

# How does Arts and Humanities research influence public policymaking?

## The project team

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# Introduction

Arts and Humanities research impacts public policymaking in a myriad of ways.

However, there are few documents which showcase examples of Arts and Humanities research successfully influencing policy thinking and leading to policy change. This publication captures the experiences (positive and negative) of academic researchers at various career stages, and in diverse institutions (both location and type), to provide an insight into the policy engagement process for those working in Arts and Humanities disciplines.

For example:



Academics researching the challenges faced by small British filmmakers owing to skill gaps, AI and the decline of independent cinema could lead to...



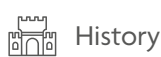
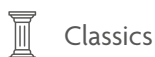
The chancellor's budget incorporating the academic's research into its plan...



Leading to small British filmmakers benefitting from the policy-research interaction.

## Key:

Icons representing disciplinary area of each researcher:



# Data collection

After obtaining all necessary ethical approval from Durham University, we created an online form via which contributors could recount their experiences of sharing research with policy communities. We received dozens of responses from colleagues representing Arts and Humanities research, as well as from social scientists whose research methods included approaches from Arts and Humanities. Policy impacts reached education, cybersecurity, filmmaking, heritage, sanitation, democracy, AI, the COVID-response, women's safety, town planning, and several more.

We hope that the responses we have collated in this publication will be useful to a wide range of audiences: from academics who are seeking to find policy engagement role models to inform their own work, to those involved in policy interested in how Arts and Humanities research may inform their thinking and planning, to knowledge brokers looking for examples of successful collaboration, as well as anyone else who would like to learn more about the 'good news stories' when communication between academia and policymakers works well.

## The problems of applying the Arts and Humanities to 'real-world' scenarios

Arts and Humanities academics encountered several challenges in their efforts to share research evidence with policymakers. Their feedback falls into four broad categories:

- Many respondents mentioned more **'practical'** problems. For example, the difference in the pace of work in academia compared to the civil service, or securing funding to continue projects which rely on research-policy interaction. These logistical challenges call for further research into how academics may overcome such problems. For example, how might we address disparities in universities' support to Arts and Humanities academics seeking to engage with policymakers?
- Some issues faced were very specific and **nuanced** to respondents' fields. This reflects the diversity of Arts and Humanities engagement with policy actors. For example, one respondent was successful in local engagement but stated that attitudes to universities established after 1992 meant it was more difficult to engage with policymakers serving communities not associated with their local 'former polytechnic'. Another respondent stated that although their research-policy interaction was effective, it was difficult to ensure its longevity owing to the high turnover rates in the social support sector.
- **Political** problems with research-policy collaboration. Some academics may have differences in political interests which become an obstacle. The nature of election cycles – one of which happened around the time of the collection of our responses – was also a factor. Several of our respondents mentioned politics as a challenge to their research-policy collaboration, and reflected on how the 2024 change of the UK government affected the future of their work with policy colleagues. This may be seen as an inevitability, as civil servants advise politicians whose decision-making is guided by party interests.
- In a similar vein, there may be more **'philosophical'** problems with academics presenting their research to policymakers. One respondent questioned the applicability of historicist findings to the present and noted the hazards of extrapolating history. To maintain the integrity of Arts and Humanities research – or any research for that matter – it is important to consider whether the research is suitable for the questions for which it is being used.

# Respondents' advice to fellow academics

To make sure that this brochure is as helpful as possible, and informs future action, we asked survey respondents to share advice with fellow academics. We noticed commonalities in this advice, even given the diverse content of the research-policy engagement.

Firstly, many respondents emphasised the importance of agreeing expectations with policymaking colleagues from the outset. Applying equally to scope and scale, policy-experienced researchers encouraged colleagues to delineate a) their time commitment for the collaborative policy project and b) what their research may and may not offer to developing 'real world' policies. Arts and Humanities research is especially good for helping map complex human questions for which there are no definitive solutions. Equally, policymakers should be advised of how this may limit researchers' abilities to supply policymaking colleagues with information that points clearly to a course of action. Furthermore, as discussed in the section 'The Problems of Applying the Arts and Humanities to "Real-World" Scenarios', the Arts and Humanities carry unique risks regarding the misapplication of academic research.

Another commonality in advice offered by our respondents was that academics need to 'translate' their research into a form which is useful to the policymaker. Avoiding academic jargon and verbosity, consideration of the audience as recipients of research, and accessibly formatting recommendations to policymaking colleagues are all vital. Academics may also want to consider seeking support from their universities and reviewing guidance already available, such as the 2020 AHRC/Institute for Government's *How to Engage With Policymakers*, for detailed information about adapting their work to be more 'policy-friendly'.

Other themes in advice included making a deliberate effort to build relationships with policymaking colleagues, as well as accepting that it is best to 'pivot' towards the questions asked by stakeholders, and away from those which prioritise academic curiosity. Not only this, but it is important to remember that there is no 'correct' way of doing research-policy-making collaboration, and each academic's experience will be different, and require different action. As readers will see, this diversity also will lead to a breadth of differences in field, career stage and government-level specific advice which are showcased in the case studies.

# A note on policymakers and their Arts and Humanities backgrounds

As much as this project focuses on how Arts and Humanities academics have taken their research to those in Parliament, the Civil Service, devolved administrations, local authorities and other policymaking institutions, it wouldn't be complete without a comment on a partial converse of its title. In other words, how many policymakers have educational backgrounds in the Arts and Humanities? This is well known; a quarter of those in Sir Keir Starmer's 2024 cabinet studied Arts and Humanities degrees, excluding PPE.<sup>1</sup> Previous governments have had similar compositions of MPs with undergraduate degrees in History, English and Philosophy; these disciplines being the 2nd, 5th and 6th most popular degrees respectively after the December 2019 election.<sup>2</sup> Of course, greater diversity in educational backgrounds of the UK's leaders is vital for proper representation of their constituents (namely, those who do not go to university and those who pursue other qualifications or professions). However, the Arts and Humanities, and fields deeply allied to its disciplines such as Politics and Economics, have provided policymakers with vital knowledge and

critical thinking skills which are well suited to informing national, regional and local governance. Having the input of policymakers who think, reason and debate in these terms undoubtedly improves the way Arts and Humanities evidence is received and used in government.

At a time when the Arts and Humanities have seen their funding squeezed and reputation hampered by the problematic notion of the 'micky mouse' degree<sup>3</sup> – fields associated with knowledge 'not needed' for typically high-paying jobs – it is more important than ever to emphasise the value of skills such as critical thinking, cultural literacy and creativity. Raising awareness of the broader impacts of Arts and Humanities research is vital for their continued relevance to policy, practice and society.

# Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the Laidlaw Foundation and the Laidlaw Scholarships team at Durham University for funding this project.

The publication would have been impossible without generous contributions from academic colleagues and knowledge facilitation experts in universities around the UK. We hope that they are delighted to see their work showcased here. All images used in this publication have been provided by the case study authors or have been sourced from digital repositories with permission for re-use under creative commons licences.

Finally, we thank the co-chairs of UPEN's Arts and Humanities sub-committee (Marina Altoe, Laura Bea and Rebecca di Corpo) for their advice, guidance and support.

## References

- 1: Morrison-Howe, J. (2024) 'Lunchtime Reading: The higher education backgrounds of Keir Starmer's new Cabinet', *HEPI Blog* (<https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2024/07/10/the-higher-education-backgrounds-of-keir-starmer-new-cabinet/>).
- 2: Unknown Author (2019) *MPs and their degrees: here's where and what our UK politicians studied*, Studee (<https://studee.com/media/mps-and-their-degrees-media>).
- 3: Baldwin, S. (2024) 'What is a "low value" degree? Government prepares crackdown on universities', *The Standard* (<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/low-value-degree-government-crackdown-universities-b1094754.html#:~:text=Limits%20will%20be%20imposed%20on%20courses%20that%20do%20not%20have,previous%20numbers%20cap%20in%202015>).



# Part One

## National Government







# CASE STUDY :

## Heritage Infrastructure Funding



RICHeS - Research Infrastructure for  
Conservation and Heritage Science



### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Ben Edwards, Reader in  
Heritage and Archaeology

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Manchester Metropolitan  
University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Archaeology

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Two policy fellowships with the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council) to develop their RICHeS (Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science) infrastructure funding scheme.

Horsfield, F., Edwards, B. and Stacey, R. (2021) *Scoping a UK Heritage Science Infrastructure. Priorities, Risks and Values*. A report to the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Zenodo (open repository for EU-funded research outputs from Horizon Europe, Euratom and earlier Framework Programmes).

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I applied to an open call from the AHRC for Policy Fellows and won the DIGILAB Policy Fellowship - (<https://www.digilab.co.uk/>).

# CASE STUDY :

## Heritage Infrastructure Funding

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I undertook a survey of a) the academic and GLAM (Galleries, Libraries and Museums) sector priorities for heritage science infrastructure investment, focusing on digital inter-connectivity; b) research the current heritage science equipment and skills distribution across the UK heritage sector.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Overall, the work formed part of the RICHeS scoping phase (see more - <https://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk/what-we-do/riches>), which led to the AHRC applying for funds from HM Treasury to fund the infrastructure scheme. There were

three components to this eventual investment:

1. the accessibility of collections
2. investment in equipment and facilities
3. the investment in a digital repository.

**The RICHeS scheme was funded by HM Treasury at £60M, and my specific recommendations for a digital repository for heritage science data was acted upon at £14M.**

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The timescale was the biggest challenge, followed by learning the rubric for HM Treasury Green Book business cases.



Ben Edwards

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Understand the time commitments required.
2. Understand the necessity to speak in terms accessible to the non-specialist who is usually working on a very short timescale.



# CASE STUDY :

## Expanding Classics Education



Research impact: Classics research influencing UK education policy and practice

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Arlene Holmes-Henderson,  
Professor of Classics Education  
and Public Policy

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Durham University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Classics and Ancient History

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Holmes-Henderson, A. and Mitropoulos, A. (2016) 'A celebration of Greek language and culture education in the UK', *Journal of Classics Teaching*, 17(34), 55-57.

Holmes-Henderson, A. (2016) 'Teaching Latin and Greek in primary classrooms: the Classics in Communities Project', *Journal of Classics Teaching*, 17(33), 50-53.

Holmes-Henderson, A. (2021) 'A level Classics poverty. Classical subjects in schools in England: access, attainment and progression', *CUCD Bulletin*, 50, 1-26.

Holmes Henderson, A. (2023) 'Ancient Languages for 6- to 11-year-olds: Exploring three pedagogical approaches via a longitudinal study' in Holmes-Henderson, A. (ed.) *Expanding Classics*, 8-29, Routledge, London.



# CASE STUDY :

## Expanding Classics Education

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I completed the AHRC Engaging with Government Course in 2018 and left that course with a clear action plan of how I could share my research on Classics Education with the policy community. With help from the Oxford Policy Engagement Network (I was employed at the University of Oxford at the time), I set up a 12-month (internally funded) research and public policy partnership with the curriculum policy team (Languages and Humanities) at the Department for Education.

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I worked closely with colleagues in Curriculum Policy at the Department for Education, exploring the potential for ancient languages to contribute to the government's EBacc (English Baccalaureate) ambition. We held regular meetings online during which I shared unpublished research findings. I helped policy officials discuss proposals with a wide range of stakeholders across the Classics Education community, introducing them to

20+ organisations and individuals to sense-check recommendations. I also hosted at Christ Church a bespoke event to bring languages researchers into conversation with Department for Education curriculum policy officials, analysts and social researchers. I supported policy colleagues in the preparation of a major government investment in Classics Education and now Chair the Latin Expert Panel.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

On the final day of my research and public policy partnership, the Secretary of State for Education announced a £4m investment in the Latin Excellence Programme, to widen access to the study of Latin and Classics in schools outside London and the South East (in areas of 'Classics poverty', as identified in my research). This was the first major government investment in Classics for more than a decade. I was then commissioned to write a report on the provision of ancient languages in primary schools: when published, this was the first DfE publication on Classics in 34 years! I have since been commissioned to write a second report which will be published in 2024.

I now provide advice to Ofsted, Ofqual, the Department for Business and Trade, Treasury, Ministry of Justice, DCMS, DHSC and DLUHC. I also work with devolved administrations (Scottish Government and Welsh Government) as well as the European Commission in Brussels.

My research on classical rhetoric and oracy has led to changes in public policy. Details can be found in this British Academy Impact story: <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/news/research-impact-innovation-fellows-research-influencing-uk-education-policy-and-practice/>.



Arlene Holmes-Henderson

“ On the final day of my research and public policy partnership, the Secretary of State for Education announced a £4m investment in the Latin Excellence Programme.”

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

# CASE STUDY :

## Expanding Classics Education

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I took my first steps in policy engagement as an early career researcher. I didn't know of any role models in Classics to ask for advice. I made lots of mistakes (one policy briefing I wrote was described by a senior civil servant as 'eloquent yet too wordy: the opposite of what the Minister needs'). No one had given me a template for a policy briefing.

At all times, policy colleagues have been courteous, professional and helpful. They have taught me a great deal and I am hugely grateful. But it is certainly the case that the world of policy moves at a faster pace than academia. I am often asked for advice on a short turnaround. This presents problems:

**can I do it to the best of my ability, can I balance it alongside my other commitments, can/should I say no?**

A major challenge I experienced as my policy impact became significant was the mental struggle regarding how I 'should' be spending my time.

Not all universities recognise and reward policy engagement as part of progression and promotion structures. I felt conflicted on whether I should concentrate on teaching and research, albeit that my policy-facing work was both fulfilling and positive for the wider discipline of Classics.

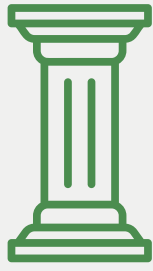
I'm pleased to say that this wasn't at all true. I moved to a university where my policy engagement success was rewarded with a joint Chair in Classics Education and Public Policy, and where policy advisory work is a major part of my permanent role.

**Policy-engaged academics shouldn't feel the need to mould their professional practice to archaic promotion structures which devalue and discourage real-world impact.**

I prioritised my particular strengths in communicating Humanities research in compelling and influential ways and am much happier for doing so.

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Don't wait until the end of a research project to engage with policy colleagues. Involve them from the start (to shape your research agenda) or engage them in conversation when you have interim findings.
2. Don't assume that policy colleagues prefer to consult mid-career researchers or senior profs. On the contrary, I have been told many times that they simply want a person who is a good researcher, and an excellent communicator. Academic title and institutional affiliation are irrelevant.
3. Set clear expectations with policy colleagues about your availability. For example, you can say that you are unavailable at weekends, or that you can spend 3 hours a week on the policy-facing project. These boundaries can be useful for both sides. (This is not an instruction. Do what feels right for you. I love policy engagement so much that I always make time for it, but that's a personal choice.)



# CASE STUDY :

## Classics Methods and Cybersecurity



Published work by Professor Genevieve Liveley

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Genevieve Liveley, Professor of  
Classics

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Bristol

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Classics

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

I have worked with several departments since 2020 - all with a core interest in my work on narratology, narratives, and futures. For example, DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), DSIT (Department for Science, Innovation and Technology), DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport), NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre), GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters), MoD (Ministry of Defence), DSTL (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory), and DCDC (Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre).

My research includes commissioned internal reports as well as published work, available here: <https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/en/persons/genevieve-liveley/projects/>.

# CASE STUDY :

## Classics Methods and Cybersecurity

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The initial route involved someone in a research team at NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre) reading one of my articles (Liveley, G. (2017) 'Anticipation and Narratology' in Poli, R. (ed) *Handbook of Anticipation*, Springer, Cham) and inviting me to talk to their team and seniors; this resulted in a secondment and follow-up commissioned activity.

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Creating secure digital futures for all citizens and securing a diverse public with variable risk needs and capabilities is a longstanding ambition for the NCSC. In partnership with the Cabinet Office, NCSC, and the RISCS (Research Institute for Sociotechnical Cyber Security) community, I led a creative project to produce a framework identifying the 'Universal Barriers' that serve as blockers to cyber secure cultures and behaviours for people working within

government organisations (such as the Cabinet Office). I co-produced a new toolkit and suite of training materials to help organisations identify and remove such barriers. It recognises that a 'whack-a-mole' approach of designing 'fixes' for priority citizen groups is both unsustainable and unscalable and offers an illustration of the value of 'universal design principles' and imaginative anticipatory thinking in cyber security to help create secure digital futures for everyone.



Genevieve Liveley

“ The influence of my research upon the evolution of NCSC's approach to risk management is clearly demonstrated in the content of the NCSC risk management guidance update issued in 2023.”

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The influence of my research upon the evolution of NCSC's approach to risk management is clearly demonstrated in the content of the NCSC risk management guidance update issued in 2023. My input especially helped to shape NCSC policy guidance (for the public sector; small and medium sized organisations; large organisations; and cyber security professionals) on:

- Future scenario planning (where my research and reports focus on 'Anticipation', 'Futures Literacy', 'Anticipatory Governance', and 'Narrativization' all brought fresh ideas as well as a robust evidence base to support NCSC external facing guidance).
- Awareness and understanding of the potential influence of unconscious bias in risk assessments (such as 'The Principle of Minimal Departure') which may skew the inputs on which cyber security professionals and boards base their analyses.
- Effective two-way communications to build credibility, trust, and for effective decision making (where narratological insights into the strategic use of storytelling in cyber security, as presented in my report on 'Using Cyber Security Narratives' were especially salient).



# CASE STUDY :

## Classics Methods and Cybersecurity

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Different expectations around availability, resources, and timescales which policy teams may not always appreciate.

Academics may have rigid teaching constraints and limited travel budgets to attend in-person meetings (usually in London).

University contracts teams can take 6 months or more to sign off on a contract/agreement.

Policy teams have their own constraints (especially tight timetables for commissioning and delivering work, hosting events and changing demands from seniors - including ministers).

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Finding the right people/team to work with is key (someone with a PhD in an Arts and Humanities subject can make all the difference).
2. Civil Servants – especially the adept ones - tend to move roles and departments swiftly so capture evidence/letters of support regularly.



# CASE STUDY :

## Pride in Place



'Pride in place' beyond the metrics: Insights from the Feeling Towns project



### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Joseph Owen, Research Fellow  
in the Arts and Humanities

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Southampton

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

English

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Marsh, N., Howcroft, M. and Owen, J. (2024) *'Pride in place' beyond the metrics: Insights from the Feeling Towns project*, AHRC Place Programme Policy Brief, University of Glasgow.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Feeling Towns was part of the AHRC Place Programme, running from 2022 to 2024. It sought to understand and provide evidence for pride in place. It explored the correlation between place attachment—the emotional bond between people and place—and the health of local cultural ecologies. It used a variety of creative methods to understand what pride meant to different communities. We worked with policymakers and heritage organisations to understand how pride could be meaningfully evaluated. Pride in place was a key, exploratory metric in the 2022 Levelling Up White Paper. We engaged with policymakers from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), and arts and heritage practitioners, to explore the kinds of metrics and approaches that pride required.

# CASE STUDY :

## Pride in Place

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Through reports, policy briefs, think-kits, submissions of evidence to government inquiries, and policy-focused webinars, we engaged with local and national policymakers. These outputs have been part of national conversations, and they have influenced both the framing and the practices of policy, specifically on culture and place-making, pride in place, and the use of qualitative data for understanding lived experience.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Our project delivered:

- Wide-ranging reports, think-kits, sandpits and webinars about pride, place attachment and decision-making for local authorities, creative practitioners and community partners.
- Substantial input on the monitoring and evaluation for Southampton City Council's successful Levelling Up Fund bid (£20m).
- New knowledge and understandings about place-based research for the UK Government and leading arts, culture and heritage organisations.
- Training seminars for DLUHC on using creative methodologies to understand and measure the "Pride in Place" mission.
- Recommendations for DCMS on how culture can reanimate public spaces.
- Key learnings for Historic England that have influenced the design of its High Street HAZ (Heritage Action Zone) evaluation programme and the next generation of Heritage Action Zones after 2024.
- Creative outputs from award-winning artists that respond to the role of pride in national and international policymaking.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

**We found it challenging that current metrics for measuring 'pride in place' were underdeveloped, and the language of pride had been used inconsistently across Levelling Up policy materials.** There is a need for policymakers to:

- Develop more flexible processes that allow local authorities to self-define key place-based terms such as 'pride in place'.
- Develop training in place-based methods with local government officers and stakeholders – this

programme should include place-leadership skills and strategies for identifying future place leaders.

- Develop open and accessible qualitative reporting for local authority data observatories to articulate the many complexities of pride.
- Support innovative research partnerships to develop effective representations of felt responses to place. Such work should consider negative feelings, conflicting notions of 'community', and multiple versions of pride.



Joseph Owen

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Build and embed relationships with policymakers early in the project's development.
2. Develop long-term, multi-year AHRC grants that support engagement with policymakers.



# CASE STUDY :

## The COVID-19 Response and the Cultural Industries



*Culture in Crisis: Impacts of COVID-19 on the UK cultural sector and where we go from here*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Ben Walmsley, Professor and Dean of Cultural Engagement

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Leeds

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Cultural Policy

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Walmsley, B., Gilmore, A., O'Brien, D. and Torreggiani, A. (2022) *Culture in Crisis: Impacts of COVID-19 on the UK cultural sector and where we go from here*, Leeds, Centre for Cultural Value.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

At the Centre for Cultural Value, we established a policy network in late 2020 to support what became the largest study of the impact of COVID-19 on the cultural industries anywhere in the world. As a result, we were invited to meet quarterly during the pandemic with teams from DCMS (Department of Culture Media and Sport) to advise them on their immediate responses to the pandemic and how they could best support the cultural sector in the crisis.

At stake was the sector's future and the livelihoods of many freelance creative professionals. It was challenging to convey our qualitative findings to DCMS, who really wanted concrete evidence and statistics which were evolving rapidly, and only painted half of the picture, revealing what was happening but not why or what the implications might be.

# CASE STUDY :

## The COVID-19 Response and the Cultural Industries

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

We attracted some internal funding via Research England to enable us to collaborate with policy specialists Culture Commons to help us influence policymakers. Through this collaboration we jointly developed and published a set of 12 recommendations and presented them at a bespoke event in the House of Lords. Our recommendations included:

- better social security provision for artists and cultural practitioners;
- engaging local people in cultural fora;
- investing in targeted skills training programmes for existing early and mid-career creative and cultural workers;

- moving away from competition-based investment models and
- developing a mission-based programme that targets cultural investment and support where it is most needed.

DCMS, combined authorities (including Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire) and local authorities (e.g. Leeds City Council) have engaged directly with these recommendations and we have followed them up via a series of placements coordinated through the Centre for Cultural Value.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Some combined authorities (e.g. South Yorkshire) have since adopted 'local voice' in a new cultural forum, and the new Labour government has already indicated a move away from competition-based funding in its new devolution deals.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

It became easier to engage with national policymakers during the COVID-19 pandemic as they were desperate for ideas on what they could do to support the sectors under their charge. But their focus was very much on the longer-term workforce and economic impacts of the pandemic rather than the immediate issues facing cultural organisations and freelancers.

Perhaps the biggest challenge we faced was a lack of

insight from certain policymakers into the complex ecology of the cultural sector and the key role that freelancers play in this. The other main challenge was to engage national policymakers with the findings from our robust qualitative research (based on 138 in-depth interviews), which some of them discounted as 'anecdotal'. Therefore, we had to counter a false hierarchy of research methods in our engagement activity.



Ben Walmsley

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Show that you understand policymakers' pressing agendas and be prepared to help them with their policy priorities.
2. Build long-term relationships with policymakers. Influence and change are usually incremental and depend on mutual trust.



# Part Two

## UK Parliament and Devolved Administrations





# CASE STUDY :

## Innovating Playgrounds



### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Ben Highmore, Professor of  
Cultural Studies

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Sussex

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Cultural and Museum Studies

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Highmore, B. (2024) 'Adventures in Lollard Street: An Experimental London Playground, 1955-1960' in *History Workshop Journal*, 97, 174-195. This was shared with the UK Parliament committee on 'Children, young people and the built environment' in February 2024.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The initial contact with a UK parliamentary committee was serendipitous: someone sent my journal article to a senior civil servant who was running the 'Children, young people and the built environment' parliamentary committee (who was also a trustee of the adventure playground I had been researching). Of course, the change in government has meant that the committee report is not currently a live issue. I have also been in touch with the Raising the Nation Play Commission, and I submitted evidence in August 2024.



# CASE STUDY :

## Innovating Playgrounds

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I am at an early stage in this impact journey and will be much better placed to provide more substantial evidence once the Raising the Nation Play Commission have published their report in 2025.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I am hoping that it will go some way towards relatively concrete policy outcomes. One of these would be that the UK government adopt a Play Duty for England similar to that which already exists in the devolved nations of Wales and Scotland.

**“ Less concrete policy outcomes might be rethinking how ‘risk’ in playgrounds is understood at the level of local councils.”**

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

“Too early to tell.”



Ben Highmore

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

I am still at the stage of willingly accepting advice.



# CASE STUDY :

## Petitioning and its History



*History and Policy: Richard Huzzey*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Richard Huzzey, Professor of Modern British History

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Durham University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

History

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

I have worked particularly closely with parliamentary officials administering contemporary e-petitions systems and campaign groups using petitions. This has developed over at least a decade, starting out from involvement in a History & Policy workshop with Friends of the Earth campaigners.

My involvement with officials began with a ESRC IAA (Economic and Social Research Council Impact Acceleration Accounts) for a placement week with the staff of the UK Parliament administering their e-petitions system, sharing research from a Leverhulme project on 19th century petitioning and QR (Quality-Related)-funded work on abolitionism. An AHRC project on 20th century petitioning included engagement with officials from the Westminster, Holyrood, Cardiff, and Belfast legislatures, and produced a visual summary and report.

For further info, see <https://www.historyandpolicy.org/case-studies/case-study/richard-huzzey>.

# CASE STUDY :

## Petitioning and its History

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I was invited to History & Policy events c. 2012-16 which engaged with Friends of the Earth over “How social change happens”. This produced a workshop and a volume I co-organised ([https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2019-02/Campaigning\\_for\\_change\\_lessons\\_from\\_history.pdf](https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2019-02/Campaigning_for_change_lessons_from_history.pdf)). My collaborator Henry Miller and I were later invited to give a talk in Parliament in 2015.

This is how I first made contact with colleagues in the petitions committee at the House of Commons, which led to a 2017 ESRC IAA placement. From that placement, plans for integrating impact into our next research project (AHRC project on 20th century petitioning) emerged. This was aided by our Political Studies co-investigator, Professor Cristina Leston Bandeira, who had strong links to officials in all the UK legislatures and was able to testify that listening to historians was valuable.

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The petitions committee clerk said obliging things about the impact of the 19th century historical findings on their attitudes and the revival of a “petition of the month” blog, which formed part of our REF Impact Case Study (more info available on <https://results2021.ref.ac.uk/impact/df13c1ff-4d00-492b-9d01-3e953e5a2e94?page=1>).

We held the first inter-parliamentary conference on petitioning in summer 2023, as well as commissioning a visual summary and policy report of our findings (available on the Outcomes Tab on <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FT003847%2FI>). As of August 2024, I am setting up a meeting to work with the incoming chair of the Commons Petitions Committee for an event to launch the report.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Feedback from clerks attending the inter-parliamentary conference last year indicated that studying historical uses of petitions to Parliament - and the 20th century explosion of petitioning outside parliament - had offered a different perspective on what campaigners may think ‘success’ looks like. Furthermore, they understood how Parliament had been, ceased, and may become again the principal target of petitioning.



Richard Huzzey

“ We held the first inter-parliamentary conference on petitioning in summer 2023, as well as commissioning a visual summary and policy report of our findings. As of August 2024, I am setting up a meeting to work with the incoming chair of the Commons Petitions Committee for an event to launch the report.”

# CASE STUDY :

## Petitioning and its History

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

It felt easier to 'sell' the relevance of 20th century over 19th century history to officials. Having a Political Studies professor, who had published on 2010s/20s case studies, as co-investigator opened doors that I doubt I would have opened as an historian.

I also struggle philosophically with the need to prove impact by insisting on "lessons from history" or directing the applicability of historicist research findings to the present day. I do not fundamentally believe in absolute generalisations from historical insights, and I would want to emphasise that studying history sensitises present-day citizens or officials to the particular contingencies, specificities, or assumptions of our own times.

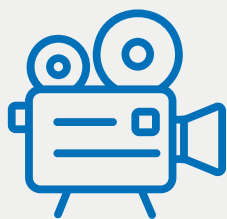
This lends itself more to complicating or destabilising present-day certainties rather than offering direct policy applications, and I find this can make us sound wishy-washy. But choosing what 'lessons' to apply to present is a political/policy question, and so historians and others may well differ over how findings translate to those contemporary questions (even when they agree on the historical interpretation - which they do not always).

**" It felt easier to 'sell' the relevance of 20th century over 19th century history to officials.**

**Having a Political Studies professor, who had published on 2010s/20s case studies, as co-investigator opened doors that I doubt I would have opened as an historian."**

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Relationships build slowly, "snowballing" into different opportunities over the years.
2. Take time to learn and understand the policymakers'/officials' dilemmas on their own terms, as it may well teach you things you did not understand about the applicability/inapplicability of your topic.
3. It can be hard to navigate the "utility" of historical research to policymakers with a fidelity to historicism (understanding the past on its own terms, not in service to proving political/policy preferences we may hold today).



# CASE STUDY :

## Filmmaking Funding and AI



Publications on AI and the film and TV industries

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Dominic Lees, Associate  
Professor in Filmmaking

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Reading

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Film, Television, Generative AI

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Sexton, M. and Lees, D. (2021) *Seeing it on Television: Televisuality in the Contemporary US 'High-End' series*, London, Bloomsbury Academic.

Lees, D., Bashford-Rogers, T. and Keppel-Palmer, M. (2021) 'The digital resurrection of Margaret Thatcher: creative, technological and legal dilemmas in the use of Deep Fakes in screen drama', *Convergence: the International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 27(4), 954-973.

Publications on AI and the film and TV industries (available on <https://www.bfi.org.uk/profile/dominic-lees>).



# CASE STUDY :

## Filmmaking Funding and AI

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

My policy interaction began when submitting written evidence to the 2022 inquiry of the Communications and Digital Committee of the House of Lords, 'A Creative Future'. I participated in the Institute for Government's course for academics, 'Engaging with Government' (2023) and co-authored written evidence to the UK Parliament's 2023-4 inquiry into Film and High-End Television. I was engaged as Specialist Advisor to this inquiry by the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, until the General Election in 2024. Major policy issues were at stake for the UK's film and TV industries, including skills gaps, the decline of British independent cinema, and the impact of Artificial Intelligence. My initial thoughts on working with contacts in the House of Commons were that it was extremely positive, and policy professionals were eager to hear expert opinion and advice.

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

As a Specialist Advisor to a House of Commons select committee, my role was to bring expert knowledge and insight to the inquiry team. The inquiry was on British Film and High-End Television, so my co-authored book on US high-end TV drama was highly relevant, as were my academic and non-peer reviewed magazine articles on the film industry. My professional background as a film/TV director meant that I could provide further useful contributions to the inquiry.

I was specifically consulted on issues around AI in the film industry, which is a focus of my current research activity. Skills training and the skills gap were a major policy concern for policymakers, which are other areas of my expertise. My advice was taken seriously and helped shape the nature of the inquiry. I found that the select committee's inquiry lead was particularly receptive to my input. I was asked to draft the structure and questions that MPs would pose to the inquiry's oral evidence session on skills and training.



Dominic Lees

“ I was specifically consulted on issues around AI in the film industry, which is a focus of my current research activity.”

# CASE STUDY :

## Filmmaking Funding and AI

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The committee inquiry looked in depth at the complex tax incentives provided by the UK Government to the film industry. We identified a significant gap, impacting negatively the British independent film sector. Before the Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's budget on 6th March 2024, the committee chair wrote a letter proposing a policy revision supported by the inquiry.

**The Chancellor introduced a new 'Independent Film Tax Credit' in the budget, worth an effective 39.75% to British film producers working with budgets below £15 million.**

This has created a major stimulus for the UK film sector.

The snap General Election call by Rishi Sunak on 22nd May 2024 brought all parliamentary committee work to a halt. The inquiry into film and high-end television was incomplete. It is possible that the new membership of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee will choose to continue the inquiry - until this point, I cannot make claims for impact through my work as a Specialist Advisor.

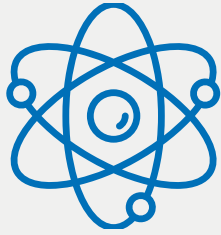
### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

**“ Do not think you know it all - policymakers are often brilliant and highly intelligent individuals.”**

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

**My policy interaction was extremely positive, and I have no problems to report.**





# CASE STUDY :

## Fairness and Streaming Services



*Music creators' earnings in the digital era*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Hyojung Sun, Lecturer in the Business of the Creative Industries

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of York

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Science and Technology Studies

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Hesmondhalgh, D., Osborne, R., Sun, H. and Barr, K. (2021) *Music creators' earnings in the digital era*, UK Intellectual Property Office.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

We launched our research project to explore the reasons behind musicians' dissatisfaction with earnings from streaming platforms. This effort coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which spurred several musician-led campaigns calling for an investigation into the fairness of music streaming payouts. These campaigns culminated in the UK Parliament launching an inquiry into the economics of music streaming, where major stakeholders, including record labels and musicians, were called to testify.

As an independent study, our research became a key reference during these parliamentary debates, drawing significant attention due to its potential impact on policy decisions. We collaborated closely with policymakers and engaged all major industry stakeholders by including them as members of our research board.

# CASE STUDY :

## Fairness and Streaming Services

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

As the principal investigator, I was responsible for coordinating with a diverse range of stakeholders, including board members and the UK Intellectual Property Office, which commissioned the research. The heightened interest generated by the UK Parliament's inquiry into this area brought significant challenges, as some stakeholders attempted to sway our research to reflect their own perspectives. This occasionally led to conflicts and tensions during board meetings. I managed these challenges by effectively communicating with both stakeholders and policymakers

to mediate and resolve conflicts.

This required our report to carefully navigate a range of diverse and often conflicting perspectives. By maintaining an objective approach, we were able to produce well-balanced research findings. In the end, this impartiality was highly valued by all parties involved. As a result, I, along with another co-author, was invited to present our findings at the Select Committee's oral evidence session to discuss issues related to music creator remuneration.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The research garnered significant global attention, with coverage in media such as *The Guardian* and *The Times*. This exposure not only heightened awareness of these critical issues but also promoted more nuanced and informed discussions beyond the simplistic understanding that is widely known. This visibility led to the government commissioning further research into algorithms and potential reforms such as contract adjustment, rights reversion, and the possible adoption of a lesser-known copyright measure called "performer equitable remuneration" (ER).

I was involved in exploring contract adjustment and rights reversion, focusing on measures that may allow performers and songwriters to renegotiate or reclaim rights they had previously assigned to rights-holders under certain circumstances. These efforts helped clarify the key issues affecting musicians' earnings. My appearance before Parliament further heightened policymakers' awareness of the systemic issues that continue to favour major stakeholders, ultimately impacting musicians' earnings.



Hyojung Sun

“ My appearance before Parliament further heightened policymakers' awareness of the systemic issues that continue to favour major stakeholders, ultimately impacting musicians' earnings.”

# CASE STUDY :

## Fairness and Streaming Services

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Addressing musicians' earnings at the policymaking level presents several formidable challenges. One major challenge is the complexity of copyright law and music industry practices, which can be difficult for policymakers to fully grasp. Major music companies have more resources and access to extensive data, allowing them to present compelling evidence to support their positions. Without a deep understanding of the music industry's intricacies, policymakers can easily be swayed by these arguments or by simplified, emotionally charged appeals from vocal musicians. This can make it harder to address critical issues, such as reforming revenue distribution, compared to more straightforward issues like placing blame on e.g. Spotify.

Another challenge is that musicians are generally not a priority for governments or political parties. Given the sense of crisis that pervades post-Brexit UK, there is a danger that any future government is unlikely to prioritise the interests of music creators by changing copyright legislation.



### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

**“ In my experience, working with policymakers is not for the faint-hearted. You may encounter lobbying groups, sometimes aggressive, so be prepared for challenges and remain steadfast in upholding the integrity of your research. However, this also offers a valuable opportunity to make a real impact with your work – embrace the journey.”**



#### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Emily Underwood-Lee,  
Professor of Performance  
Studies

#### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of South Wales

#### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Drama

# CASE STUDY : Developing Women's Support Networks

## RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Rawdin, C., Wallace, S., Miller, N., Underwood-Lee, E. and Williams, E. (2024) *Addressing Police Perpetrated Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV): A Process Evaluation: Final Report*, University of South Wales.

Underwood-Lee, E. and Wallace, S. (2022) *Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Research Network Wales: Setting the Research Priorities For Wales: Final Report*, University of South Wales.

*Forty Voices, Forty Years* (2019), Collection of 48 stories and oral histories archived at National Museum Wales and National Library Wales.

## BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

My connections with policy colleagues have been established through the VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) Research Network for Wales, which I co-chair with Dr. Sarah Wallace. This network works with Welsh Government, Public Services (including in crime and justice, health and social care, education, youth and community, and other related areas), and specialist Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services to ensure that policy and practice is rooted in research. This ensures effective prevention, provision, and support for victims/survivors and anyone at risk of VAWDASV. It also works to eliminate VAWDASV.



*Forty Voices, Forty Years*

# CASE STUDY :

## Developing Women's Support Networks

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

We meet regularly with policymakers, public sector officials, and service providers via quarterly meetings. We advise (both formally and informally) several Welsh Government VAWDASV Blueprint workstreams and sit on the South Wales Police VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) Internal Advisory Group as well as carrying out research projects. For example we have worked on behalf of Welsh Government to explore how services connect with, and listen to, survivors, carrying out the AWPAC (All-Wales Policing Academic Collaboration) evaluation of services for victims/survivors of police perpetrated VAWDASV, and examining the VAWDASV Research Priorities for Wales.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

VAWDASV provision is increasingly research-informed, and services, provision, and policy are becoming more 'joined up' in their approaches. Stories created during the Forty Voices Forty Years project (accessible on <https://welshwomensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning/forty-voices-forty-years/>) have been used as evidence for policymakers and to train police, healthcare and VAWDASV service providers.

**Welsh Women's Aid stated 'this research is helping to save the lives of women and girls'.**

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The main challenge we have confronted is ensuring the longer-term impact of research when there is such a high turnover of personnel in the VAWDASV sector.

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Understanding the needs and priorities of the sector you wish to impact is central, and this is best done by genuinely working in collaboration.
2. Rather than starting from the questions we think we want to ask, listen to the stories people tell about their experiences, what they value, and what they would like to see done differently. Then think about the way we can use our academic skills to contribute towards that change.



# Part Three

## Local Authorities





# CASE STUDY :

## Cultural Creation at the Local Level



*Arts and Academia: The Role of the Arts in Civic Universities*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Carola Boehm, Professor of Arts and Higher Education

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Staffordshire University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Arts, Music and Culture

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Boehm, C. (2022). *Arts and Academia: The Role of the Arts in Civic Universities. Great Debates in Higher Education*, Bingley, Emerald Publishing Limited. (<http://eprints.staffs.ac.uk/7301/>)

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

As a civic university, Staffordshire University has a large number of partnerships with our city council colleagues at all levels, and these partnerships influence regional policymaking. In my case, this focuses on creative and cultural policy, including night-time economy, tourism, heritage, high streets, pride in place, creative industry and wellbeing. I was significantly involved in shaping the council's cultural strategy.



# CASE STUDY :

## Cultural Creation at the Local Level

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I was one of the founding members and current chair of our cultural compact Stoke Creates, collaborating intensively with the city council on culture-led regeneration. This includes:

- Stoke Creates uses co-creation to shape the city's updated cultural strategy. I facilitated (with other colleagues) a workshop to allow more voices to feed into the updated cultural strategy. The facilitation was underpinned by my research and practice-based work in cultural co-creation.
- I sit on the City Council's Heritage Trust Steering Group and contribute to shaping the city's approach to its many derelict historic properties. My contribution has been to bring in tools and confidences in applying co-creation processes to motivate and mobilise more communities towards becoming more active in placemaking activities.
- I sit on the advisory board for the expansion of the City Council's owned Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, contributing research insights to the strategic ACE (Arts Council England)-funded capital developments and extension plans of the museum to ensure it serves its surrounding communities.
- As chair of Stoke Creates Cultural Compact, I worked together with many stakeholders to ensure we increase inward cultural investment into the city by piloting new forms of philanthropic and strategic giving. In the last 2 years, we have secured cultural investment of approximately £1.4 million into our region, including via philanthropic giving initiatives. Our philanthropic work informed DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport) and ACE on how to mobilise networks for philanthropic giving.



Carola Boehm

“ In the last 2 years, we have secured cultural investment of approximately £1.4 million into our region, including via philanthropic giving initiatives.”

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Over the last two years, my research contributed to securing cultural investment into our region, including via philanthropic giving initiatives. My research developed confidences in cultural leaders to lean into co-creation processes, to increase the impact that cultural interventions can have for placemaking. We have trained around 100 cultural leaders in co-creation and placemaking knowledge and skills, drawing directly on my research.

# CASE STUDY :

## Cultural Creation at the Local Level

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

We have very successfully translated our research into regional policy, but much less into national policy. I view the main barriers as follows:

- The prestige market that the UK Higher Education climate holds makes it harder for post-92 universities to be considered suitable members of consortia focussing on national policy. Thus, they are limited in their abilities to affect national policy, successfully engage, or even be invited to provide advice which informs national policy initiatives.
- The pressure that specifically post-92 universities are under to focus their time on recruitment (being more reliant on student income than research) and teaching creates challenges in becoming more active in research-to-policy work. This could be seen as a diversity issue, with predominantly more privileged Higher Education communities having the capacity to engage in policy work.



### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

We are still working on maximising our own policy work. However, having one person within a thematically based research unit with the responsibility of informing others of policy-related opportunities has proven a great mechanism to allow researchers to become aware of, and act on, relevant policy opportunities.



# CASE STUDY : Valuing Culture



*Unified Theory on the Value  
of Culture*

## NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Hugh Brown, Lecturer in  
Cultural Industries

## UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Leeds

## DISCIPLINARY AREA

Cultural Industries

## RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

A draft Unified Theory on the Value of Culture (for further info, see <https://ahc.leeds.ac.uk/performance/staff/4783/dr-hughie-brown>).

## BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I have been working on an unpublished theory on the value of culture for about 10 years. When I joined the University of Leeds, I joined a project led by Historic England that aims to create a Taxonomy of Arts, Culture, and Heritage (ACH) values. As this project has progressed, it has emerged that my theory provides a useful framework for the project. We are now exploring ways in which the theory might inform Green Book valuations of arts, culture, and heritage. As part of my efforts to build a network of industry partners for teaching purposes, I have also shown the theory to several local government organisations in Yorkshire, who are also interested in adopting it.

# CASE STUDY :

## Valuing Culture

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I joined the project led by Historic England to provide input into the Arts and Culture aspects. My duties are to oversee testing of the ontology/taxonomies produced and to coordinate the communication programme with the project's stakeholders. During early conversations about existing taxonomies and frameworks for analysis, I mentioned my Unified Theory to the project leader, who invited me to present it to

the other work units. It has since been noted as a potentially useful framework for analysis and for an ontological structure that may inform Green Book valuations of Arts, Culture, and Heritage. I also presented a tool derived from the theory to the cultural director at Leeds City Council, who wants to use the tool to make ACH (Arts, Culture and Heritage) grants funding more effective and efficient.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The project aims to create a framework to include a valuation of AHC into UK national accounts in a similar way to the Natural Capital valuations. My work aims to inform such a valuation by incorporating non-financial valuations and providing a method by which non-financial and future financial values may be included in current accounts. This has the potential to

end years of disquiet between AHC practitioners and policymakers about how to value AHC project, workers, and education and to (finally) see AHC given its due estimation in public funding and discourse. Leeds City Council are discussing ways to incorporate the theory into its nascent cultural compact and related approaches to cultural policy.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

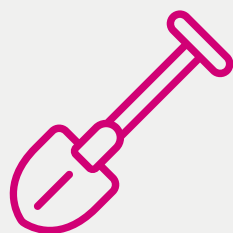
I still do not have the workload to write up and publish the Unified Theory, despite it finding traction among policymakers. It seems that the real-world usefulness of the theory may come before the academic publication and peer review of the theory, which I hope does not affect its validity.



Hugh Brown

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

“I would advise giving policymakers something that solves their problems, not just something that seems useful and valid from an academic perspective.”



# CASE STUDY : COVID-19, Churches and the High Street



*The impacts of COVID-19 closure of  
cathedrals and churches*

## NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Kate Giles, Professor of  
Archaeology

## UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of York

## DISCIPLINARY AREA

Archaeology

Photo by DAVID ILIFF. License: CC BY-SA 3.0

## RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

A range of policy-related work involving the impacts of COVID-19 closure of cathedrals and churches with the Church of England and the APPG (All-Party Parliamentary Group) Faith group (further info available on <https://churchesandcovid.org/>).

DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) Community Renewal Historic High Street STREETLIFE project and extensions of urban room offer (further info available on <https://www.streetlifeyork.uk/>).

Photo by DAVID ILIFF. License: CC BY-SA 3.0  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=34007963>



# CASE STUDY : COVID-19, Churches and the High Street

## BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Our work on COVID-19 and churches developed from existing links with the Church of England and other heritage bodies (e.g. Historic England). The APPG Faith group was interested in our work and my co-author provided rapid responses to House of Bishops debates and the COVID-19 enquiry. This was an exceptionally challenging time, so everyone was working responsively, and we hope our work had a lasting impact on future decision making.

Our work on STREETLIFE was a response to the CRF (Culture

Recovery Fund) opportunity and resulted in both a formal evaluation and, more recently, support from our own University of York Policy Engine team. This has led to a series of follow-on initiatives from The Common Room (urban room pilot). We have not had contact with the UK government over this, but it would be good to feed ideas/ thoughts about future historic High Street funding initiatives related to placemaking, especially as this is devolved to local government and mayoral budgets.



Kate Giles

## COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Regarding COVID-19 and churches: we analysed the impact of closure on non-worshipping communities as well as congregations and clergy, especially around social care, wellbeing and churches as places of solace and sanctuary. Our recommendations included work on the need to resource reopening, rebuild volunteering and explore new opportunities to resource social care provision post pandemic.

Regarding STREETLIFE: potential for heritage-led regeneration of historic High Streets (not HHAZ (High Streets Heritage Action Zone) in the case of York) to contribute to placemaking and diversification of cultural offer. This impacted directly on developer decision making around regeneration, creation of new cultural offers (Centre for Print) and follow-on funding projects around the idea of an urban room for York.

We are now working with the City of York Council on expanding/developing capacity in public consultation and placemaking in the city centre. This includes Snickelways (i.e. a collection of historic streets and footpaths), a project with BID (Business Improvement District) as well as the suburbs (use of Levelling Up funding for Acomb Front Street).

# CASE STUDY : COVID-19, Churches and the High Street

## IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The impact of the COVID-19 and churches project includes changes in thinking around the role and impact of closing churches - our hope is to build on this with a future survey in partnership with the National Churches Trust (a major undertaking bringing together expertise from their work and House of Good report).

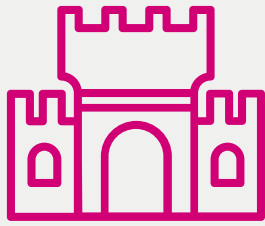
Regarding STREETLIFE: Changes in local (York) policy around use and potential of historic High Street shop units but more deeply, using the idea of an urban room to inform local authority and developer-led consultation with stakeholders, local residents and visitors.

## CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

- One challenge was funding and sustainability – there was a constant search to extend research and impact using University of York internal funding resources to sustain activity and follow up impact.
- Another challenge was that APPGs were interested but followed their own agenda.
- A third challenge was that political priorities were in flux and funding streams demanded particular kinds of reporting and evaluation.

## ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Set aside a lot of time to navigate a very different world of funder priorities and reporting (especially if your background is Arts and Humanities not Social Sciences).
2. Ensure the longevity/ sustainability of buy-in from your institution. This will make all the difference to the effectiveness of your work.



# CASE STUDY :

## Waste Management and History



*Research on the history of waste management in the UK*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Henry Irving, Senior Lecturer in Public History

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Leeds Beckett University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

History

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

I have shared various findings from my research on the history of waste management in the UK; see <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/123296/pdf/>.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I have been interested in the application of academic research into policy since the beginning of my PhD research. My own experience in this field began through work with the History & Policy network. Because my research interacts with policy that is both devolved and primarily enacted by local authorities, I have had to seek out contacts in various spaces. I have done this by responding to consultation opportunities, attending conferences and events aimed at the waste sector, and by giving talks organised for stakeholders in the sector. Relatively few Humanities scholars have ventured into this field, and I have found this a useful way of starting conversations.

# CASE STUDY :

## Waste Management and History

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I recently held a British Academy Innovation Fellowship where I worked with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to apply my expertise on the history of waste management to the implementation of a series of reforms currently badged as 'Simpler Recycling'. This involved two main strands of activity:

- I carried out a range of engagement events with those working in the waste sector. This included running online seminars on the history of waste management, attending conferences and writing policy recommendations. These activities were designed to provide a space for officials and practitioners to think differently about the challenges posed by the implementation of 'Simpler Recycling'. Feedback from participants suggests that this was successful, although it is difficult to identify single points of direct impact given the range of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the policy.
- I worked with WRAP to include historical content in some of their public-facing campaigns, especially those aimed at children. Here I worked with a primary school to develop learning activities connected to a 1940s essay competition about the importance of recycling in wartime. The work we produced was then used in a campaign by WRAP Cymru. In a similar vein, I have also worked directly with Leeds City Council to produce a film supporting the roll out of kerbside glass collection in the city.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The fact that history is being considered and talked about within the waste sector suggests impact, although this is hard to evidence beyond invitations to collaborate and testimonials from collaborators. On a smaller scale, the adoption of the campaign materials noted above shows direct impact, albeit

for 'engagement' rather than policy per se. The difficulty in measuring direct impact is perhaps illustrative of the drawn out and complex nature of waste policy, with the Simpler Recycling reforms forming part of a broader strategy that was set as long ago as 2017.



Henry Irving

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Policy engagement can take many forms and does not need to play out in Whitehall.
2. There is often a 'snowball effect' where one opportunity leads to another, so it is well worth taking a first step even if it seems a relatively small one.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I was fortunate to have had the time and resources to support research-policy interactions because of my British Academy Fellowship. However, this has not always been the case and a lack of time and resources (or even competing pressures for time and resources) has been a challenge at other moments. Ultimately, this work must sit alongside my broader research and teaching commitments. This is not to mention the similar pressures faced by those working in the waste sector, especially those working for local authorities.



# CASE STUDY :

## Human Geography and Modernising Central Heating



### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Sam Johnson Schlee, Senior  
Lecturer

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

London South Bank University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Human Geography

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Preliminary research on the history and contemporary culture of heat and energy. Much of this has since fed into a Policy Impact Case Study for the British Academy which will be published in late 2024. I have also written for the Financial Times, the Conversation, and broadcast on the BBC on these topics.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Whilst working on a project about cultural geography of gas and central heating as part of a BA Innovation Fellowship I was introduced to a contact at the Greater London Authority (GLA) who quickly latched onto the relevance of my research for their work on housing retrofit. I was pleasantly surprised that there was an immediate recognition of my research into historical transitions, and particularly communications and advertisements from this era.

This relationship continued into a future project to directly research a grant-based retrofit scheme called Warmer Homes. There was a recognition that they faced a big challenge in engaging the public with the benefits and process of de-carbonising energy, and that rather than a socio-technical issue they needed support from a cultural perspective. In part this was because of the humanities backgrounds of several of my main contacts!



# CASE STUDY :

## Human Geography and Modernising Central Heating

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

- Collaborative workshops using my research as a starting point for the design of policy interventions and guidelines for future delivery.
- A commissioned report by the GLA on their Warmer Homes programme based on home-visit interviews.
- Presentation to the National Retrofit Hub.
- I think a big part of the influence of my research comes down to its ability to clarify and substantiate the idea that communication and engagement are important and more than a matter of service design but require a level of cultural understanding. In particular, I suggest that a more compelling and desirable image of the de-carbonised home could be persuasive.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Evidence that has supported a re-think of public engagement in future versions of GLA Warmer Homes Programme.

Previously communication often emphasised the financial value of the grant and our research made

the case that the wider benefits should be better emphasised. Furthermore that the public should not be made to feel like recipients but rather as participants in something being done for the greater good. As one of our GLA contacts said not “being done to”.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Another element of my research was a collaboration with a commercial research agency, elements of this relationship were very productive particularly in some of our workshops. However it was very hard to work with people who bill time by the hour. Academic research and collaboration can be challenging to prioritise in the private sector, particularly in the Humanities when the IP benefits are a bit more nebulous.

Working with policymakers has been very interesting and I have been pleased by how receptive they are to Humanities research. It is notable that some of my main contacts have a Humanities background, the Programme Policy officer for Warmer Homes who I worked with most closely had actually done her MA with my second supervisor in Anthropology & Design at UCL.



Sam Johnson Schlee

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

“Be optimistic! Many people working in policy share a Humanities background and use those critical and contextual thinking skills to assess the issues they face in their roles.

Think about how co-creation and co-production can help embed your way of thinking as well as your evidence base in the policy work of your contacts.”



# CASE STUDY :

## Enabling Safe and Accessible Active Transport



### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Radka Newton, Professor of  
Innovation and Management  
Education

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Lancaster University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Innovation

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Newton, R., Rindt, J., and Calvo, M. (2024) 'Future in Place: Participatory Future Scenario Planning for Place-based Local Policymaking', in Gray, C., Ciliotta Chehade, E., Hekkert, P., Forlano, L., Ciuccarelli, P. and Lloyd, P. (eds.), *Digital Research Society 2024: Research Papers*.

'The Path to Eden', *Lancaster University Management School 54 degrees magazine*. [Path to Eden](#).

Video capturing the collaboration with policymakers: [The I-Connect Project](#).

This involved regional policymakers at City council level responsible for planning and climate change policies.



'Future in Place: Participatory Future Scenario Planning for Place-based Local Policymaking'

# CASE STUDY :

## Enabling Safe and Accessible Active Transport

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Our local authorities, Lancaster City Council and Lancashire County Council, reached out to the University via our mutual partner, Groundswell Innovation. The representatives of the local authorities shared the new Lancashire 2050 strategy with the University and expressed concerns related to current citizens' and visitors' experience of transport connectivity and modality.

Lancaster University Management School provided seed funding to my research team to carry out

a research project, I-Connect, (<https://wp.lancs.ac.uk/i-connect/>) investigating our county's active transport readiness in preparation for the Eden Morecambe Project development that was approved in early 2023. Our research utilised service design and futuring methods combining evidence-based and creative approaches to visually document the current state of active transport between Lancaster and Morecambe and outline plausible future scenarios for 2050.



Radka Newton

“ Our Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach enabled policymakers to be involved in all stages of the project.”

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The research has been carried out collaboratively with the local authority stakeholders involving wider county ecosystem players such as local entrepreneurs and the art and culture community.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Our Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach enabled policymakers to be involved in all stages of the project starting with ecosystem activation through future scenario planning and the collaborative design of ethnographic data collection and visualisation. The project has been delivered in several sequenced stages in order to provide regular updates to the local authority informing their planning and lobbying activities related to social prosperity funding and the levelling up agenda.

The research outputs provided a portfolio of assets that have been used in policy meetings, regular team discussions and wider stakeholder presentations including to the Eden project leaders. The research has enabled informed discussions clarifying a human-centred approach to transport planning and highlighted issues that were brought to light by our participatory action research approach.

# CASE STUDY :

## Enabling Safe and Accessible Active Transport

“ The project has contributed to the mutual appreciation of connectivity between academic researchers and policy designers.”

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The project has contributed to the mutual appreciation of connectivity between academic researchers and policy designers. The main challenge for the policymakers has been to incorporate creative design methods into their analytical processes. Their openness to learn with us and support the project evolution demonstrated a need for regional policymakers to have access to design methods promoted by the central government Policy Labs, yet accessible only to central government civil servants. As a multidisciplinary University research team, we benefited greatly from the process of learning that was also facilitated by our common partner Groundswell Innovation. The director of Groundswell is a local entrepreneur who regularly co-delivers innovation learning at the University and also sits on the county council innovation board. This has been a major asset to our collaboration with policymakers as we have been able to bridge many gaps in communication.

The project highlighted challenges in policymaking, including budget constraints, reliance on outdated methods, and limited resources for innovative tools. Visual data formats showed promise for engaging residents, but local councils lack the training to implement them independently, relying on external expert facilitation. The project underscored the challenges of scaling such interventions across the UK due to resource constraints and the unique needs of each local area.

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

- The research project brief has to be collaboratively scoped out and co-designed with the policymakers who must be treated as equal partners.
- The expectations and boundaries of academic reach ought to be clarified to policymakers in advance so that they do not feel abandoned or used at any stage of the research.
- Academic and practice-related outputs ought to be defined clearly for both parties.
- Projects with policymakers ought to be split into stages with clear outputs so that the policymakers can integrate the outcomes iteratively and regularly into their practice.





# CASE STUDY :

## Dealing with Electronic Waste



*More on: Generation Fix (2024)*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Michael Stead, Lecturer in Sustainable Design Futures

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Lancaster University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Sustainable Design/Sustainable Computing

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

My projects have been exploring the growing environmental and social problems caused by 'smart' technologies – particularly electronic waste (e-waste), digital exclusion and the lack of citizens' right-to-repair such technologies. My AHRC Impact Accelerator-funded project Generation Fix (2024) has links to local government – Blackburn with Darwen Council. Generation Fix builds upon my earlier ESRC/EPSRC Impact Accelerator funded project The Repair Shop 2049 (2021-2022) which the council also supported. The insights developed through the latter informed a 2022 DCMS policy. I have also recently been interviewed by the Green Alliance regarding these projects.



# CASE STUDY :

## Dealing with Electronic Waste

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The projects have been run in conjunction with partners The Making Rooms in Blackburn – a community makerspace – which the council subsidises. This partnership introduced design-led research to council colleagues. The partnership also facilitated connection to the Green Alliance. Academic colleagues asked me to contribute to the DCMS briefing. I am very keen to work with, and

share, my research with policy stakeholders. Sustainable Design and Technology is my passion and I want to disseminate my findings as broadly as possible. I also understand that policy is often the root of real-world change so I am happy to work with policy colleagues to try to enact sustainable transitions. My experiences thus far have been very positive.

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Alongside the activities described above, the biggest impact we have had is securing £55,300 from Virgin Media O2/Hubbub to fund the creation of Blackburn Repair Space. The aim is to start to develop a fully-fledged, localised repair service for smart tech and electronics. This would reduce e-waste in the community and redistribute fixed devices locally increasing digital inclusion. The Making Rooms are leading the project with Blackburn council as policy partners and myself as the academic partner.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The AHRC Generation Fix and Blackburn Repair Space projects are still running so we haven't seen the full impact of this work yet. However, we believe it is influencing council colleagues' awareness of the growing problems caused by e-waste, technology obsolescence and digital exclusion. Further, it is increasing their understanding of the need to facilitate local circular solutions

to combat it – with improved repair services (like the Blackburn Repair Space) and increased repair education (our Generation Fix educational toolkit) being part of this drive.



Michael Stead

“The biggest impact we have had is securing £55,300 from Virgin Media O2/Hubbub to fund the creation of Blackburn Repair Space.”

# CASE STUDY :

## Dealing with Electronic Waste

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Many of us train through the PhD to write in certain way that best engenders our research to our chosen disciplinary community. As a result, I found translating complex, technical and theoretical academic work into a more easily digestible form (both in writing and verbally) very difficult at first. It has

taken time, but I feel like my work is beginning to really chime with a wide range of stakeholders now. This is helping to make the research more 'valuable' to different parties. Actually instigating real-world change is the hardest part though. But the Blackburn Repair Space proves it can happen!

**“ It has taken time, but I feel like my work is beginning to really chime with a wide range of stakeholders now.”**

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

“ Go for it! It is an opportunity to develop impact for your research outside of your discipline and traditional academic channels like conferences and (often subject community siloed) publications.

Hang in there. Having real-world impact can take time. It also takes time to build trust and rapport with policy colleagues.”

## Part Four

# Other Policymaking Bodies, e.g. NGOs, Public Institutions





# CASE STUDY :

## Albinism and the UN



'We are human, just like you: Albinism in Malawi—implications for security'

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Charlotte Baker, Professor of French and Critical Disability Studies

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Lancaster

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Languages and Cultures

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Baker, C., Lund, P., Massah, B. and Mawerenga, J. (2021) 'We are human, just like you: Albinism in Malawi—implications for security', *Journal of Humanities*, 29(1), 57-84.

Baker, Charlotte, et al. (2010) 'The myths surrounding people with albinism in South Africa and Zimbabwe', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 22(2), 169-181.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I have worked with policymaking colleagues since I created the Albinism in Africa network in 2014 and more recently as part of my research on belief and disability inclusion in sub-Saharan Africa. It has always been a case of finding a common agenda, drawing together the right stakeholders and pushing for change together. My collaborators have been in the UK, Europe, Australia and across sub-Saharan Africa.

# CASE STUDY :

## Albinism and the UN



Charlotte Baker

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I have influenced the UN agenda on albinism through my research findings and engagement activities. More recently I worked closely with policymakers and other stakeholders to secure UN Resolution 47/8 against accusations of witchcraft and associated harmful practices passed by the Human Rights Council in 2021.

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Transparency is really important from the beginning. Ensure that you are on the same page, pulling together in the same direction.
2. Relationships are crucial. They need to be developed, sustained and meaningful.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Although only passed in 2021, the Resolution is already having an impact including:

- In August 2023 a coalition of UK- and Nigeria-based NGOs used the International Day Against Witch Hunts to call for government and key partners to join hands to implement the UN resolution on the elimination of witchcraft.
- In July 2023, Ghana's MPs passed a bill criminalising witchcraft.
- In March 2023, the Pan-African Parliament released its Guidelines on Accusations of witchcraft and ritual attacks: towards eliminating harmful practices and other human rights violations, at the joint sittings of the Committee on Gender, Youth, Family and People with Disability, the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs, and the Committee on Education, Culture, Tourism, and Human Resources at the PAP (Pan-African Parliament) headquarters in Midrand, South Africa.
- In March 2023, the UN issued a thematic report on the issue <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc5247-study-situation-violations-and-abuses-human-rights-rooted>.
- In 2022, an article by a Canadian research team recommends that future research should incorporate the terminology of the Resolution when gathering data on albinism, particularly where negative myths and stigma on the condition are well documented.
- In 2022, the South African Law Commission undertook a review of the Witchcraft Suppression Act <https://www.justice.gov.za/salrc/dpapers/dp158-p135-Revised-Review-WitchcraftSuppressionAct.pdf>
- Calls to pardon those historically accused of witchcraft in the UK; legally pardon those convicted in Great Britain for offences of witchcraft - (<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/640686>).

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

Working across systems and structures with different languages and ways of doing things can be a huge challenge. Another challenge has been securing resources, but my position as an academic has been invaluable in this regard, with several successful funding applications to the Wellcome Trust, AHRC and ODA (Official Development Assistance) funding supporting this work.

The other constraint has often been time and competing priorities on the part of all partners, but sharing this mutually important agenda has strengthened our willingness to go above and beyond to make collaboration work.





# CASE STUDY :

## Inclusivity and Music



*Responding to misrepresentation: sample pack creation, branding and distribution*

### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Manuella Blackburn, Reader in Electronic Music and Sound Design

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Keele University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

Music

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Blackburn, M. (2024) 'Responding to misrepresentation: sample pack creation, branding and distribution', *Sound Studies*, 1–31. For further information, see <https://fass.open.ac.uk/research/projects/EDIEF/projects>.

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

My research project exploring commercial sample packs and representation practices (supported by an AHRC EDI Engagement Fellowship in 2020-21) reached out to different stakeholders in commercial music. The research project ended up producing a new sample pack (audio library of Indian musical instrument sounds), which we wanted to commercialise.

We reached out to Loopmasters (sample pack distributor) as a potential partner. Once we discussed what we were trying to do, the project started to influence their new policymaking to change outdated ways of representing sound (both visually and through text). Further to this, the research project developed into a report for the AHRC with a set of recommendations about inclusive research funding schemes.

# CASE STUDY :

## Inclusivity and Music

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The research was directly taken up by Loopmasters - a sample, MIDI file and preset distributor founded in 2003 - to form two new policy documents (Content Branding Policy and the Product Optimisation Guide). Our reflections of physically making a new product for distributions had indicated many issues, considerations and insights that we fed back to Loopmasters via a guidance document output (further information available on <https://www.manuellablackburn.com/instrumentsindia/information/linksandresources>). This guidance document was adopted by Loopmasters for their third-party producers and the wording appears in their policy documents for future content.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The new policies were used to reflect on visual and text practices for Loopmasters' existing catalogue (116 titles were ringfenced for contravening the new policies). These titles underwent rebranding as a result (for inappropriate language, stereotypical imagery, irrelevant religious symbol use etc.) and all new releases have to abide by the new policy.

With regards to the other impact with AHRC, the report made 31 recommendations regarding optimisation of inclusive grant making. Several of these recommendations have been taken up by AHRC and appear in policy documents for funding procedures and grant making.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

When making recommendations,

**there is no guarantee the organisations/policymakers you are working with will act upon these or change their practices.**

There is sometimes an element of risk in working in this way.

It was also challenging to work with the academic schedule and the external organisation's schedules - there were sometimes different competing priorities. It was somewhat unclear to us how to navigate the institutions' intellectual property regulations and support on both sides perhaps came too late in the day to make the most of their advice.



Manuella Blackburn

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

“ It is a very exciting area to work in. Keep being curious about how other stakeholders could use your research for policy change.”



# CASE STUDY : Reforming NGOs' Translation Policy



*Respecting Communities*

## NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Angela Crack, Professor of Civil  
Society and Social Impact

## UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

University of Portsmouth

## DISCIPLINARY AREA

International Development and  
Translation Studies

## RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Footitt, H.F., Crack, A.M., and Tesseur, W. (2018) *Respecting Communities*. This is available on <https://www.intrac.org/resources/respecting-communities-international-development-languages-cultural-understanding/>.

Footitt, H., Crack, A. M., and Tesseur, W. (2020) *Development NGOs and Languages*, Cham, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan.

Chasukwa, M. and Crack, A. M. (2024) *Participatory translation and anti-racism in development work*, Development Policy Review.

## BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I worked with the international NGO Tearfund and NGOs in Malawi and Peru to change their translation practice and policies, to foster more inclusive relationships with their local staff and the communities that they aim to serve. More info is available on <https://ukcdr.org.uk/case-study/changing-language-translation-practices-in-ngos/>.

# CASE STUDY :

## Reforming NGOs' Translation Policy

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

This was an AHRC-funded project that aimed to examine how languages and translation impact the relationships between NGOs and the people they aim to serve. It also considered how translation issues can impact the delivery of NGO projects. We produced policy recommendations in the 2018 report and 2020 book, which several NGOs implemented. In particular, the major international NGO Tearfund revised its policy on translation almost entirely in line with a follow-up consultation.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The NGOs concerned undertook the following actions in accordance with our policy recommendations, among other things:

- Increased funding for translation.
- The international NGO Tearfund revised their entire translation policy and made it central to their diversity and inclusion agenda.
- Improved levels of understanding and trust between NGOs and communities.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

The challenges I faced included the different timelines of academic workflow versus standard NGO practice. Furthermore, ensuring close working relationships with NGOs throughout the project so that we could deliver recommendations that were implementable and realistic.

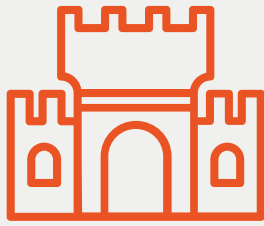


Angela Crack

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

1. Invest time in establishing clear expectations of delivery at the start, and building rapport and trusting relationships.
2. Ensure recommendations are delivered in a format that is accessible to your target audience.





# CASE STUDY :

## Democracy in Sudan



*The Sudan Handbook: for diplomats, development workers and others*



### NAME AND ACADEMIC TITLE

Justin Willis, Professor in History

### UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Durham University

### DISCIPLINARY AREA

History

### RESEARCH SHARED WITH POLICY OFFICIALS

Ryle, J., Willis, J., Baldo, S. and Madut, J. (2012) *The Sudan Handbook: for diplomats, development workers and others*, Rift Valley Institute. This reflected the content of a residential annual course that I ran for several years.

Willis, J., el-Battahani, A. and Woodward, P. (2009) *Elections in Sudan: Learning from Experience*, UK Department for International Development. This was aimed at international staff working on Sudan's 2010 elections and was funded by Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Mwakimako, H., Ndzovu, H. and Willis, J. (2009) *Trends in Kenyan Islam*, Report for FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office).

Willis, J. and Assal, M. (2021) *Voting for Change: elections and political transformation in Sudan*, Rift Valley Institute. This was created for the FCDO and others and was commissioned in collaboration with UK Aid and the Rift Valley Institute.



# CASE STUDY :

## Democracy in Sudan

### BEGINNINGS OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I began doing policy work on Sudan in the period of the CPA (Comprehensive Peace Agreement) when there was a substantial international intervention, much of which seemed ill-informed. This led to the Sudan Course and Sudan Handbook; as part of a wider project on election history (and because of my long-term work on Kenya), I subsequently became involved in providing policy advice and briefings on Kenya to the UK government. This continues, though I would say that the peak of liberal interventionism has passed, and so there is decreasing demand for, and interest in, this kind of advice.

### COLLABORATION INVOLVED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

As above: in the last three elections in Kenya, I have worked with colleagues on FCDO-funded projects intended to shape UK policy. The issues discussed related to electoral support in advance of the elections and political responses to events in the elections.

### IMPACT OF RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

I am doubtful as to whether they did.

### CHALLENGES FACED IN RESEARCH-POLICY INTERACTION

**“ In the fields in which I work, UK policy is quite constrained; and academic knowledge is often difficult to translate into action.”**



Justin Willis

### ADVICE TO OTHER ACADEMICS

Do not expect too much. You will learn a lot about policy and its limits.

# An afterword by the Co-Chairs of the UPEN Subcommittee on Arts and Humanities Policy Engagement

Arts and Humanities research is critical to society, the economy and wellbeing. It produces invaluable knowledge that, when used well, supports policy development, effectiveness, and implementation in all areas. While experts in the sector have been advocating for the use of Arts and Humanities evidence and approaches for over a decade, our work in the UPEN Arts and Humanities sub-committee so far has brought to light the 'chicken and egg' situation which many Arts and Humanities researchers face at the start of their policy engagement journey.

This collection of case studies shows us what success looks like, and contributes to changing the narrative around the value, use, and policy relevance of Arts and Humanities research.

We believe this piece of work will be invaluable for researchers, knowledge brokers and policymakers working with Arts and Humanities research and policy engagement. These case studies make clear how Arts and Humanities research is crucial in delivering change for vulnerable members of our society, local communities and at-risk sectors. This work is essential in dispelling the myth that Arts and Humanities research can only contribute to Creative Sector policy - indeed the researchers whose work is highlighted in this publication have contributed to pressing cross-cutting societal and policy issues such as fuel poverty, violence against women and girls, education gaps, technology waste, international relations and digital exclusion. We are thrilled to see this piece of work published, showcasing the tireless efforts of Arts and Humanities scholars, and making clear the impact and value of this research for the policy community.

As co-chairs of the UPEN subcommittee on Arts and Humanities, we have heard from our members about the challenges of finding positive, detailed and encouraging case studies and narratives of what policy impact looks like for Arts and Humanities disciplines. We feel confident that the 'you can't be what you can't see' era is over thanks to this landmark publication by UPEN Vice-Chair Arlene Holmes-Henderson and Laidlaw Scholar Luke Sewell. For the first time, Arts and Humanities scholars and their knowledge facilitation colleagues have a range of case studies showcasing recent successful examples of Arts and Humanities research influencing public policy in a range of policy arenas. The geographical range of the case studies presented, as well as the diversity of university type and career stage of researchers, demonstrates that the policymaking community is open to collaboration with Arts and Humanities researchers across the sector.

This publication marks the start of a new chapter for the UPEN Arts and Humanities sub-committee, one in which we advocate for the value and relevance of our evidence to policymaking (broadly defined). We hope that colleagues will, like us, feel uplifted by the outstanding work that is already taking place, and inspired for future research-policy interactions.

Thank you to Prof Arlene Holmes Henderson, Luke Sewell and the Laidlaw Foundation for leading and funding this work. And thank you to all of those who contributed these case studies.

If you would like to be involved in work around Arts and Humanities academic-policy engagement, join our UPEN sub-committee and sign up to the UPEN newsletter to stay up to date on future work. If you have any further case studies, do let us know so we can expand this list.

Laura Bea, Marina Altoè, & Rebecca di Corpo,  
UPEN Arts and Humanities Sub-Committee Co-Chairs.



## About Durham University

Durham University is a globally outstanding centre of teaching, learning and research excellence, a collegiate community of extraordinary people, in a unique and historic setting.

The Durham Public Policy hub provides opportunities for researchers to connect with policymakers to increase the impact of Durhams research on public policy. Professor Holmes-Henderson is the Director of the Durham Centre for Classics Education Research and EngagementS (CERES), a forum which allows researchers, civil society organisations and policy officials to explore, collaboratively, solutions to contemporary policy challenges. To find out more about Durham University's #TranformativeHumanities initiative, visit: <https://www.durham.ac.uk/departments/academic/arts-humanities/research/transformative-humanities/>

## About The Laidlaw Foundation

The Laidlaw Foundation is a global non-profit dedicated to enriching lives through the transformative power of education, particularly focusing on individuals from underserved communities. Our initiatives span from nurseries to C Suites across six continents, cultivating a diverse community dedicated to creating equitable opportunities.

We are committed to developing leaders who embody excellence, act with integrity, and who are driven to solve the world's most intractable problems.

The Laidlaw Scholars Leadership and Research Programme invests in passionate undergraduate students to become ethical leaders in every sector and geography.

We believe good leaders come in all shapes and sizes, from every type of background: the quiet and the gregarious, the scientist and the poet, the musician and the athlete.

That's why we invest in young people, providing the tools, support, and a global network to fuel their development. We provide fully funded scholarships which allow them to cultivate leadership skills, conduct meaningful research, and join a community of change-makers dedicated to creating a more just and equitable future.

## About UPEN

UPEN was set up in 2018 by a small number of universities. It now has more than 120 UK members. UPEN acts as a central space for academics, policy actors and professional services staff who undertake and support academic-policy engagement. We champion academic-policy engagement to strengthen evidence-informed policymaking in the UK. UPEN's founding purpose was to make it easier for UK governments and legislatures to communicate their needs and opportunities with researchers by providing a 'one stop shop' through which opportunities can be shared more easily. UPEN's activities include a weekly UPEN newsletter, strategic projects led by Vice-Chairs and Sub-Committees, an events programme, and a regular blog, as well as members' meetings and our annual conference. Our co-chairs for UPEN currently are Andy Brown (University of Leeds), Sarah Chaytor (UCL), and Chris Hewson (University of York).

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