of first impressions and honing one’s personal brand*, videos were also offered on topics such as *optimising one’s LinkedIn profile and tapping into the hidden job market*.

Box 3: Internship and work placement opportunities in action

From working in A&E to setting up a creative communications firm

Matteo Celoro, who gained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Creative Writing and English at Birkbeck in 2020, was working in the A&E for the NHS when he applied to study English and Creative Writing at Birkbeck. Born in Italy, Matteo was flourishing in his Creative Arts studies when he was selected by Birkbeck Talent for an internship with Dynamo PR, a tech-focused public relations agency. He threw himself into it and worked on projects for major companies at the cutting edge of technology, including tech start-up Improbable, who received more than \$1billion in seed funding to ‘build the Matrix’ - massive scale virtual worlds that could be for military training exercises or online video games hosting thousands of players simultaneously.

After graduating, Matteo was hired by a London-based gaming PR firm. His first project on the communications for a Viking-themed survival game called Valheim required his reading a lot of Norse mythology, writing Viking poetry and much else. The game sold one million copies in its first weekend and another nine million subsequently. Its success attracted significant global media coverage, including interviews with the likes of Forbes, The Washington Post, Imagine Games Network (IGN), and exposure on YouTube and Twitch.



Matteo subsequently left his job to launch PR and creative communications firm Noovola. He and his co-founder have been building a client base with small 'indie' game developers and their success in bringing 'super-indie' titles into the limelight is earning Noovola an impressive reputation. Noovola now has employees based across Europe and has recently been hired to work on multiple high-profile, high-budget games by major publishers.

Matteo reflected on the impact of Birkbeck on Noovola's success:

"The College not only helped me get my first role in the industry, but it offered a learning environment that did so much to build my confidence as a writer and as a creative. If it wasn't for Birkbeck and spending my evenings around Bloomsbury, I wouldn't be where I am today. It enabled me, as it has for so many others, to put my future in my own hands and create something for myself. So, the world will always need more Birkbeck!"

"I INTERNED AT EUROPE'S BIGGEST CHINESE FILM FESTIVAL, THANKS TO BIRKBECK"



After finishing her bachelor's and master's degrees in Filmmaking in Australia, *Shanshan Wu* went back to China and worked on film training courses for young people. Then she realised she wanted more – she wanted to know more about the cinema market, film distribution, film curating, and, of course, film festivals.

She researched film programmes in London and identified Birkbeck's [MA Film and Screen Media](#) as her top choice. The chance to do a work placement at a film or media related organisation was a crucial factor.

Shanshan subsequently got the opportunity to do her work placement at 'Odyssey: a Chinese film season', hosted by the non-profitable organisation UK-China Film Collab (UCFC). Thanks to Birkbeck and the placement host, she led the marketing team of Europe's biggest Chinese film festival. She learnt so much and met so many great colleagues and friends.



1.54 Other virtual engagement activities

The Birkbeck's International Student Experience enhancement team also delivered a raft of virtual extra-curricular activities. These include fitness sessions, Pilates classes, walking tours, academic English classes, video showings, tea parties and networking sessions. These sessions allowed students to socialise and unwind throughout a busy year and availed them of a virtual space to meet and build relationships.

A new Global Buddies scheme was additionally introduced to assist international students to connect with a member of the Birkbeck alumni community to help them settle into life in London during their first term of study. Such buddies may offer tips, either in-person and/or virtually, on getting around the city, London's hidden gems, best places to grab coffee, as well as practical advice on matters such as learning in English and setting up a bank account.

The following feedback by one of our international students during the year suggest significant appreciation of the team's effort:

"I would like to express my admiration for you and your team for the incredible work done. Despite the tough situation in which last academic year has started, you have managed to make our experience at Birkbeck and London memorable. I have studied in three universities and honestly, Birkbeck was the only place where I felt at 'home' and a sense of belonging. I am very honoured and proud of being part of Birkbeck and carrying this legacy forever!"



2.0 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS, ACCOLADES AND DISSEMINATION

2.1 MAJOR RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Several research contributions of international importance were made by Birkbeck academics during the 2021-22 academic year. The paragraphs below offer a sample of these major achievements, including significant creative productions by Birkbeck playwrights and scholars.

Plants are responding instantly to climate change

A new study led by Birkbeck scientist, Dr Stefan Engels of the Department of Geography, and published in *Communications: Earth and Environment*, has found that natural ecosystems are incredibly sensitive to climate change. This is a hugely significant finding because understanding the timing and rate of natural ecosystem responses to climate change is fundamental to developing mitigation and adaptation policies, and enabling better forecasting of impacts of future climate changes.



The research team extracting sediment from Lake Hamelsee

The research team made these discoveries by extracting and analysing 18 metres of sediment from Lake Hämelsee, Germany, which have recorded climate and environmental conditions since the lake's formation around 15,000 years ago, after the end of the last ice age.

Dr Stefan Engels, of the Department of Geography at Birkbeck, said: "Chemical and biological signals within natural archives, such as lake sediments, allow us to see how nature responds to climate change. Our results indicate that the environmental impact of climate cooling was more severe than previously thought and that it was felt at the same time across large parts of Europe. This demonstrates the sensitivity of natural ecosystems to climate change and helps us to better forecast the effects of future climate changes."

New hope for antibiotic resistance crisis

Birkbeck researchers have uncovered a way that may help stop the spread of antibiotic resistance, which threatens the ability to treat common infectious diseases.



This discovery could impact the lives of millions globally given the World Health Organisation's description of antibiotic resistance 'as one of the biggest threats to global health, food security and development today'.



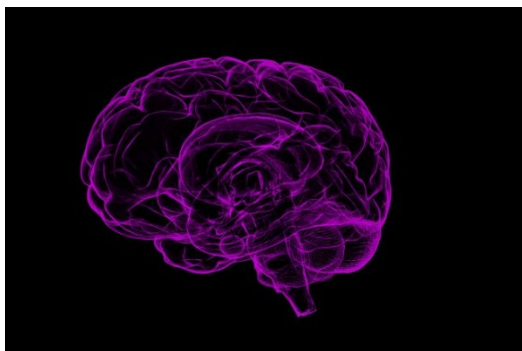
The pioneering research, funded by the Wellcome Trust and published in *Nature* by Birkbeck and UCL in collaboration with the University of Washington, showed, for the first time, the structure of the transport apparatus that enables the spread of antibiotic resistant genes between bacteria. By understanding the way that bacteria exchange genes, scientists can discover ways to prevent the spread of

antibiotic resistant genes or exploit the transport mechanism so it delivers beneficial genes into higher organisms.

Professor Gabriel Waksman, Professor of Structural Molecular Biology at Birkbeck and UCL, and the lead author of the study, said: "We are in a global crisis of antibiotic resistance, which threatens to overcome healthcare systems all over the world...This research is critical in understanding how antibiotic resistance is spread among bacterial populations. Now we can visualise the structure of the transport apparatus, my research will focus on how the transport apparatus works to transfer genes."

Measuring brain activity could pave way for tailored support for autistic people

New research from Birkbeck has shown for the first time that, at a group level, autistic people tend to process faces differently to non-autistic people. According to this ground-breaking research just published in *Science Translational Medicine*, three sub-groups of autism can be identified from measuring brain activity. Importantly, the research also showed that brain activity can predict how social skills develop. This new way of predicting how social skills might naturally change could help provide tailored care, and therefore significantly improve quality of life for autistic people in the longer term.



Lead researcher Professor Emily Jones, Professor of Translational Neurodevelopment at Birkbeck said: "Around 1% of the UK population are autistic, and typically respond differently to social interactions. They also tend to have different communication styles, as well as patterns of interests and sensory difficulties. The way in which different people



experience autism varies widely from one person to another. Our findings could eventually be used to tailor support more effectively and help increase mental wellbeing and quality of life for autistic people. This is important because difficulties with social development may lead to an increased chance of isolation and loneliness, which may in turn contribute to the higher levels of anxiety and depression reported by autistic people.”

The research forms part of a large-scale collaboration across Europe, Longitudinal European Autism Project (LEAP), that aims to improve outcomes for autistic people.

Teenage mental health not just about genes

New research from Birkbeck, University of Oxford, and the Karolinska Institute Sweden, published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, has found that inherited factors play less of a role in mental health for some teenagers, particularly those who have experienced a range of environmental adversity.



Funded by the UK Medical Research Council, the US National Institutes of Health, MQ Mental Health Research and UK National Institute for Health Research and involving 22,000 teenagers in England and Wales and Sweden, the study established that there are a range of pathways through which teenagers might experience mental health problems. For some, it is more due to inherited

predisposition and for others there is more of an environmental component.

Lead researcher Professor Angelica Ronald, Professor of Psychology and Genetics, said: “Genetic research has accelerated rapidly for mental health conditions in recent years. There is still a tendency to think of mental health being influenced by either genes or environment, but we know that both play a role. Adolescence is a particularly critical time because most mental health problems start around then. Our research is unique in the way it shows how genetic propensity and environmental adversity interact in their influence on adolescent mental health. We found that genetic influence played less of a role for some groups of teenagers, particularly those experiencing considerable environmental adversity.”

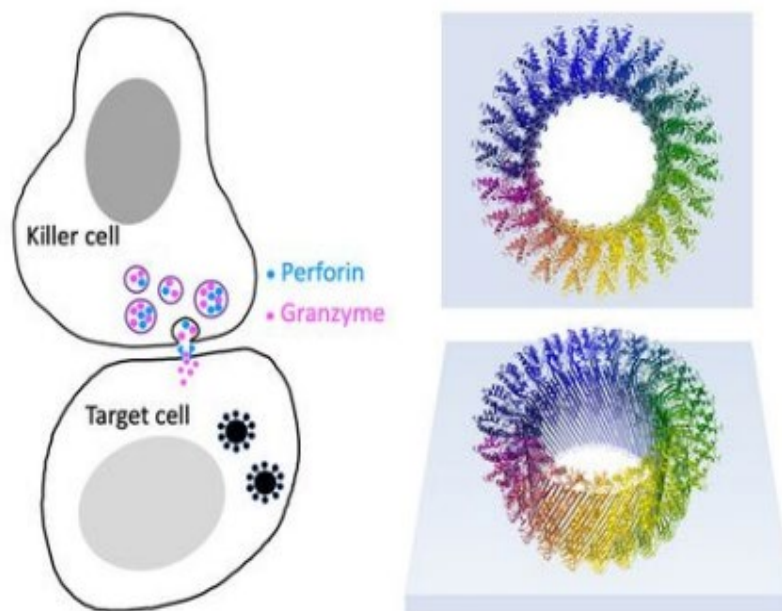
The immune system's killer weapon captured red-handed

Birkbeck researchers in collaboration with their counterparts at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne have determined the structure of a protein assembly



used by the immune system to kill unwanted cells. The protein perforin sits within these killer cells and its role in human health is finally balanced. The unfortunate individuals who lack functional perforin usually die of infection or cancer in early childhood, but overactive killer cells can trigger inflammation and kill healthy cells resulting in serious organ damage.

The photo, below, shows, on the left, a killer cell or cytotoxic lymphocyte in the act of killing a virally targeted cell by releasing perforin to punch a hole in the target membrane and thereby allow the entry of lethal granzymes. On the right, two views of a ring of perforin molecules (multicoloured models) surrounding a pore in a membrane (blue slab).



Marina Ivanova, former postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Biological Sciences, determined the perforin structure when she worked in Professor Helen Saibil's group and these findings have now been published in *Science Advances*. Understanding the details of perforin pore structure will help scientists design drugs to enhance or prevent its activity, eventually leading to new therapeutics to treat certain autoimmune diseases and the condition *familial hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis*.

Workplace support found to improve quality of life for breast cancer patients

A new study led by researchers at Birkbeck Centre for Building Resilience in Breast Cancer (BRiC), published in the *Journal of Cancer Survivorship*, has reported that women with metastatic breast cancer (MBC) can benefit from employers who are supportive and understanding of their needs as a better quality of working life was



met with reduced levels of depression in this population. Quality of life is heavily impacted in MBC and depression alone can increase the risk of cancer-related and all-cause mortality in these women by up to 30%. Based on their findings, the researchers - Chapman, Derakhshan and Grunfeld - called for more educational and support resources to enable these women to make required work-based adaptations and further help employers strengthen their understanding and awareness of the needs of women living with secondary breast cancer.



Professor Nazanin Derakhshan, founder of the Centre for Building Resilience in Breast Cancer, said, "BRiC's previous research has shown that workability can promote emotional resilience in women with primary breast cancer, especially younger women who can have full-time careers prior to diagnosis. The current research adds significantly by documenting this effect in metastatic

breast cancer. Our results should be communicated with our colleagues in human resources who no doubt can help improve women's experience and quality of working life which will, in turn, promote their workability and longer-term sustainment of work, should they wish to continue working after diagnosis".

The blurred boundaries of online speech and content moderation

New research by Birkbeck academics into online and social media content governance, entitled 'Localizing content governance in place-named Facebook Groups', has uncovered the distinct forms of content moderation happening at the local level. When deciding whether content was appropriate or not, Facebook moderators seemed to privilege the local cultural context and social norms in interpreting the company's global rules. They also tended to see themselves as catalysts for discussion and engagement, rather than content police. Local Facebook moderators also appeared to understand their influential, but perilous, role.

Lead researcher, Dr Scott Rodgers, Reader in Media and Geography, commented: "studying local Facebook groups not only reveals the fascinating world of neighbourhood social media, it also underlines the limits of large-scale moderation—whether by platforms, governments or algorithms."



Waiting times crisis in the NHS signals service failure but there is a fuller story

'Waiting Times', a five-year Wellcome Trust funded project led by Professor Lisa Baraitser from Birkbeck's Department of Psychosocial Studies and Professor Laura Salisbury of the University of Exeter, concluded in 2022 with new insights on the waiting times 'crisis' in the NHS. The study acknowledges the view of waiting times as a sign of service failure and abandonment but goes beyond reiterating the need to reduce NHS waiting times to offer a more holistic understanding of the relationship between waiting, care and changing experiences of time in the contemporary NHS.

Improving victims' access to language support could lessen disadvantage in the criminal justice system



New research from the Institute for Crime and Justice Policy Research (ICPR), at Birkbeck's School of Law, has found that individuals who speak English as a second or additional language (ESL) - victims, witnesses, suspects, defendants, and convicts - tend to be disadvantaged when facing the criminal justice system, leading to unfair justice outcomes and constraints

on access to services and support, including rehabilitative initiatives. The research, undertaken in collaboration with Victim Support and the Centre for Justice Innovation and funded by The Bell Foundation, identified lack of training for staff and insufficient resources to offer appropriate support as contributory factors and suggested policy and practice improvements, including new training and guidance for frontline staff and better access to English language education. Based on their findings, the ICPR and collaborators urged the Government to strengthen victims' rights to language support in the upcoming Victims' Bill and for equitable access to rehabilitation services for speakers of ESL in prison and under probation supervision.

Fascinating insights on modern relationships

The latest play by David Eldridge of the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing at Birkbeck was shown at the National Theatre's Dorfman stage from 27 April – 18 June 2022. The play entitled 'Middle', a touching and funny portrait of a 21st century marriage and the second of David's trilogy on love and relationships, follows *Beginning* which enjoyed spectacular runs in the UK and across the world, including Dublin, Santiago, Athens, Shanghai, Paris, and Barcelona.



In a video about the play, David explains that *Middle* is not a sequel to *Beginning*, but rather a continued forensic exploration of the themes and nuances that make up modern day relationships. It focuses on the real-time story of a different couple, who, in the middle stages of both their relationship and their lives, have reached a crossroads. This acclaimed playwright

has already been commissioned by the National Theatre to pen the final play in the trilogy, *End*.

Another Birkbeck playwright, Daragh Carville of the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing, also has a hit TV series, *The Bay*, which returned for a third series to widespread praise.

2.2 PRESTIGIOUS ACCOLADES AND HONOURS

Birkbeck staff were recognised and honoured for their internationally excellent research contributions during 2021-22. Some of the recipients of these prestigious accolades are presented below.

Annie E. Coombes, Professor of Material and Visual Culture in the Department of History of Art and Founding Director of the Peltz Gallery at Birkbeck, has been made a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (RHS). She joins over 4500 historians who belong and contribute to the 154-year-old Society, as fellows and members active in the UK and worldwide.



Professor Coombes said, "I am deeply honoured by my election as a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, given in recognition of the impact of my historical research including in three major monographs: *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination in Late Victorian and Edwardian*

England (Yale University Press, 1994); *History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and*



Public Memory in a Democratic South African (Duke University Press and Wits University Press, 2003) and (co-written with Lotte Hughes and Karega-Munene) *Managing Heritage, Making Peace: History, Identity and Memory in Contemporary Kenya* (I.B. Tauris, 2014)."



Professor Mike

Hough, Emeritus Professor of Criminal Policy, Birkbeck, University of London, is the recipient of this year's Outstanding Achievement award from the British Society of Criminology, in recognition of his long contribution to bringing academic and policy research together. This accolade has been awarded annually since 2009 to recognize major

contributions to the discipline of criminology. Professor Hough founded one of the major UK centres for academic policy research on criminal justice - the Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research - and directed it for more than 20 years.

President of the BSC, Professor Sandra Walklate said: "It gives me the greatest pleasure to endorse the society's recognition of Mike's stellar contribution to the discipline and the work of the society in this way. His achievements and international stature speak strongly to the ongoing importance and presence of British criminology on the global stage."

Dame Marina Warner CBE, Professor of English and Creative Writing, has been appointed a Companion of Honour for services to the humanities, in the Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours list. This award recognises sustained service of national importance, and is limited to only 65 people in total, illustrating the scale and impact of Dame Marina's work within the arts and humanities. Sample recipients include Sir David Attenborough, Dame Judy Dench, Margaret Atwood, and Sir Salman Rushdie.



Dame Marina has had a particularly rich career as not only an academic but also a novelist, cultural historian, art critic, curator, librettist, broadcaster, essayist, and critic. She is a contributing editor to *The London Review of Books*, a Fellow of the British Academy, a Distinguished Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and, from 2017-2021, President of the Royal Society of Literature. She was made DBE

in 2015, and the same year was awarded the Holberg Prize in the Arts and Humanities. In 2017 she was given a British Academy Medal and a World Fantasy Lifetime Achievement Award. She is currently patron of the Ted Hughes Society, Bloodaxe Books, the Society for Story Telling, and The Longford Trust.

Dame Marina commented: "The honour is a great surprise, and I am especially delighted that my work as a writer and a teacher have been recognised at a time when education in the arts and humanities is under stress from policy-makers."



Dr Ashok Kumar, Department of Management has received the PEWS Immanuel Wallerstein Memorial Book Award from the American Sociological Association for his book 'Monopsony Capitalism: Power and Production in the Twilight of the Sweatshop Age' (Cambridge University Press, 2020). The annual award commemorates the sociologist and economic historian Immanuel Wallerstein and recognises the best world-systems book.

Dr Kumar's highly acclaimed work, also awarded the Paul Sweezy Outstanding Book Award in 2021, looks at the relationship between firms, workers and states under the backdrop of a world system. Through an empirical analysis of workers' unrest in China, India and Honduras, complimented by archival research from the United States alongside detailed examinations from Turkey, Vietnam and Cambodia, the book treats the development of industrial capitalism as a dynamic process, tracing and analysing production from conception to consumption.

Dr Kumar said: "To receive the book prize in memory of Immanuel Wallerstein is a great honour. Wallerstein's world system analysis wasn't a theory as much as a protest against neglected issues and deceptive epistemologies. I'm grateful to the committee for choosing to recognize Monopsony Capitalism within such a rich tradition."



Furthermore, several Birkbeck staff received coveted **fellowships** and **recognitions** during 2021-22. Professor Lynn Nead, Pevsner Professor of History of Art at Birkbeck, was made a **Fellow of the Association for Art History**, an award which recognises her significant contributions of the field of art history. Professor Rosie Cox of the Department of History of Geography was also made a **Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences**. A book by Professor Catharine Edwards of the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology was named by the Guardian **as one of the top 10 books about the Roman Empire**. Professor **Martin Paul Eve** of the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing won an **open scholarship award for the Open Library of Humanities**.



Professor Nead



Professor Cox



Professor Edwards

Box 4: Additional accolades for Birkbeck staff and students during 2021-22

- Dr Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra, Department of History of Art was featured as a **"rising star"** in the April 2022 issue of the BFI's Sight and Sound magazine. This followed the multi-country premier of her acclaimed film, *Malintzin 17*.
- Professor Jean Marc Dewaele, Department of Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics won the European Second Language Association **'Distinguished Scholar'** award.
- Dr. Monish Bhatia, Department of Criminology received the **Best Article award** from the British Society of Criminology for a paper on Street Level Bureaucrats and Harms Against People Seeking Asylum published in *Critical Criminology*.



- The latest book from the Department of Law's Dr Kojo Koram, *Uncommon Wealth: Britain and the Aftermath of the Empire*, was shortlisted for the **prestigious Orwell Foundation Political Writing Prize**, the UK's most prestigious political writing award.
- Martin Paul Eve, Professor of Literature, Technology and Publishing in the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing was named one of the finalists on the **Shaw Trust's Disability Power 100 list**, an annual award for disabled influencers.
- Dr Uracha Chatrakul Na Ayudhya of the Department of Organisational Psychology was ranked 19th in the **HR Magazine's most influential thinkers list 2022**.
- Professor Alex Poulouvasilis of the Department of Computer Science and Informatics was **a finalist in the Women in Tech Excellence Awards** in the category 'Role Model of the Year: Public Sector and Universities.'
- Daragh Carville, Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing **won the Ambassador Award at the Sunshine Awards** in recognition of his work as co-creator and writer of the ITV crime drama 'The Bay'.
- Damian Escayg, LLB student, was selected by international law firm, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, for **a Stephen Lawrence Scholarship**, which aims to address the under-representation of Black men from less privileged backgrounds in large commercial law firms.

2.3 FUNDING FROM RESEARCH COUNCILS, MAJOR CHARITIES AND INTERNATIONAL SOURCES

Reflecting the outstanding quality of Birkbeck research, several staff members were successful in securing significant external research grants during 2021-22. Notably, the UCL-Birkbeck Medical Research Council (MRC) Doctoral Training Programme (DTC) received a multi-million renewal award to continue enabling the training of the next generation of leaders and innovators in biomedical research. The new award, led by Professors Geraint Rees, Paola Pedarzani and Nicholas Keep, will build on the success of the current UCL- Birkbeck MRC DTP, and will support 22.5 postgraduate studentships per year; a further six studentships will be part-funded by the UCLH, Moorfields, and Great Ormond Street Hospital NIHR Biomedical Research Centres, and three more studentships reserved for Black, Asian and minority ethnic students

match-funded by Birkbeck. The DTP will be funded for three years in the first instance (2022-24) with the possibility of an extension for another two years (2025-2026) subject to a mid-term review.

Birkbeck attracted five Leverhulme Research Fellowships, a scheme for experienced researchers at a more established stage of their academic careers. The prestigious and fiercely competitive award has a total value of up to £60k each and is tenable for between three and twenty-four months. Among these recipients is Dr Tanya Serisier of the Department of Criminology, who was awarded £57,276.

Professor Dermot Hodson of the Department of Politics was granted £505,248 for cutting-edge research on Banking in Europe, a project co-funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Luxembourg National Research Foundation, Fonds de la Recherche (FNR). Professor Dermot Hodson will serve as Principal Investigator on the project and Professor David Howarth from the University of Luxembourg, a leading authority on European financial institutions, as Co-Investigator.



Professor Keep

Professor Hodson

Dr Serisier

Professor Roussos

Professor Alex Poulouvassilis and Professor George Roussos of the Department of Computer Science and Informatics [received a £353,354 research grant](#) from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council for a project addressing personal data management and [data security challenges](#). The ESPRESSO Project – Efficient Search over Personal Repositories: Secure and Sovereign – will address the complexities that have arisen around personal online data stores (pods), which give individuals complete control over which applications can access their personal data and for what purpose. The findings of the project will help to address key policy challenges relating to data sovereignty and privacy and will inform future research in this area

Birkbeck further attracted other PhD studentships during the review year, as part of the UCL, Bloomsbury and East London (UBEL) Doctoral Training Partnership funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Professor Rosie Cox and Dr Mara Nogueira, for example, will be supervising Avinay Yadav who received an award

to complete a PhD on "The Making of a 'Clean City': Governing Waste and Informality in Urban India".

The Department of Geography similarly received substantial funding to establish four Mark James PhD studentships for 2022-23 entry. The awards, which cover tuition fees and a stipend for up to three years of full-time study (or five years for part-time study), are funded by Mr Mark James in honour of his friend Sir Peter Hall, an urban planner and geographer, and also an alumnus and former lecturer at Birkbeck. The recipients will focus on four designated projects and will be supervised by the Department's Dr Stefan Engels, Dr Shino Shiode, Dr Mara Nogueira, Dr Penny Vera-Sanso, Dr Kezia Barker, Dr Ella Harris and Professor Rosie Cox.

In addition, funding from the global digital giant, Google, is supporting the School of Business, Economics and informatics' offer of The Kathleen Booth Anniversary PhD Studentship in Computer Science, to be awarded competitively to a woman wishing to pursue doctoral studies in any of the Department's areas of specialism. This scholarship is to mark the 100th birthday milestone of Kathleen Booth, the other half of the Birkbeck's famous Computing pioneers, Andrew and Kathleen Booth.

A few more examples are noted below:

Dr Steve Noble of the Department of Economics, Maths and Statistics was received an EPSRC Mathematics Small Grant for a project entitled 'The critical group of a topological graph: an approach through delta-matroid theory'. The application was jointly made with Prof Iain Moffatt of Royal Holloway and Birkbeck's share of the grant is £31,231.

Dr Jasmine Bhatia of the Department of Politics and Dr Imke Henkel of the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies respectively received British Academy/Leverhulme grant of £9,983.59 and £9,457.00. The former's grant examines why efforts at building a government might fail, through an exploration of the collapse of the previous government in Afghanistan, while the latter will examine the democratic role of news media during Covid-19 in the UK and Germany, triangulating digital news outputs, journalists' professional reflections, and audiences' experiences.

Dr Adam Tierney of the Department of Psychological Sciences also attracted a significant ESRC grant to study the relationship between selective attention and second language learning.

2.4 APPOINTMENTS TO EXPERT PANELS/BOARDS

The professional expertise of Birkbeck academics was also recognised through appointments to important national and international panels during the 2021-22 year.

Professor Kevin Ibeh of the Department of Management was appointed Director representing the UK on the Board of the European International Business Academy (EIBA), an association of international business academics and practitioners with headquarters in Brussels. Professor Ibeh joins EIBA Executive Officers and other National Representatives (Directors) charged with the governance of this leading international professional network, promoting research, global communication, knowledge transfer, lifelong learning and exchanges of ideas. Founded in 1974, EIBA promotes the advancement and dissemination of frontier thinking, information, and multi-disciplinary perspectives in the ever-evolving field of International Business.

Box 5, below, presents a far from exhaustive list of such appointments.

Box 5: Sample appointments of Birkbeck staff to expert panels/boards, 2021-22

- Professor Iroise Dumontheil of the Department of Psychological Sciences was elected to the board of the International Mind, Brain and Education Society (IMBES) in September 2021.
- Professor Rick Cooper also from Psychological Sciences was made an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Cognitive Science Society, for “long and distinguished history of both scientific and service contribution to the field of Cognitive Science”. This followed a 6-year stint as Executive Editor of the journal *Cognitive Science*.
- Dr Taolue Chen of the Department of Computer Science and Informatics (CSIS) was appointed a member of the editorial board for *International Journal of Software and Informatics*.
- Dr Paul Yoo also of CSIS was appointed a member of the editorial board for *ACM Computing Surveys*, one of the leading computer science journals.
- Dr Lilith Whiley of the Department of Organizational Psychology joined the editorial board of the journal *Gender, Work and Organization*.
- Professor Julie Gore also of the Department of Organizational Psychology joined the board of the Naturalistic Decision Making Association,



concerned with the study of how people make decisions in complex, high-stakes settings.

- Professor Andy Ross of the Department of Economics, Maths and Statistics was elected Chair of the Academy of Social Science Practitioner Fellows Search Committee, the national academy of academics, practitioners and learned societies in social science.
- Dr Federica Rossi of the Department of Management was appointed Advisory Editor for the journal *Research Policy*.
- Dr Neil Pyper of the Department of Management was elected to the British Academy of Management Council.
- Dr Kerry Harman of the Department of Psychosocial Studies was appointed to the Steering Group of the South African National Research Foundation (NRF)-funded project entitled 'Reconceptualising resilience: home, community care and Ubuntu'.

2.5 VIBRANT INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

Birkbeck staff sustained their typically vibrant presence in international scholarly and related fora during 2021-22. These international activities, aimed at disseminating research findings, sharing insights etc. took various forms, including conferences, invited keynotes or seminar presentations. Sample activities are outlined in Box 6, below.



Box 6: Sample International Presentations by Birkbeck Staff, 2021-22

- Dr Lina Dzuverovic of the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies took part in the Art as a Protest Tool panel at the 'Saving Democracy from Itself' conference at the Young Leaders 40 summit, in Zagreb, Croatia.
- Professor Lisa Baraitser of the Department of Psychosocial Studies gave the Stevens-Barchas Lecture on 'Enduring Time' at the Richardson Seminar on the History of Psychiatry, DeWitt Wallace Institute for Psychiatry, Cornell University, New York, USA.
- Professor Carmen Fracchia of the Department of Languages, Culture and Applied Linguistics contributed to the 'Voice of the Shadows: African presence in the 16th – 19th century art of northern Italy' exhibition which opened at the Mudec Museum Milan, Italy, 13 May-18 Sept. 2022.
- Professor Sanjib Bhakta of the Department of Biological Sciences made a series of presentations to undergraduate and postgraduate students and early career scientists during a visit to India, 11 July - 15 August 2022.



- Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra of the Department of History of Art premiered her film, Malintzin 17, at the Tiger Competition of the prestigious International Film Festival, Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The film was also presented in Greece, France, and Mexico in March 2022.
- Dr Fred Yamoah of the Department of Management was a guest speaker on "A Crisis on Our Plates: Tackling Climate Change through Food Systems" at



the Arabia CSR Forum, the region's premier convention on CSR and sustainability, 4 October 2021.

- A documentary film, 'Rites Undone', tracing the journey of Nigerian victims of sex-trafficking in Italy, produced by Birkbeck's Derek Jarman Lab and directed by Naomi Richman, premiered at the Mental Health Rights Film Festival in Lisbon, 25-26 February 2022.
- Dr Paul Eisner from the Department of Geography presented a paper at the 3rd Expert Meeting of the UN Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information (WG-MGI) in Singapore. The WG-MGI is part of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM).
- Professor Denis Mareschal from the Department of Psychological Sciences was invited speaker on 'The Active Child' at the Uppsala-Göttingen Workshop on Active Learning, Göttingen, Netherlands, in December 2021. He was also invited speaker by the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, USA, in February 2022.
- Professor Daniele Archibugi of the Department of Management was interviewed by the Labour Commission, Italian Chamber of Deputies, on the reform of the pension scheme, 12 October 2021. Daniele was also convenor and lecturer for the talk 'Everything you always wanted to know about becoming a researcher (but were afraid to ask)' at Transversal Skills for Young Scholars, Venice International University, 20-24 September 2021.
- Professor Kevin Ibeh also of Management delivered a keynote to a Society for the Advancement of Management Studies-funded research workshop series organised by Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania, in conjunction with Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, South Africa, November 2021.
- Professor Alexandra Beauregard of the Department of Organizational Psychology was invited speaker for the session 'Conversations on collaborations between African and Global North work family scholars' hosted by the Work and Family Researchers Network on 6 April 2022. She was also invited speaker at a Professional Development workshop for Doctoral Students held in New York, USA, on 22 June 2022.



- Dr Ken Hori of the Department of Economics, Maths and Statistics was keynote speaker at the Graduation Ceremony at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC), Barcelona, Spain, on Friday 27 May 2022.
- Dr Luca Andriani of Management, in 2022, received an Erasmus Visiting Fellowship to visit the Athens University of Economics and Business, Athens, Greece; a Visiting Research Fellowship from the Italian National Research Council, Rome, Italy; and another Visiting Fellowship from the Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin, Italy.



3.0 OUTSTANDING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

The strong commitment of the Birkbeck community to addressing real life global challenges was again richly demonstrated during the 2021-22 year. Contributions span across a range of topical themes, including support for forced migrants, the Ukraine-Russia war and Afghanistan crisis, climate change, Covid-19 pandemic, mental health, human rights, and advancing equality, diversity and inclusion. These global citizenship activities are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs and outlined in Box 7.

SUPPORTING FORCED MIGRANTS TO ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Birkbeck's nationally recognised and award-winning Compass Project, which has been supporting forced migrants by offering pathways into higher education since 2016, continued its work during the 2021-22 year. The Access and Engagement team hosted 20 new Compass Scholars to a two-day Orientation programme in October 2021, which included briefing from the Birkbeck's Wellbeing, Study Skills and Library teams, a tour of campus facilities and introduction to volunteer academic mentors.

The following excerpts from one of the latest recipients of this scholarship opportunity, who came to the UK in 2020 seeking asylum from the Yemeni Civil War, illustrate its life-changing potential:

"With everything that is happening back home in Yemen, I've developed a real interest in global politics...It's been intense, but my experience at Birkbeck has been great. I don't feel like an alien here. This university is for everyone...After graduating I'd love to do an internship in politics – maybe something to do with Yemen and security issues. I feel like I have something to give in this area and Birkbeck has helped put me in a position to do that."

The Afghanistan crisis and Ukraine-Russia war have further elevated the need for this work. In response to the respective crisis, Birkbeck contacted affected students and assured them of the College's support, with appropriate information on how to access existing services and government support (e.g., hardship support via the Office for Students). Guidance was also offered to eligible prospective Ukrainian students and staff regarding study loans from the Student Finance England and the admissions process for applicants. Birkbeck alumni based in the affected countries were similarly reached.

Supporting forced migrants to join the Birkbeck community with minimal barriers aligns strongly with the College's longstanding mission of facilitating access to higher education to non-traditional learners. Birkbeck's University of Sanctuary status

and membership of the Open Society University Network's Threatened Scholars' initiative as well as The Council for at Risk Academics (CARA) and the Universities in Exile Consortium enable it to partner with like-minded institutions to deploy support to current and prospective students, staff, refugees and asylum seekers, and institutional partners, including those impacted by the Ukraine-Russia war, Afghanistan crisis and others.

The College's support extends to availing Compass project participants of opportunities for extracurricular activities as well as platforms to further develop their skills and learning. For example, a new referral partnership between Birkbeck and The Bike Project availed forced migrants of access to bicycles to enable them to get around cheaply, and boost their health, fitness and independence.

Furthermore, seven current and former Compass Project students (Angela Obi, Janahan Sivanathan, Merwa Zen, Michael Darko, Mohamed Alie Jalloh, Nirmala Kahingalage, Selamawit Berhe) and the Chair of the Project's Steering Committee, Professor Leslie Topp, collaborated with the Warsaw-based filmmaker and artist, Anna Konik, to make two films - *A Road to Travel* and *Silence Heard Loud* (2022) – about their experiences. The latter, *Silence Heard Loud*, premiered at the London Human Rights Watch Film Festival at the Barbican Centre on 17 March 2022 and was also streamed online (UK and Ireland only) on the Human Rights Watch Film Festival platform during the following week.

Notably also, the Compass project team collaborated with School of Science colleagues to celebrate the World Refugee Week 2022. Co-organised by Dr Katherine Thompson and Professor Sanjib Bhakta, the interactive event explored the theme of 'Healing,' to celebrate global community, mutual care and resilience, and featured short presentations, including Isabelle Habib's talk on some of the work undertaken at Birkbeck to support refugees and forced migrants.



Continuing support from Birkbeck's friends and supporters assisted the College during 2021-22 to sustain its mission of extending access to higher education to forced migrants from overseas as well as local communities with lower university participation rates.

Kate Cavelle, Head of Pro Bono and Community Investment at Allen & Overy, commented thus:

“We believe the business community has an important role to play in advancing social mobility through access to learning...We are delighted to continue supporting Birkbeck with their almost 200-year-old mission of delivering flexible, high-quality and accessible education.”

ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The commitment of the Birkbeck community to [confronting the climate crisis](#) continued to find practical expression during 2021-22, as indicated by several examples. Notably, the College hosted a Teach-In for Climate Justice on 25 April 2022, featuring presentations and conversations with worldwide partners. The event was part of the Worldwide Teach-In, a project of the Graduate Programs in Sustainability at Bard College in New York, USA, in conjunction with partners worldwide and the Open Society University Network. The initiative mobilised 1000 communities in-person and online at the end of March 2022, with the goal of engaging these communities in serious dialogue about what they can do to change the future.

Birkbeck’s multi-disciplinary team led discussions on the ways in which climate change and environmental issues intersect their diverse research and professional activities and connects those around them. The team included Dr Aideen Foley (Geography), Dr Kezia Barker (Geography), Dr Kai Heron (Politics), Kayleigh Woods Harley (Birkbeck Climate Network), Dr Phil Hopley (Earth and Planetary Sciences), Dr Joel McKim (Film, Media and Cultural Studies), Professor George Roussos (Computer Science and Information Systems), Dr Becky Briant (Geography), Professor Luciana Martins (Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics), Dr Lesley McFadyen (History, Classics and Archaeology), Professor Alex Colas (Politics), Dr Jason Edwards (Politics), Dr Kalpana Wilson (Geography), Dr Fred Yamoah (Management), Dr Mike Bintley (English, Theatre and Creative Writing), Professor Sue Brooks (Geography), and Dr Caroline Edwards (English, Theatre and Creative Writing).

In more practical terms, Birkbeck’s newly opened 373 Euston Road building received a [BREEAM ‘Excellent’ sustainability rating](#) in recognition of its inclusion of features such as a green roof, a rainwater harvesting system, and a photo voltaic system which converts sunlight into electricity.

CHAMPIONING HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck sustained its work on human rights advocacy and justice reforms during 2021-22. In addition to their earlier noted new research about variations in experience of the criminal justice system based on English language ability, ICPR researchers have developed a second training film for specialist lawyers as part of the Judging Values and Participation in Mental Capacity Law project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The resource, co-produced with the leading charity, *VoiceAbility*, provides advocacy for people with a learning disability and/or autism.

Professor Jessica Jacobson, Director of ICPR, commented: "ICPR warmly welcomes the launch of this second film. By tackling the complex – and rarely acknowledged – issue of the role of values in the Court of Protection, it will undoubtedly support improved and more reflective practice on the part of lawyers, judges and other professionals working in this field."

Relatedly, the contribution of Birkbeck Law School's Professor Bill Bowring to promoting international justice was highlighted during the focal period. Specifically, the European Court of Human Rights backed the conclusion of a 2016 British inquiry which found Russia responsible for the assassination of Alexander Litvinenko, a former Russian spy turned British citizen fatally poisoned in London in 2006 with radioactive polonium-210 apparently by two Russian agents for exposing corruption and links to organised crime in the Russian intelligence services. Professor Bill Bowring played a crucial role in the case, representing Marina Carter, Alexander's widow.

A practising barrister since 1974, Professor Bowring initiated the case in 2007 with solicitor, Louise Christian, and drafted the written pleadings. Professor Bill Bowring is well known for his work in the field of human rights. He combines his academic work at Birkbeck with practice at the Bar and has acted as a consultant and expert on human rights, minority rights and related issues for the United Nations, Council of Europe, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), European Union and the UK Government. He is President of the European Lawyers for Democracy and Human Rights (ELDH) and a 2017 recipient of Academy of Social Sciences' Fellowship for services to Russian studies.

ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Birkbeck reinforced its commitment to advancing opportunities, equality, diversity and inclusion during 2021-22. Equality-promoting initiatives (e.g. ATHENA SWAN,

Disability Confident, Race Equality Charter) continued to be promoted, as was the commemoration of international days, weeks and months (e.g. International Women's Day, International day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, Holocaust Memorial Day, World Refugee Day, Global Accessibility Awareness Day, Pride Month, Black History Month).

Sample activities undertaken include an inaugural Equalities and Diversity event organised by Assistant Deans for Equality, which brought together all staff diversity networks and equality and diversity advocates at Birkbeck on 27 June 2022; a talk on 'Celebrating Multiple Identities' by author and campaigner Sarah Hagger-Holt, on 25 May 2022, jointly organised by Birkbeck staff networks, Astrea, Out@BBK, Parents Network, Disability Network and REACH; an ASTREA International Women's Day talk on menopause; and BEI Talks' Equality event with Dr Balissa Greene. Latest report that the annual gender pay gap at Birkbeck is among the closest in London, having [narrowed markedly](#) over the past few years, suggests a much-appreciated positive trend on the gender equality front.

The Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism (BISA), a founding member of the International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism (ICRAR), continues to reinforce its international reputation as a centre of innovative research and teaching on antisemitism, racialization, religious intolerance, and on disseminating new ways of thinking about antisemitism and racism. As in previous years, BISA, a diverse, multi-national team, joined with the Institute of Historical Research to host a Holocaust Memorial Day lecture given by an international scholar.

The work of the Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team toward applying for the Advance HE Race Equality Charter progressed during 2021-22, notably through the conduct of student and staff surveys, and the unveiling of a dedicated race equality website. As already noted, three UCL-Birkbeck [Medical Research Council \(MRC\)](#) Doctoral Training Programme (DTC) studentships were reserved for Black, Asian and minority ethnic students with matched-funding by Birkbeck, while the Wellcome Trust/ISSF similarly launched a new summer internship programme offering four competitive internships to Minority Ethnic undergraduate students in biomedicine or medical humanities. In addition, Birkbeck's partnership with Santander availed students and staff of access to a new free online course for university communities across the UK, which explores Black British history, cultures and steps to anti-racism.

Furthermore, assisted by philanthropic gifts from partners and supporters, Birkbeck continued to extend financial support to students from under-represented backgrounds. Notably, Goldman Sachs Gives made a significant new commitment of over £1m as part of their partnership with Birkbeck to improve racial equity and tackle barriers and challenges facing the higher education sector. This followed the



success of the Goldman Sachs and Birkbeck Diversity Fund, which supported over 500 students studying at Birkbeck through offering bursaries and emergency hardship funding to current and incoming BAME students and supporting outreach activities in London communities with low university participation rates. This extended partnership allows Birkbeck to sustain the above-noted agenda and enhance its suite of comprehensive support programmes.

The 2021-22 year equally saw the continued offering of the Access to Postgraduate Study Scholarship, a non-repayable grant of £3,000 paid directly towards tuition fees, to students whose circumstances or background may mean that they face barriers accessing education or greater challenges while undertaking their degree studies. To further underline its commitment to expanding higher education opportunities and reducing financial barriers to international students wishing to study at Birkbeck, the College extended its Global Future Scholarship scheme, allowing eligible postgraduate taught students residing in all EU member countries and Brazil to pay the same fee as home students. This marks a big expansion of the scheme from the preceding year when a smaller number of EU countries were included. A number of new scholarships were also announced for international students residing in India or Nigeria enrolled for full-time postgraduate course in Autumn 2022 or January 2023.

RISING TO THE COVID-19 CHALLENGES

Birkbeck sustained its robust response to the COVID-19 crisis during 2021-22. For example, a new report by Dr Caroline Kamau-Mitchell of the Department of Organizational Psychology assisted the House of Lords and UK Government's work on new legislation affecting patients with COVID-19 and long Covid.

Dr Ella Harris of the Department of Geography developed "The Lockdown Game", The iDoc, an educational game which takes players through select Londoners' experience of navigating the rules, threats, possibilities and absurdities of lockdown. The iDoc, which was part of Dr Harris' Leverhulme Fellowship, was launched on 24 May 2022.

Professor Sanjib Bhakta of the School of Science also hosted an event exploring lessons learnt from the pandemic so far in different countries of the world. This event featured [Professor Ulrike Hahn](#), Professor of Psychology at Birkbeck and author of [the COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Handbook and Wiki](#), which aimed to demystify the myth of COVID vaccinations and solve the challenge of vaccine hesitancy. Professor Alexandra Beauregard of Organisational Psychology similarly chaired a virtual plenary on 'Conversations about Covid-19 & Work Family Around

the Globe' as part of Work and Family Researchers Network meet on 17 September 2021.

ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Researchers at Birkbeck additionally sustained their focus on aspects of mental health challenges facing humanity during 2021-22. Example of activities undertaken include observing the University Mental Health Day to remind the community of the need to lookout for colleagues who may be struggling with their mental wellbeing following the challenges of the past two years. The Employee Assistance Programme, a virtual library of wellbeing information, designed to support staff experiencing professional and personal difficulties with their mental/emotional wellbeing, also continued.

TAKING SCIENCE EDUCATION TO FESTIVAL GOERS

Professor Gilly Forrester's Leverhulme-funded project on great apes featured in the new Science Futures area at the 2022 Glastonbury Festival (22-26 June), exploring the role of science in identifying environmental and societal issues and the scientists working to find solutions. The science-themed stalls showcased installations and performances to create a relaxed and engaging atmosphere in which visitors can find out about the scientific evidence behind headlines and discover how different areas of research are coming together to secure a brighter future for all life on Earth.

Festival-goers participated in The Great Ape Challenge, a fascinating look into how language makes humans different to animals, aimed at offering an interactive experience using puzzles that mimic language structure and can be manipulated by all great apes (including humans).

This Glastonbury event is one of several ways in which Birkbeck scientists have recently sought to engage and educate the general public. An earlier outing at the annual Norwich Science Festival, on 3 November 2021, featured senior academics from Birkbeck (Professor Natasha Kirkham, Dr Simon Green, Dr Georgina Donati, Dr Lianne Schroer, Dr Brittney Chere, and PhD candidate Cosmin Stamate) and three other universities, using fascinating live science experiments, short talks, and panel discussions to educate visitors on the human brain. Equally pertinent were the May 2022 Science Saturdays and their free online talks as well as Professor Forrester's July 2022 public engagement activity at Twycross Zoo.



Box 7: Other examples of Global Citizenship Activities at Birkbeck

- As part of the COP26 global meeting in Glasgow, staff working on Birkbeck's sustainability efforts produced a video discussion on what the College and businesses need to do to tackle the climate crisis.
- Birkbeck marked World AIDS Day on 1 December 2021, by supporting a London AIDS memorial located in Tottenham Court Road.



- Professor Sanjib Bhakta, Department of Biological Sciences wrote a blog to mark World Tuberculosis (TB) Day, discussing the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on TB, why this is so alarming, and how research at Birkbeck is making a difference. Professor Bhakta also reflected on World Antimicrobial Awareness Week in a blog as did former PhD student, Alex Cook, who is looking at new approaches for malaria control.
- PhD student Ben Morris shared his experiences as a disabled person and his research on neurodiverse people in this blog to mark International Day for Persons with Disabilities.
- The Transforming Institutions by Gendering contents and Gaining Equality in Research (TRIGGER) report led by Birkbeck academics, which looks at gender inequality in STEM, was published in 2022. The FP7-funded European project aims to increase the number of women in those university sectors where they are underrepresented.
- Birkbeck recently invited applications from academic, professional and research staff for the 2022-23 Aurora programme, the Advance HE leadership development scheme aimed at addressing the under-representation of women at senior levels.
- Dr David Tross of the Department of Geography wrote a blog to mark the International Day of Happiness and featured in a Birkbeck Explains video on the pandemic's impact on our happiness.



- Elizabeth Charles of Library Services produced a comment piece on a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) e-book subscription from ProQuest.
- Sonia Joshi, MSc Politics, Philosophy and Economics student, discusses the inequities surrounding the western approach to climate change in a blog.
- Dr Pam Yeow of the Department of Management shared top tips on how to have a more sustainable Christmas.

4.0 INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AND STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Birkbeck continued to sustain and develop strategically important relationships with suitable international universities during 2021-22, as the disruptive effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on international linkages abate. Brief accounts of some international collaborative links are presented below.

Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, China

The collaboration between Birkbeck and the Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (SWUFE), Chengdu, China, which involved a dual degree arrangement at the Bachelor's level and progression into postgraduate Business and Management programmes, continued during the 2021-22 year. The second cohort of the dual degree students joined other final year undergraduate students at Birkbeck at the beginning of the academic year. Both institutions are looking to build on the July 2021 extension of the agreement to expand the collaboration.

Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC Barcelona), Barcelona, Spain

The academic collaboration between Birkbeck's School of Business, Economics and Informatics and the Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, which enables UIC Barcelona's undergraduate students of Economics and Marketing to gain Bachelor's degrees from both Universities upon successful completion of the prescribed curriculum also advanced during 2021-22. The period witnessed a visit by staff and students of UIC Barcelona to the School of Business, Economics and Informatics, which availed the delegates of taster lectures and extracurricular activities typically offered to international students at Birkbeck. The second cohort of UIC Barcelona students are expected at Birkbeck in October 2022.

Sophia, Hosei, ICU, Ochanomizu, Waseda and Kansai Universities, Japan

Birkbeck's academic relationships with Japanese universities, including Tokyo-based Sophia University, Hosei University, ICU, Ochanomizu University, and Waseda University continued during 2021-22. The relatively new collaboration with Kansai University, Osaka, was also sustained. The Covid-19 pandemic had not allowed the full functioning of these collaborations over the past few years, but higher levels of activities are expected in the forthcoming academic year and beyond.

University of São Paulo, Brazil

The Department of Psychosocial Studies of the School of Social Sciences, History, and Philosophy continued its longstanding formal link with the Department of Social Psychology and the Psychology Institute at the University of São Paulo, Brazil during the 2021-22 academic year. Notably, Professor Stephen Frosh's research project with Sao Paulo colleagues culminated in a Palgrave book, *Brazilian Psychosocial Histories of Psychoanalysis*, which he co-edited. This authoritative history of psychoanalysis in Brazil featured mainly contributions by Brazilian scholars, making their work available in English for the first time.

University of Professional Studies, Accra, Ghana

Birkbeck and the University of Professional Studies Accra (UPSA), Ghana, sustained their collaborative focus on PhD training for UPSA staff during the 2021-22 academic year. A delegation of senior leaders from UPSA are expected to visit Birkbeck in Autumn 2022 to discuss enhanced implementation of the MOA signed in 2020.

University of Sharjah, UAE

Birkbeck and University of Sharjah, UAE worked, during 2021-22, to develop a dual degree offer respectively involving their Department of Biological Sciences and Department of Medicine. The discussion was based on an MOU signed in 2021. The dual degree provision, when agreed, would enable University of Sharjah's postgraduate students to gain Master's degrees from both Universities upon successful completion of prescribed curricula.

Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca (UNIMIB), Italy

Birkbeck and the University of Bicocca recently agreed an MOA establishing a dual degree collaboration to enable eligible postgraduate students from the University of Bicocca to gain Master's degrees from both Universities upon successful completion of prescribed curricula. The agreement will enable Birkbeck to offer the MSc in Quantitative Risk Management with Machine Learning, while UNIMIB will award *The Laurea Magistrale* in Economics and Finance.

Athens University of Economics and Business, Greece

Birkbeck and the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) recently signed an MOU to facilitate more substantive discussion toward developing dual degree Master's programmes in the business and management area. The dual degree provision, when agreed, would enable AUEB postgraduate students to gain Master's degrees from both Universities upon successful completion of prescribed curricula.

Minnesota State University, Mankato, USA

Birkbeck and Minnesota State University, Mankato, have agreed the text of an MOU to provide a platform for more focused discussion regarding developing collaboration opportunities between both institutions. This followed the latter's visit to Birkbeck, on 15 November 2021, as part of Minnesota State Government-led higher education delegation. The delegation was part of the Minnesota State Governor's trade mission to the UK and was aimed at strengthening links between US and UK institutions to ensure greater access for students.

European Elite Sports Federations and Academic Centres

Birkbeck Sports Business Centre's longstanding collaboration with leading European sport federations (UEFA, FIBA, IIHF, and EHF, and the Council of Europe EPAS) and academic partners (University of Limoges, France, University of Lausanne, Switzerland, University of Mainz, Germany, and University of Lleida, Spain) continued during 2021-22. The collaborative Executive Master's in Global Sport Governance (MESGO), aimed at advancing sports sector professionals' knowledge of sports governance on an international level, for which Birkbeck is a founding academic partner enrolled its sixth cohort in Autumn 2021.

The MESGO VI participants attended this unique programme's second session in-person in Paris, France, having previously met online. They spent the five-day period (22-26 November 2021) discussing several topics related to governance, evolution of competition design, regulation of international player transfer markets, financial sustainability and diversity in sport. They also visited a variety of sporting facilities, including the Paris Saint Germain Football Stadium, the French Football Federation, the Auteuil Hippodrome Racecourse, the Ice Hockey Accor Arena, and the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games Organising Committee. The session was directed by Sean Hamil, Director of Birkbeck's Sport Business Centre.

The Open Society University Network (OSUN)

Birkbeck sustained its active membership of The Open Society University Network (OSUN), a new global network anchored by Central European University and Bard College and supported by the Open Society Foundations, during the 2021-22 year. Encompassing over 30 Universities and research and educational institutions from Europe, Americas, Africa and Middle East, and Central Asia, the OSUN network integrates learning and advances knowledge across geographic and demographic boundaries, promotes civic engagement, and expands access to higher education to underserved communities. It also promotes the development of engaged citizens by exposing students of partner institutions to globally integrated academic programmes on Open Society and Democracy, Sustainability and Climate, Inequalities, Human Rights, Transnationalism, and Arts and Society.

Sample opportunities advertised to OSUN members include a call by the Experimental Humanities Collaborative Network for proposals on a project on 'rethinking the humanities in the light of changing technologies, our increasingly connected planet; and another by the Threatened Scholars Integration Initiative for nominations for Residential and Non-Residential fellowships, particularly in the light of the Ukraine-Russia war. There were also calls for proposals for hosting CommUniversity Workshop Series and for the Global Institute for Advanced Studies Post-Doctoral Fellowships. A recent project funding to Rebekka Hoelzle of the Department of Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck for a MPhil/PhD research on migrant women exemplifies the kind of opportunities associated with OSUN.

Additional examples of international collaborations at Birkbeck

The Institute of Earth and Planetary Sciences (IEPS), a joint Research School between the Department of Earth Sciences, UCL and the Department of Earth and Planetary Science, Birkbeck, collaborates closely with scientists from the US, Indian, Chinese and European space mission in the course of their planetary work. With research projects on every continent on Earth, as well as the Moon and Mars, they actively work with institutions and governmental agencies in over 48 countries. The IEPS' work essentially entails fieldwork visits to Cape Verdes, Canary Islands, China, Korea, Vietnam, US and Central Greece, and publications by team members involve collaborations with scientists from over 100 other national and international higher education institutions.

5.0 INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND VISITORS

5.1 HOSTING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Birkbeck's profile as a centre for world class research, scholarship and knowledge exchange was reinforced during 2021-22, through the hosting of influential international events and visitors. Relevant examples are presented in the next several paragraphs.

Birkbeck Institute of Humanities reaching new frontiers

The Birkbeck Institute of Humanities held a series of events featuring international speakers during the year. Notably, the Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters (SHaME) team and The Women of the World (WOW) Foundation organised the Shameless! Festival of Activism Against Sexual Violence, on 27 November 2021. The festival brought together activists, researchers, speakers, survivors and artists to confront and change attitudes to sexual violence and was held at the Battersea Arts Centre with support from the Wellcome Trust.



The festival's illustrious line-up included Professor Joanna Bourke, Professor of History at Birkbeck and Principal Investigator of the SHaME project, and Jude Kelly, CBE, CEO and Founder of the WOW Foundation and Birkbeck Fellow, who opened the event. Attendees also heard from prolific speakers including authors Laura Bates and Winnie M Li, and model and author Emily

Ratajkowski. The day also featured performances and workshops by artists, poets and musicians all of whom all spoke to the theme through their respective media.

Professor Joanna Bourke commented: "The Festival exuded a tremendous sense of solidarity, safety, and anger. Yes. Anger that so many people (of all genders) are still being subjected to sexual violence, abuse, and harassment...It was a productive collaboration between academia, the arts, and activism with all of us working towards similar objectives, creating a rape-free world."

Birkbeck's new state-of-the-art Toddler lab officially opened

The Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development (CBCD) at Birkbeck which has been at the forefront of developing techniques to understand the development of infants since its establishment in 1998 opened its new £8.5 million state-of-the-art



ToddlerLab on 30 May 2022. Supported by The Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation, The Wolfson Foundation, CareTech Charitable Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation and Elizabeth and Daniel Peltz, the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab is first research centre in the world to study toddler brain development.



In addition to investigating development in typically developing children, allowing insight into the fascinating world of toddlers, The Wolfson ToddlerLab provides continuity with the existing Birkbeck BabyLab, enabling scientists to track development seamlessly over the first five years of life. BabyLab scientists have achieved a number of notable firsts to date, including pioneering novel non-invasive methods for measuring brain and cognitive functions in human infants, and these advances have been shared with other labs worldwide through high profile collaborative networks and training programmes.

Vincent Keaveny, the Lord Mayor of London, remarked: "It's a pleasure to be able to open this brand-new centre not only as the Lord Mayor but as the Vice-President of Birkbeck. The ToddlerLab continues their great – and unrivalled – work in understanding brain development in children. I am delighted to be here today, not only to celebrate the historic links between the City and Birkbeck but to also celebrate the future success of one of our country's finest educational institutions."

Useful Knowledge Conference heralds the beginning of Birkbeck's bicentenary season

Organised as part of Birkbeck's bicentenary celebrations, the Useful Knowledge conference held on 24 February 2022 featured a series of talks on Birkbeck's near 200-year history as well as historical and contemporary perspectives on part-time higher education and mature learners.



A special panel discussion involving current Vice Chancellor Professor David Latchman and two former heads, Sir Timothy O'Shea and Baroness Tessa Blackstone, was a major highlight. Other key speakers include Conference chair [Professor Joanna Bourke](#), historian Professor Sally Alexander, [Professor Jerry White](#), and Black feminist activist and College Fellow, Marai Larsai.



Science Week 2022 inspires and fascinates

The School of Science's annual Week, held in-person and virtually from 29 to 31 March 2022, offered programming showcasing its three Science Departments: Psychological Sciences, Biological Sciences and Earth and Planetary Sciences. As in previous years, the Week featured free public lectures and related events designed to share internationally recognised research. There were brief talks by Birkbeck scientists on current, cutting-edge research, including latest research on earthquakes, space exploration, the arms race between host and pathogen, cell-to-cell interactions in microbial communities, how neuroscience helps us to understand how children learn and how visual attention works in real-life settings.

Birkbeck annual festival of arts and culture continues to thrive

Birkbeck Arts Week, the annual festival of talks, walks, workshops, screenings and performances, and celebration of the creativity and intellectual endeavour of Birkbeck's School of Arts made its tenth outing from 18 to 27 May 2022. The Week, offered in a hybrid format featured several highlights, including actor Dan Ryan talk with Birkbeck playwrights Daragh Carville and David Eldridge about their work on ITV's *The Bay* and *Middle* and author Damian Catani's online conversation with acclaimed French novelist Michaël Ferrier regarding the question of separating the art from the artist. Other highlights include the screening of documentary filmmaker Medhin Tewolde's internationally-acclaimed *Negra* and Q&A with her on what it means to inhabit Mexico as a black woman, and a discussion among Birkbeck's Art historians on new approaches to the art and design of the *fin-de-siecle* in the event 'Art Nouveau, Jugendstil: The Creations, Creators and New Studies'

Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image's annual Essay Film Festival returns for its eighth edition

Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image (BIMI), based in the School of Arts' Birkbeck Cinema, held its annual essay festival from 19 March to 23 April 2022. The research-led festival, supported by the CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership, has become a key reference in the film festival circuit, and this year's coverage of important films from the UK, USA, Jamaica, Australia, Italy, and Croatia illustrates the festival's international profile. Creative and critical, performative and political, the essay film is the cutting edge of cinema's engagement with the world. The 2022 programming reflects an open and inclusive idea of the essay film, a hybrid form that brings together elements of documentary and experimental filmmaking into a highly personal and often politically engaged mode of expression. The vibrant, eclectic programme was spread across the Birkbeck Cinema, the Institute



of Contemporary Arts (ICA), Bertha DocHouse, the Goethe Institute, as well as online via a dedicated Screening Room.

The BIMl also organised other international events during 2021-22, notably a presentation by Japanese documentary filmmaker Haneda Sumiko and another on the work of Jacques Perconte, a visual artist and a major figure in the French digital art and avant-garde-scene.

The Centre for French, Francophone and Comparative Studies debuts

The Centre for French, Francophone and Comparative Studies (CFFCS) was established in 2021, with a wider focus on French and Francophone thought, literature, history and other cultural aspects. It co-hosted the two-day programme on the French visual and digital artist, Jacques Perconte, mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The Centre replaced the former Birkbeck Research in Aesthetics of Kinship and Community.

Birkbeck Interdisciplinary Research in Media and Culture sustains its international focus

BIRMAC, the home of Interdisciplinary Research in Media and Culture at Birkbeck, celebrated the launch of 'What Will Be Already Exists', an edited volume from Artpool's 40th anniversary Conference, in a joint event with Artpool on 11 February 2022. Invited speakers include art scholar, critic, and curator Ieva Astahovska of the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art, Riga, Latvia and art historian and curator, Cristian Nae of George Enescu National University of Arts, Iasi, Romania. The online event was chaired by Dr Sophie Hope of the Department of Film Media and Cultural Studies.

The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research continues to champion world prisons

The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research, School of Law, sustained its focus on promoting prison reforms across the world during 2021-22. A new report from the Institute, the latest edition of the World Prison Population List (WPPL), researched and compiled by Helen Fair and Roy Walmsley put the number of people held in penal institutions throughout the world at 11.5 million, showing that prison populations continue to rise in many parts of the world. The Institute also used the opportunity of the June 2022 Commonwealth Heads of Government meet in Kigali, Rwanda, to draw attention to chronic prison overcrowding in Commonwealth countries, with Catherine Heard, Director of the World Prison Research Programme,

particularly highlighting the need for better data as a crucial first step in addressing the challenge.

The Criminology Seminar Series launched in 2015 to provide a platform for critical, path-breaking interdisciplinary research on crime, criminal justice, and related themes by scholars within and beyond Birkbeck similarly continued during the 2021-22 year. The series, convened by Dr Sappho Xenakis, featured talks by Julian Go of the University of Chicago, USA, Elena Mamoulaki of Hellenic Mediterranean University, Greece, and Reece Walters of Deakin University, Australia, respectively on 27 January, 24 February and 17 March 2022.

Countersign conversations roll on to a third series

Countersign, a podcast series founded by Professor Stewart Motha of the School of Law at Birkbeck as a platform for extended discussion and interviews with leading international scholars, featured a number of international voices during 2021-22. Its latest series, the third, focuses on the environment, climate change, and mass extinction. The guests include Margaret Davis, Matthew Flinders Distinguished Professor at Flinders University, Australia, and Irene Watson, Professor of Law at the University of South Australia and author of *Aboriginal Peoples Colonialism and International Law: Raw Law*. Professor Motha's conversation with Professor Davis focused on her 2022 book 'Eco Law: legality and normativity of nature', while the discussion with Professor Watson centred around the Australian Court's 1992 landmark ruling on the *Mabo vs Queensland* case.

Politics at Birkbeck celebrates 50th anniversary

The 50th anniversary of the Politics at Birkbeck was celebrated from 27 June – 1 July 2022 with a week of activities, including special anniversary lectures and a closing reception. The event which brought together the Birkbeck Politics community, current and past students, staff, and friends, was marked with an International online conference on architecture and the institutions of the EU, with speakers including Sebastiano Fabbrini (University of Venice), Wolf D. Prix (COOPHimmelb(l)au, Vienna, Austria), Sabine Saurugger (IEP Grenoble, France), Ambassador Ioannis Vrailas (Head, Greece's Permanent Representation to the EU), Thomas Christiansen (LUISS Guido Carli, Rome, Italy) as well as several senior EU officials. Lisa Nandy MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, Communities & Local Government and Birkbeck alumna delivered the anniversary's keynote.

Talking Europe

The Talking Europe vlog managed by Dr Dionyssi Dimitrakopoulos of the Department of Politics as part of his tenure as Jean Monnet Chair in Parliamentary



Democracy and European Integration featured insightful conversations on important themes pertinent to Europe and beyond during 2021-22. One of the latest episodes involved Sean O'Curneen, Secretary General of Renew Europe Group, and Andrej Lavtar, Political Advisor of the Renew Europe Group, discussing the Belgian region of Wallonia's impact of EU Trade Policy. Their conversation dissected the governance of the EU's trade agreements.

The School of Business, Economics and Informatics international events

The School of Business, Economics and Informatics organised several international events during the 2021-22 year. A two-day conference on 'Environmental Finance for the Common Good', organised by Dr Ellen Yu on 31 March – 1 April 2022, attracted many international speakers, including Thomas Singer from the US Conference Board, Maria Netto from the New Development Bank, Baltimore, USA, Karsten Schulz from the University of Groningen, Netherlands, Ekaterina Gratcheva from the World Bank, Washington DC, USA and Dominic Chow from the Vatican.

Another hybrid conference, on 'Improving organizational and societal resilience through cyber security education, training and research', hosted by Dr Peter Trim on 11 June 2022 also attracted invited government, academic and industry participants from Korea, the UK and the USA. Professor George Magoulas further hosted the Birkbeck Knowledge Lab Seminar 'Conversations with computers – how chatbots can impact users, service provision and society' on 23 March 2022, with Dr Asbjørn Følstad of the Norwegian Technology Research Institute, SINTEF, as invited Speaker.

The Centre for Innovation Management and Research based in the Department of Management hosted a number of international speakers at its [2021-22 seminar series and public policy debates](#). The seminar series offered international perspectives on sustainable innovation and diversity and inclusion while the debates covered mainly digital transformation and regional economies. The international guests include Thomas Cooney from Technological University Dublin, Ireland, Jo-Ann Rolle from City University of New York, USA, Dr. Yannis Pierrakis, UIC Barcelona, Spain, Prof Tomasz Mrockowski, Dr Brett Gilbert, Dr Emma Chen and Dr Anna Fung from American University, USA, Dr Helka-Maria Kalliomäki, University of Vaasa, Finland, Jacob Mogensen from Food and Bio Cluster, Denmark, Martí Casadesús from Universitat de Girona, Spain, Prof. David Langley from University of Groningen, Netherlands and Pierre-Yves Danet, Orange, France.



International events from the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy

The Department of Psychosocial Studies co-hosted a three-day international conference focused on its Wellcome-Trust funded 'Waiting Times' project undertaken with colleagues from the University of Exeter. The conference also attracted scholars from the University of Oslo, University of Sydney and University of Edinburgh.

The Birkbeck Institute for Social Research's Age, Care and Caring Crisis Working Group hosted a public engagement event featuring screening and discussion of the film *Together Apart*, which follows the story of two indigenous women from the Philippines as they leave their children behind to work in Europe. The screening was followed by Q&A and reflections with the film director, Maren Wickwire, representatives of Filipino Domestic Workers Association and Kanlugan, a charity serving the Filipino migrant community in the UK.

5.2 HOSTING INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Birkbeck hosted several international scholars and other visitors during the 2021-22 period.

Notably, **Professor Jerome Branche**, Professor of Latin American Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Pittsburgh renowned internationally for his pioneering work on race, colonialism, and literature in the Latin American, Caribbean and the Luso-Hispanic worlds, commenced an eight-month visiting Professorship at Birkbeck's Department of Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics (LCAL), on 1 June 2022.

[Professor Branche's schedule included delivering a five-part masterclass series](#), with weekly units covering several interlocking topics including race, coloniality, the politics of memory, forced labour, liberation, and national identity in the context of the African diaspora as it relates mainly to the Hispanic Caribbean. A public discussion with leading academic and artist Marcus Wood is also planned, along with a staff workshop on ways of decolonising the curriculum, and assistance in building the 'Expanding the Latin American Colonial Archive: Transatlantic, Trans Hispanic and Transpacific Connections' research network.

The visit is funded by the Leverhulme Visiting Professorship *scheme*, which enables UK institutions to invite an eminent researcher from overseas to enhance the skills and knowledge of the academic staff and/or students for a duration of between three and twelve months.



Professor Yasemin Giritli Inceoglu, formerly Dean of the Communication Faculty of Galatasaray University, Turkey, and a member of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, joined the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities as a Visiting Research Fellow during 2022. Also, part of the American Biography Institute among other roles, Prof Inceoglu has worked on Media Pluralism Monitor Turkey Project supported by Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom and European Commission since 2016. Her current research interests are based on hate speech and hate crimes in the media, international communication, media pluralism and peace journalism. Her Fellowship concentrates on different types of discourse such as hate speech, discriminatory discourse and dangerous speech, and discusses how the media represent the ideology of power.

Professor Anindya Sundar Ghosh, from the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, India, also visited the ISMB-Mycobacteria Research Laboratory at Birkbeck to collaborate on a world-leading project to tackle antibiotic resistance in superbugs resistant to multiple drugs led by Professor Sanjib Bhakta.

The visit is part of an exchange funded by ASEM-DUO, an organisation that provides funding for academics to visit between Europe and countries in Asia. Joined by PhD student, Sarmistha Biswal, Professor Anindya Sundar Ghosh interacted with academic staff and students of the Department of Biological Sciences, attended the Institute of Structural and Molecular Biology (ISMB) symposium, and led a research seminar on drug resistance in World Health Organisation (WHO) priority bacterial pathogens.



Professor Branche



Professor Inceoglu



Prof. Bhakta, Ghosh, Dr Biswal



Birkbeck equally hosted several visiting delegations during the focal period. Notably, a higher education delegation from **Minnesota State, USA**, led by the State's First Lady, Gwen Walz, visited on 15 November 2021, to explore collaboration opportunities between Birkbeck and the Minnesota State higher education sector – see photo.



Staff and students from **Atlas Skills Tech University, Mumbai, India**, also visited on 27 June 2022, to explore academic collaboration opportunities. The visiting delegation included Dr Kamatchi Iyer, Dean of the School of Management and Entrepreneurship, Utsav Shroff, Associate Director of International Relations, Kunal Ramchandani, Director of Student Experience, and dozens of Postgraduate and Undergraduate Students in Management, Entrepreneurship, Media and Communications.

During the visit, the delegation was welcomed at Birkbeck's Main building by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), Professor Kevin Ibeh, who was joined by Assistant Dean (International) for Science Professor Sanjib Bhakta, and International Marketing and Recruitment Management Ms Veridiana Ribeiro. The guests were also treated to a well-received taster lecture by Dr Oliver Borish of the Department of Management and a tour of the Birkbeck's Bloomsbury campus.

Examples of other international visitors during 2021-22 are presented in Box 8 below.

Box 8: Sample International Visitors, 2021-22

- Professor Jonathan Doh, General Editor of *Journal of Management Studies* (ABS 4*) of the Villanova School of Business, USA, was a guest at the [Meet the Editor online session](#) hosted by the Department of Management, Birkbeck, on 14 Feb. 2022.
- Professor Kellie Robertson, Professor of English at the University of Maryland, USA, delivered the William Matthews Memorial Lecture on 11 November 2022. The talk entitled 'Yesterday's Weather: Climate Change and the Arc of History' looked back at medieval and early modern accounts of climate change to help us understand the current challenges faced, and how we can envision a more equitable and capacious future.



- Professor Geoffrey Wood, Editor in Chief of *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *Human Resource Management Journal* and Dancap Private Equity Chair at Western University, Canada, presented at the 'Meet the Editor' series organised by the Department of Management. Professor Morton Huse, Professor Emeritus at BI Norwegian Business School, also delivered a presentation on 'How to Become and Thrive as an Impactful Scholar' in November 2021.
- A delegation from the Angolan Education Ministry visited Birkbeck in July 2022 to discuss arrangements for extending educational training opportunities to Angolan students and university staff members. The delegation made up of senior officials from the Education Ministry; Scholarship Fund, INAGBE; and the Angolan Embassy in London, held fruitful discussions with the PVC (International) Professor Kevin Ibeh and the International Marketing Manager Veridiana Ribeiro.
- The Vice-Chancellor of Namibia University of Science and Technology, Dr Eroid Naomab visited Birkbeck to explore academic collaboration opportunities between Birkbeck and this university in Southwest Africa. Dr Naomab met with the PVC (International), Professor Kevin Ibeh, during his visit.
- Professor Lowell Abrams of George Washington University, USA, visited the Department of Economics, Mathematics and Statistics for three weeks in March-April 2022 funded by a London Mathematical Society grant. The visit enabled intensive work, with collaborators Dr Steve Noble (Birkbeck) and Iain Moffatt and Maya Thompson (Royal Holloway, London), on topological graph theory, characterizing embedded graphs/delta-matroids with a self-duality/self-partial-duality.



6.0 INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI

With thousands of alumni currently living in 146 countries around the world, Birkbeck's international reach runs wide and deep. The top 10 home countries reflected in our international alumni database are the USA, Greece, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Canada, Republic of Ireland, Japan, China and Switzerland.

During the year, and as part of The World Needs More Birkbeck campaign, the Alumni and Development team 'took to the road' to meet members of our alumni community in a number of global cities. Pictures from some recent gatherings can be seen below:



Dublin Alumni reception, June 2022



Madrid Alumni Reception, June 2022

Birkbeck's international alumni also continued to make significant strides in different walks of life during the 2021-22 period, as reflected in the paragraphs and Box 9, below.



DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR WATER CONSERVATION

Sundeep Donthamshetty who gained an MSc in Intelligent Information Systems from Birkbeck in 2013 is the co-founder and director of [WEGoT Utility Solutions Pvt](#), a state-of-the-art technology start-up focused on water, electricity and gas conservation in India.

Having worked in IT across a range of sectors in the UK for more than a decade, Sundeep was keen to enhance his skills. He was thus excited to learn, in 2008, of Birkbeck's part-time MA in Intelligent Information Systems, and he enrolled without a second thought.



After completing the MSc programme, he moved back to his hometown of Chennai, India – an area which has always battled with acute water shortages - and co-founded WEGoT Utility solutions in 2015, with the aim of conserving water and creating new solutions to this problem. Notably, WEGoT designed and developed a sensor-based ‘smart water’ meter that sends relevant data to the user almost at real-time, enables monitoring of individual usage and patterns and pinpointing of leaks

The company, boosted by US\$2 million seed funding received in 2019, has since expanded to Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai and other cities, and have developed their product into a complete water management system. By pairing the initial hardware with a software platform called ‘VenAqua’, WEGoT has been able to reduce the demand for water by tracking real-time flow and reportedly saved over **three billion litres of water**.

Addressing inequalities and climate crisis in Brazil



Handemba Mutana Poli dos Santos who graduated in MSc Public Policy and Management at Birkbeck in 2017 has gone on to forge a successful and rewarding career that blends law and public policy to address social inequalities in Brazil. He is currently the Global Public Policy Director at TikTok for Good. Already well established in a successful career, having worked in investment banking and then as Chief of Staff for the National School of Public Administration, Handemba was eager to do more to

support his country. The exposure to Birkbeck, including his dissertation on inequalities in Brazil and their policy interlinkages, an invaluable global network, and new and diverse perspectives from classmates and teachers, proved to be exactly what he needed.

After completing his course, Handemba moved back to Brazil and have been able to use his enhanced knowledge and skills to navigate complex systems in Brazil to build impactful and scalable initiatives. In his latest role as Global Public Policy Director for TikTok for Good, Handemba has been employing tech as a tool to widen efforts to reduce inequalities and address issues such as climate change, including partnering with Instituto Terra and a famous singer in Brazil, Gilberto Gil, on a major campaign song, ‘Reforestation.’ Handemba credits his impactful career to Birkbeck:

“The university brought me possibilities, and that’s something you can’t take for granted. It gave me the opportunity to think about my career, study and change my world view. I had a great experience at Birkbeck, I wouldn’t be here in this role without it.”

FROM RESEARCHING TO AVOID NUCLEAR DISASTER TO A PIONEERING ROLE IN THE INTERNET REVOLUTION



Birkbeck graduate of BSc Psychology and Ergonomics of Human-Computer Interaction Eva Pascoe started life in Poland where, as a student, she experienced the 1986 Chernobyl Disaster, partly caused by the fact that the user interfaces at the power plant were too complicated for the operators to interpret. Driven by a mission to help avoid such disasters in the future, Eva came to

Birkbeck in 1987 to study BSc Psychology and Ergonomics of Human-Computer Interaction and subsequently PhD on “designing interfaces to manage risk in dynamic contexts.”

It was during these studies at Birkbeck that Eva found that the nuclear energy sector was already losing significance and pivoted to the nascent internet sector. Eva remembers her time at Birkbeck fondly as she was able to work with some of the top academics in the country, including John Long, Professor of Cognitive Engineering and Human Computer Interaction and Nick Pidgeon, Professor of Environmental Psychology and Risk. As she noted, “I was absolutely in the right spot. I was so happy there.”

In September 1994, Eva co-founded Cyberia, an internet café that piqued the interests of many eager web users. She went on to set up a franchise with locations in Bangkok, Paris and Tokyo, ensuring the success of each with the lesson she learned at Birkbeck. She subsequently pioneered the first e-commerce websites for fashion in the UK, working with the Arcadia group for brands such as Burton, Topman and Topshop on the first multi-brand portal that revolutionised the consumer retail experience. After leaving Arcadia, she continued her mission to help women founders and working in the technology and e-commerce industry to spearhead innovations to further change the way we shop.

Championing Birkbeck’s unique offer through work in the policy and global tech space



After leaving Birkbeck with an MSc in Innovation Management and Technology Policy in 2008, Sofia Gkiousou has carved out a successful career in public policy. As a passionate advocate for the transformative power of a Birkbeck education, Sofia is committed to ensuring that others have access to the College’s unique offering. Since graduating, she has held roles in the



energy sector, with Airbnb, and recently joined tech giant Google. She is particularly proud of her contribution to the Airbnb Africa Academy, an initiative that works with partners on the ground to support local hosts in building digital skills to boost community-led tourism on the continent.

Reflecting on her time at Birkbeck, Sofia commented as follows: "It is so valuable that Birkbeck gives people the opportunity to work full-time and study part-time for a University of London degree. The calibre of teaching and the quality of research helps create such a positive and engaged student community. It needs to be protected; it needs to be recognised and applauded. That's why I support Birkbeck."

Box 9: Other Birkbeck alumni making strides

- Dr Camelia Dewan, who gained her PhD from the Department of Geography at Birkbeck, recently published a book entitled "Misreading the Bengal Delta: Climate Change, Development, and Livelihoods in Coastal Bangladesh". The book, which analyzes how development actors create flawed causal narratives linking their interventions in the environment and society of the Global South to climate change, was based on her doctoral research supervised by Dr Penny Vera-Sanso.
- Denise Cadete, neuroscience graduate from Birkbeck, was extensively quoted as research expert on the mental illusion of having a sixth finger in a March 2022 article in Scientific American.
- Alumna Rosetta Furlagawo, British-born Sierra Leonean journalist, was recently profiled for her work as a Researcher on Sky News' Foreign desk. Rosetta started out at a BAFTA (British Academy Film Awards) award-winning Indie Production Company, Swan Films, where she had a 6-month internship. After four years in TV Production, she got into news/current affairs in 2021 by freelancing at Five News (ITN Productions) as an Assistant News Editor. Her first story, assisting Sky Africa Correspondent's report on the hurricanes that affected Sudan and Senegal, was published in Spring 2022.

APPENDIX A

SOME INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS HOSTED BY BIRKBECK

19, Interdisciplinary Studies in the Nineteenth Century, an open-access, refereed online journal established in 2005 to advance interdisciplinary study in the long nineteenth century. Supported by the Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies at Birkbeck's Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing and CHASE, the journal publishes two themed issues annually as well as special forums advancing critical debate in the field. The general editor is Dr Ana Parejo Vadillo.

Alluvium Journal is a leading journal of 21st-century writing critically acclaimed for its innovations in academic publishing. This open access journal launched in 2012 by The Centre for Contemporary Literatures at Birkbeck publishes bimonthly general and special issues that explore 21st-century texts and approaches to the literary canon.

Dandelion is a postgraduate arts journal and research network also hosted by the Centre for Contemporary Literatures at Birkbeck and supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). It publishes two special issues per year, bringing together new articles from a wide variety of disciplinary approaches within the humanities.

Studies in the Maternal, now in its 14th volume, is an international peer-reviewed, scholarly online journal. Supported by the Mapping Maternal Subjectivities, Identities and Ethics network based at the Department of Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck, the journal aims to provide a forum for contemporary critical debates on the maternal understood as lived experience, social location, political and scientific practice, economic and ethical challenge, a theoretical question, and a structural dimension in human relations, politics and ethics.

The Centre for Educational Neuroscience combines the expertise of researchers in child development, neuroscience and education at Birkbeck's Department of Psychosocial Studies, UCL Institute of Education and University College London. Its website reflects the Centre's reputation as a source of research-backed authority on the links between neuroscience, psychology, and education and attracts visitors from over 200 different countries.

The Decolonizing Sexualities Network/DSN Blog, active since 2010, is jointly managed by the Board of Co-ordination (BoC) comprising Dr Silvia Posocco of the Department of Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck, Suhraiya Jivraj of the University of



Kent, Paola Bacchetta of the University of California, Berkeley, US, and Sandeep Bakshi of the University of Paris, France. The DSN Life Sense-ing Series brings into focus feelings and memories through glimpses of personal narratives that make people who they are.

The Mechanics' Institute Review (MIR) is a contemporary magazine and forum for exciting new writing in short fiction, poetry and creative non-fiction. It consists of an online platform, a printed literary magazine and a series of creative writing events and career-developing opportunities designed to represent the quality and diversity of the UK literary scene. This site hosted by the Centre for Contemporary Literature is managed by Dr Julia Bell and maintained and edited by a rotating group of Birkbeck students, alumni and staff.

The Open Library of Humanities (OLH) is an academic-led, gold open-access publisher that offers free, permanent access to scholarly work in the humanities discipline, covering its costs via payments from an international library consortium. The OLH which recently received funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Arcadia, a charitable fund of Dr Lisbet Rausing and Professor Peter Baldwin, merged with Birkbeck in May 2021.

Mediapolis is a [journal of cities and culture edited by Dr Scott Rogers](#) of the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies.

Critical Studies in Television is edited by Dr Janet McCabe of the Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies.

APPENDIX B

SOME NEW BOOKS FROM BIRKBECK

- Dr Richard Tacon of the Department of Management published a new book, *Social Capital and Sport Organisations*, Routledge, 2022.
- Professor Daniel Monk of the Department of Law recently co-edited a new book, *Fifty Years of the Divorce Act 1969*, Hart/Bloomsbury.
- Professor Martin Eve's latest book, *The Digital Humanities and Literary Studies*, was published by the Oxford University Press in May 2022.
- Dr Kojo Koram's critically acclaimed book, *Uncommon Wealth: Britain and the Aftermath of the Empire*, was published by John Murray in 2022.
- Dr Ella Harris has co-edited a collection entitled "*The Growing Trend of Living Small: A Critical Approach to Shrinking Domesticities*" with Dr Mel Nowicki and Tim White.
- Professor Luciana Martins launched a teaching and learning toolkit, comprising a book and a board game, which is linked to the research project *Digital Repatriation of Biocultural Collections*.
- Gordon McIntyre of the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems) has published an illustrated children's book about poetry, and has already received rave reviews.
- **Charlie Jeffries, British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of History, Classics, and Archaeology, published a new book entitled *Teenage Dreams: Girlhood Sexualities in the US Culture Wars*.**
- Professor Paul Watt recently published a book, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents: Public Housing, Place and Inequality in London* (Policy Press).
- Pedro Gomes recently published a new book, *Friday is the New Saturday*, named one of the Business Books of the Month by the FT.



APPENDIX C

SOME BIRKBECK STAFF EDITING INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS

Professor Alexandra Beauregard of the Department of Organizational Psychology is Editor of the journal *Work, Employment and Society*.

Professor Joe Brooker of the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing is on the editorial board of *Parish Review: Journal of Flann O'Brien Studies*, which is now part of the Open Library of Humanities (OLH) as a [fully peer-reviewed OA journal](#).

Dr Marcos Centeno of the Department of Cultures and Languages guest-edited a special issue on "Japanese Transnational Cinema" of the journal, *Arts*, in 2020 (with Nori Morita of Waseda University, Tokyo).

Professor Rosie Cox of the Department of Geography is co-editor of *Geo: Geography and Environment*, the Open Access journal of the Royal Geographical Society.

Dr Benedetta Crisafulli (MGMT) has been invited to co-edit a special issue of *Sustainability*, an open access journal, on 'Sustainable Business, Social Responsibility, Ethics and Consumer Behaviour Research'.

Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele of the Department of Applied Linguistics and Communications is the General Editor of the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*.

Professor Julie Gore of the Department of Organizational Psychology is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. Professor Almuth McDowall, from the same department, is Associate Editor of the same journal.

Professor Clare Press of the Department of Psychological Sciences has been appointed an Associate Editor at *Cortex*, an international journal with over 142 volumes.

Dr Suzanne J Konzelmann of the Department of Management is co-executive Editor of the *Cambridge Journal of Economics* and an Editor of the *Annals of the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Economics, History and Political Science*.

Dr Yi Ling Lai of the Department of Organizational Psychology is Editor of *International Coaching Psychology Review*.



Dr Sarah Lambie and Dr Tanya Serisier of the Department of Criminology guest edited a special issue on 'Queer theory and Criminology' of the leading international journal *Criminology and Criminal Justice* in November 2020.

Professor Carlo Milana of the Department of Management is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Strategic Change: Briefings in Entrepreneurial Finance*, with Professor Helen Lawton Smith, also of the Department of Management as Associate Editor.

Dr Halley Pontes of the Department of Organizational Psychology is Associate Editor of the *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*.

Professor Julian Swann of the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology has been the editor of the *European History Quarterly* since 2011.

Dr Sarah Thomas of the Department of History of Art and Dr Emily Senior of the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing guest edited a special issue of *Atlantic Studies* in May 2021.

Dr Fintan Walsh of the Department of English, Theatre and Creative Writing was appointed Senior Editor of the International Federation for Theatre Research's journal *Theatre Research International*.



APPENDIX D

SOME BIRKBECK VOICES IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

- Professor Slavoj Žižek (Institute of Humanities) contributed a piece entitled 'We must stop letting Russia define the terms of the Ukraine crisis' to *The Guardian*.
- Lecturer David Eldridge (English, Theatre and Creative Writing) was featured in *The Guardian* talking about his new play 'Middle', which is on at The National Theatre.
- David Feldman (Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism) contributed to an [article in The Guardian](#) about the history of boycotts in relation to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Dr Kojo Koram (Law) wrote an [opinion piece for The Guardian](#) on whether children should be taught about the 'benefits' of the British Empire in school.
- Professor Martin Eve (English, Theatre and Creative Writing) [wrote in Research Professional](#).
- Professor Almuth McDowall (Organisational Psychology) commented on an article featured on the BBC Worklife website on why a wide-scale return to the office is a myth.
- Professor Patrizia Di Bello (History of Art) commented on [an article on the BBC Culture website](#) that explored the surprising ways the Victorians flirted.
- Professor Daniel Pick's (History, Classics and Archaeology) book 'Brainwashed' was [reviewed in The Guardian](#).
- Professor Anthony Bale (English, Theatre and Creative Writing) was [on the NPR radio show 'Here and Now', talking about the pandemic and the Canterbury Tales](#).
- Dr Monish Bhatia (Criminology), was quoted on a [piece in The Washington Post](#) about the government's plans to electronically tag asylum seekers.
- Professor Ian Crawford (Planetary Science and Astrobiology) was featured in Live Science, commenting on a piece about [The Coldest Place in the Solar System](#).
- Professor [Daniel Monk \(Law\) is featured in an article in iNews which explains a new 'no fault' divorce law](#) which came into effect from 6 April, 2022.
- Dr Pedro Gomes (Economics) [contributed to a Politico article discussing a four-day working week](#).
- Professor Bill Bowring (Law) commented on the downfall of Oleg Deripaska, Russian oligarch, in [Yahoo Finance](#).
- Dr Kojo Koram (Law) contributed to the [New Statesman](#) and [The Telegraph](#) on how London became an oligarch's playground



- Dr Kieran Andrieu (Politics) [commented, in Vice](#), on how war and sexualisation have always had an intimate relationship in Western cultural representation.
- Professor Slavoj Žižek (Birkbeck Institute of Humanities) wrote for [the Sri Lanka Guardian](#), the [Nepali Times](#) and [The New Arab](#) on the Slovene government's response to the Ukraine crisis
- Professor Joanna Bourke (History, Classics and Archaeology) contributed to a BBC video that discusses how artists are using art to highlight the Ukraine war and commented on the history of sexual violence in a [BBC Radio 4](#) interview.
- Professor David Feldman (Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism) defended the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (JDA) in [The Jewish Chronicle](#).
- Professor Tim Smith (Psychological Sciences) appeared on [BBC Radio 4](#) to discuss how our brains analyse and process films.
- Professor Roger Luckhurst (School of Arts) [contributed to the National Geographic](#) on "What is Gothic?"
- Professor Tim Smith (Psychological Sciences) [was featured in Newline for Healthcare Professionals](#), part of a group of the world's leading neuroscientists, clinicians and researchers sharing tips for navigating the dangers of children's screen use.
- Professor Almuth McDowall (Organisational Psychology) [commented on a Guardian article](#) that shared tips on how to relearn office small talk after years of remote working.
- [Professor Helen Lawton Smith](#) (Management) [commented on an article on the Forbes website](#) that discussed ways that the tech industry could address underrepresentation in leadership
- The ToddlerLab was featured in an article on [the Times](#) website that examined whether a toddler is smarter than a squirrel.
- Dr Konstantinos Chalkias (Management) contributed to [The Conversation](#) website detailing the positive effects of international alliances when responding to natural disasters.
- Professor Dermot Hodson (Department of Politics) contributed to [the Washington Post](#) on why tensions between the UK and EU over the Northern Ireland Protocol are likely to continue.
- Dr Katherine Angel (Arts) appeared on [BBC Radio 4's, Woman's Hour](#) to discuss 'Daddy Issues', which is also the name of a book Dr Angel published in 2019.
- Dr Katherine Harvey's (History, Classics and Archaeology) book, *The Fires of Lust: Sex in the Middle Ages*, was reviewed on [the Times](#) website.
- Dr Aviah Day (Criminology) is featured in both [The Guardian](#) and [Novara Media](#) speaking on violence against women.



- Birkbeck is cited in [ITPro](#), as part of a consortium of universities positioned to bridge the digital skills.
- Professor Emily Jones' (Psychological Sciences) research findings about brain activity in autism subgroups were featured in [Autism Eye](#).
- Dr Benjamin Gray's (History, Classics and Archaeology) piece on the Monarchy and the Athenian city-state appeared in the Times Literary Supplement website.
- Research undertaken by the Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research (ICPR) on the impact of COVID-19 on prisons and prisoners [was featured on The Barrister magazine website](#).
- Dr Jo Yarker (Organizational Psychology) contributed to an article on [The Guardian](#) on the power of saying no and setting healthy boundaries.
- A Peltz Gallery's commissioned film, 'Shadow Shame Again', produced by South African artist Penny Siopis, was [covered by CNN](#).
- Dr Katherine Angel's (English, Theatre and Creative Writing) book Tomorrow Sex Will Be Good Again: Women and Desire in the Age of Consent is reviewed by [the New York Review](#).
- Dr Katherine Angel (School of Arts) [wrote an article for Aeon](#) about women's experience of shame when they write about their pain.
- Birkbeck's ToddlerLab and the use of wearable technologies for researching toddlers' social interactions and development was featured in the Guardian.
- Muthu de Silva (Management) was featured in a Forbes online article about how 'Co-Creation can be a powerful tool for organizations looking to become more innovative.'



SOURCES

Inside the Birkbeck Community

Birkbeck news

BBK Magazine

Birkbeck blogs

Birkbeck tweets

Departmental websites/blogs/tweets

Research Centre reports/websites

Newsletters

Birkbeck alumni blog

Miscellaneous



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