



**Birkbeck**  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

# BIRKBECK INTERNATIONAL DIGEST 2023

BIRKBECK





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## FOREWORD



I am pleased to present the 2023 edition of our International Digest, a particularly special one given its appearance in Birkbeck's bicentenary year. As in previous years, this International Digest richly illustrates our continuing impact on the world, offering, *inter alia*, snapshots of the contributions and activities of our staff, students and alumni, and the rich learning opportunities we offer students, home and international.

Birkbeck's outstanding reputation for teaching and research was again severally reinforced during 2022-23 via high-profile external assessments. Notably, the College was ranked in the top 20% among the 1,799 universities assessed by the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings in 2023. The QS World University Rankings for 2023 similarly placed Birkbeck in the top quartile of the 1500 universities assessed.

Furthermore, Birkbeck achieved an excellent 91% positivity rating for its teaching and learning resources in the UK's National Student Survey results for 2023, placing it among the top performing UK universities. Several subjects excelled, including Maths which ranked first in the UK for academic support provided, assessment and feedback, and teaching on courses. Psychology also placed fifth nationally for teaching, and Economics seventh for learning resources.

Equally pleasing are other important recent developments that advance Birkbeck's prospects and sustainability. First, the campaign for a properly designed and promoted Lifelong Learning Entitlement in the UK which I have long championed has led to the *Lifelong Learning (Higher Education Fee Limits) Bill* currently going through the UK Parliament. The Bill would, if enacted, provide the legislative framework for the Student Loans Company to award fee loans to students wishing to undertake short courses as part of their Lifelong Loan Entitlement. This would potentially favour lifelong learners and institutions such as Birkbeck. Second, the reopening of the refurbished Birkbeck Central building, formerly Student Central, for preliminary use has markedly increased the study and social spaces available to students on our Bloomsbury campus. A generous donation from the Wohl Foundation will further transform the building to provide a two-storey auditorium and a high-quality flexible space which can host a wide range of activities and events. This will facilitate the College's vision of increasing learning and social spaces, improving student experience, and providing an interconnected campus. Third, a three-million-pound award from the Office for Students is supporting the installation of new *HyFlex*



digital technology into nearly all Birkbeck-owned classrooms. This project will, upon completion, further reinforce Birkbeck's reputation for flexible learning.

I would like to warmly appreciate all members of the Birkbeck community for their respective contributions to the rich and varied achievements captured in this International Digest, including the many inspiring activities marking our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The contributions of colleagues who left Birkbeck during the past year are equally acknowledged.

Special thanks also to Professor Joanne Bourke on the resounding success of her finely researched book, 'Birkbeck: 200 Years of Radical Learning for Working People', which traces Birkbeck's fascinating 200-year history.

Finally, do join me in congratulating and welcoming Professor Sally Wheeler on her recent appointment as the next Vice Chancellor of Birkbeck. It has been the honour of my life to lead Birkbeck over the past 21 years, and I look forward to passing the 'lamp' to Professor Wheeler and supporting the College in other capacities from January 2024.

Professor David Latchman, CBE

Vice Chancellor, Birkbeck



## EDITOR'S BRIEF



This latest edition of the Birkbeck International Digest, published in our special bicentenary year, continues the tradition of celebrating the College's international contributions and world class profile, and offering glimpses of the achievements of staff, students, and alumni during the focal period. It is organised in six sections, respectively focusing on international students and their learning experience; staff research contributions, accolades, and dissemination; global citizenship activities; international collaborations; international events and visitors; and alumni activities at the international stage.

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

Section 2 offers highlights of the significant research achievements made by Birkbeck staff during 2022-23. These include original insights on how physical activity improves children's cognitive and academic outcomes, how toddlers with autism sleep less well as babies, how our 'stubborn brains' use past experiences to shape perception of the present, new strides on addressing antibiotic resistance, and high-profile advocacy for changes to how autism research is conducted. There are also important research findings on how improving organisational environments works better than prioritising individual support, the persisting fear of discrimination among neurodivergent employees, as well as major archaeological discoveries of a complete neolithic cursus on the Isle of Arran in Scotland and about cooking techniques dating 70,000 years which reveal the role of plants in the diet of Neanderthals. The section further presents a raft of prestigious accolades and fellowships, research grants, appointments, invitations, and international presentations undertaken by Birkbeck staff.

Section 3 illustrates Birkbeck's global citizenship profile, by featuring some of the contributions of our community to major global challenges, notably climate change,

mental health, advancing equality and inclusion, and promoting human rights and educational opportunities for forced migrants.

Section 4 offers examples of Birkbeck's international academic relationships with several international universities and organisations, while Section 5 covers some international events and visitors hosted by the College. The final section presents some of the significant achievements made by our alumni at the international stage during the focal period.

Overall, this International Digest underlines the continuing commitment of the Birkbeck community to advancing our international standing and culturally inclusive environment.

I would like to thank all those whose stellar achievements are reflected in this Digest as well as their many enablers. Colleagues in the International Committee, External Relations and Development and Alumni teams, including those that completed their tenure or left the College during the year, are also warmly appreciated. Andrea Williams, one of the latter, is particularly cherished for her exemplary support for international student experience and international partnerships at the Business School. Garmon Op Garth, another leaver, is also appreciated for his keen support for student and staff international mobility.

Finally, the next academic year will be the first of Birkbeck's third century as well as the beginning of a new Vice Chancellor term at Birkbeck. Let me conclude, therefore, by thanking our outgoing Vice Chancellor, Professor David Latchman, for his support for the international agenda, whilst also welcoming our incoming Vice Chancellor, Professor Sally Wheeler, to her new role. I do also look forward to welcoming new and continuing international students and the wider community to the 2023-24 academic year.

Professor Kevin Ibeh  
Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)



***International Committee at Birkbeck, 2022-23:***

Naomi Adam, Assistant School Manager, Science  
Professor Alexandra Beauregard, Assistant Dean (International) BEI  
Professor Sanjib Bhakta, Assistant Dean (International) Science  
Professor Bill Bowring, Professor in Law  
Dr Magarita Palacios, Assistant Dean International, SSHP  
Julie Crofts, Director of Academic Standards and Quality, Registry  
Garmon Ap Garth, Academic Services Manager, Registry  
Ben Goodrum, Compliance and Operations Manager, Registry  
Lynn Grimes, Director of Marketing and External Relations  
Professor Kevin Ibeh, Pro Vice-Chancellor (International); Chair  
La Young Jackson, Deputy Student Immigration Compliance & Advice Manager  
Eoin Lally, Deputy Director of Marketing and Recruitment  
Pedro Malheiro, Student Leader, Birkbeck Student Union  
Dr Ana Parejo-Vadillo, Assistant Dean, Recruitment and International, Arts  
Veridiana Ribero, International Marketing and Recruitment Manager  
Eleanor Seale, Committee Support, Registry  
Clare Thomas, Assistant School Manager, Arts  
Andrea Williams, Assistant School Manager, International Partnerships, BEI



## 1.0 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### 1.1 Profile of international students

Birkbeck's reputation for research and teaching excellence and its intercultural learning environment attracted an increased number of international students during the 2022-23 academic year. A total of 2042 international, including EU, students enrolled into the College, accounting for approximately a fifth of the overall student population. These international students skewed toward undergraduate (53:47) and continuing students (51:49). Over 2 in 5 (specifically 45%) were in the Faculty of Business and Law, while the Faculty of Humanities and Art and Faculty of Sciences accounted for 32% and 23% of the international student body respectively.

Regarding nationalities, EU students accounted for 26% of all international students, with the rest of the world accounting for 74%. Among the main source countries were India, China, USA, Nigeria, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Germany, Spain, Canada, Brazil, France, Turkey, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, and Romania. Others include Greece, Bangladesh, Republic of Ireland, Poland, Singapore, UAE, Switzerland, and Russia. Overall, international students for the 2022-23 year originated from over 140 countries, reflecting the impressive international diversity of the Birkbeck community.





Among the 2022-23 cohort of international students were recipients of the prestigious [Chevening](#) Scholarships selected based on their leadership potential and academic profile. These Chevening scholars, funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and partner organisations, similarly reflected diverse nationalities, backgrounds, and life experiences.



Chevening scholars on 2 December 2022

## 1.2 International students in their own words

Box 1, below, presents brief excerpts from insights shared by international students studying at or graduating from the Birkbeck during the review year.

*Box 1: International students in their own words*

### **An incredible experience**

Annika Bellot's commitment to pursuing a career in environmental diplomacy and making meaningful change in law was shaped by two devastating hurricanes in her native Caribbean Island of Dominica in 2015 and 2017. Birkbeck proved to be an exact fit. She identified Birkbeck's perfect location in London, opportunities to meet other students, meet ups with other international students and Chevening scholars organised by the international team, and trips to Brighton, Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, and other European cities as influential factors. Her own words:



"Studying at Birkbeck really exceeded my expectations and it was an incredible experience. The lecturers were amazing, and the degree content was just so meaningful. There are many things that I have already begun applying practically to my career, including my current work looking into governmental environmental policies."

- Annika Bellot, LLM Environmental Law, Policy and Governance, Dominica



***“The exceptional quality of the lecturers truly set my experience apart”***



A South African attorney with significant experience of advising clients on complex cross-border transactions involving cutting-edge Blockchain technologies and digital assets, Michail Le Roux joined Birkbeck to study LLM Law and New Technologies to support his well-crafted 10-year career plan. He chose this Master’s programme because it perfectly complemented his existing expertise whilst also empowering legal professionals to navigate challenging unregulated markets and understand and shape legal frameworks of the future. Michail’s expectations were fully met as indicated by the following comments:

“The future is looking bright! The exceptional quality of the lecturers truly set my experience apart. Throughout my Master’s course, I had the privilege of learning from thought leaders who held esteemed positions within the industry.”

- Michail Le Roux, LLM Law, South Africa

***“I made friends for life with people from all over the world”***

After gaining a BSc Psychology degree from her home country, Pakistan, Wardah, went into corporate sales/marketing and later human resources, winning several promotions and awards. However, a hunger to return to clinical psychology, study in England, and work in mental health psychology remained, leading to her applying for a degree programme in MSc Health and Clinical Psychological Sciences. Although Wardah received offers from three UK universities, she chose Birkbeck for its amazing location in Bloomsbury, central London, and proximity to famous landmarks. She reflected thus:



“I was very impressed with how helpful Birkbeck staff were with everything, and how excellent the teaching was. I started volunteering at St Pancras Hospital as a Mental Health Assistant whilst studying. I’ve ended up making friends for life at Birkbeck with people of different ages from all over the world. The blend of cultures was so interesting. We also loved trying foods from around the world at the farmer’s market by the university every week. Spending time in spring and summer in Russell Square Gardens, just around the corner from Birkbeck, was also lovely. But what I loved the most was the Birkbeck Library – I used to spend hours and hours in there!”

- Wardah Jadran, MSc Health and Clinical Psychological Sciences, Pakistan



***"I felt so supported at Birkbeck"***



Tin Su Liang was born in Taiwan but left the country at 15 for high school and undergraduate studies in Canada. A move to the UK for postgraduate education led her to Birkbeck for PhD research in Psychology, focusing on the psychology of people's relationships with guide dogs. Tin Su was attracted to Birkbeck by the reputation of her PhD supervisor. She commented thus:

"Being part of a student research group and sharing offices and resources with students from a variety of countries and backgrounds make Birkbeck a great place for people to study. I really appreciated the support and resources I had with my peers and with Psychology academics."

- Tin Su Liang, PhD Psychology, Taiwan

***"I am forever grateful to Birkbeck for assisting me to achieve my dream"***

Gladys was a heartbroken 18-year-old when she had to stop her law school studies in Brazil after second year due to her family's financial situation. A sales career in the aviation industry provided an alternative path, allowing Gladys to work her way up, over 20 years, to Regional Sales Manager position. Gladys' dream of becoming a human rights lawyer never went away though. It was no surprise therefore that she decided to resume her quest. She chose Birkbeck because it was rated as one of the best universities for Law in England and because it gave her an opportunity to achieve her dream whilst continuing to work full time. Graduating in First Class was the icing on the cake! Her words:



"Being a Birkbeck student has been fantastic for my career. I've been introduced to great law firms through pupillage seminars, and I was able to serve as a volunteer for the Refugee Law Clinic and a policy researcher for the Environmental Law Foundation Policy Clinic. Birkbeck provided me with an exceptional mentor who guided me through the process of becoming a commercial lawyer. I've found that having a University of London degree adds huge weight to my CV. I am also so appreciative of the mental health, disability and learning support help I received!"

- Gladys Paulsen, LLB Law and Commercial Law, Brazil



***"I gained clarity and renewed confidence about my career path"***



Following ten-year working experience in investment banking in her home country, China, Yuan sought a new career path for herself and decided to study MSc Management with International Business at Birkbeck. This turned out to be the perfect solution as it provided Yuan with clarity and renewed confidence. She remarked thus:

"I found the teaching so knowledgeable and inspiring that I realised I didn't want to leave the world of finance behind after all. Studying at Birkbeck provided me with useful, in-depth knowledge about both my field and related ones. I've become excited about the future again and looking forward to progressing even further in my field. It's incredible to think that before this degree I felt so directionless."

- Yuan Yao, MSc Management with International Business, China.

### **1.3 Continuing focus on innovations**

Birkbeck's strategic commitment to providing innovative curricula, pedagogies and enhanced learning experience to students, home and international, was sustained during the 2022-23 year.

Box 2, below, offers examples of recently introduced digital learning innovations and student experience-enhancing initiatives.

***Box 2: Boosting flexible learning and learning experience***

Birkbeck's reputation for flexibility learning received further boost during 2022-23 with fresh investment in cutting-edge classroom technology aimed at making it easier for students to participate in lessons whether physically present or joining remotely. Supported by the Office for Students' £3million grant, the new Hyflex project will allow students greater choice over where, when, and how they learn, enabling them also to watch high quality recordings of classes they miss. The project notably advances Birkbeck's priority focus on facilitating flexible learning through providing a connected campus characterised by cutting-edge technology and state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities, including immersive learning environment.

Birkbeck's Digital Education Team additionally continued to avail staff and students of excellent training opportunities, including bite size sessions, regular drop-ins, and support. Study skill resources, including Studiosity, were equally offered to complement the 'Welcome to Birkbeck' online module which students first encounter upon enrolment.



Furthermore, Birkbeck academic staff continued to receive support, including for producing high-quality videos and audio podcasts and via the annual Teaching and Learning Conference. Main themes explored in this academic year's edition include challenges posed by AI for assessing students and maintaining academic standards, Hyflex teaching, interactive and immersive learning, inclusive practices for access, lowering learning barriers, and promoting belonging in digital higher education. Equally indicative of the priority focus on enhanced learning experience were the Vice-Chancellor's annual Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Learning received by deserving staff selected based on significant innovations and demonstrable impact on student experience.

#### **1.4 International mobility opportunities for students and staff**

The year under review equally witnessed significant return to international outward mobility activities at Birkbeck following the lull caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Several Birkbeck students, mainly in Languages, took advantage of the Turing Scheme funding to study abroad, and they appeared to have enjoyed the experience by all accounts. The recent confirmation of Turing funding for the 2023-24 year would ensure the continued provision of such international mobility opportunities to Birkbeck students.

#### **1.5 Activities to enrich the study experience of international students**

The One World Festival programme is a package of social, cultural, skills-enhancing, networking, and employability events designed to reinforce Birkbeck's priority focus on students' wellbeing, enriched experience, and sense of inclusion and community. Reflecting the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic, a blend of in-person and virtual extra-curricular activities were designed for the 2022-23 year to enable international students to continue to share experiences and create memories.

The programme was kicked-off with an in-person reception on Friday, 7 October 2022, with a separate virtual reception organised for international students studying remotely. The event featured tips on cultural literacy and networking and was addressed by Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), Professor Kevin Ibeh, who assured the new international students of the College's resolute commitment to availing them of top-quality learning and memorable experiences.

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



The paragraphs that follow offer brief accounts of selected extracurricular activities organised during the review year, including seasonal celebrations, visits to iconic venues, social events, employability events, and other engagement activities.

### 1.51 Seasonal celebrations

During the Yuletide 2022, international students had the opportunity of experiencing **Christmas festivities** held across Birkbeck. These kicked-off with the arrival and subsequent decoration of the College's traditional Christmas Tree by international students assisted by the International Student Experience Team. The Student Union also hosted a Christmas-themed night as did some other units within Birkbeck.



The 2022 **Diwali** (Dipavali) **festival** was also marked with an event dubbed "Diwali on Campus 2022" held on 24 October 2022 at the Birkbeck Central. This featured performances by internationally acclaimed Bengal artists, Subho Karmakar, Babu Fakir and Sourav Moni and exhibition of a selection of arts and crafts.

Celebrated in many Asian countries, including India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, and Nepal, Diwali is derived from the Sanskrit terms "Dipa", which means "light, candle, or that which burns, glows, and illuminates," and "Vali", which means "an array, row, continuous line, series." Happy Diwali wishes were extended to members of the Birkbeck community observing this international religious festival that brings joy and illumination into the lives of households.



The **Lunar New Year**, the year of the Rabbit, was similarly marked by the Birkbeck community in January 2023, with Happy Lunar New Year wishes extended to the celebrating members of our community. The Student Union event featured games, snacks, and a lot of fun, with all attendees adorning Chinese Coin bracelets.





The month of April saw Birkbeck marking the 2023 **Eid Mubarak**, or Blessed Feast/Festival, observed by Muslims worldwide. Warm Eid greetings were again extended to the celebrating members of our community.



### 1.52 *Tours and social meets*

Several tours and social events were organised during the 2022-23 year to provide international students with opportunities to visit some iconic London locations and interact socially. These include walking tours of the UK Houses of Parliament, British Museum, Courtauld's Museum, and East London's iconic markets, the last-mentioned led by Professor of Social and Cultural Geography, Melissa Butcher. In addition to afternoon teas, Global Lounge meets and related social events, international students were treated to a Coronation Party, giving them a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to join the celebrations marking the accession of King Charles III to the British throne.

Pictures from some of the foregoing events can be seen below:



Celebrating the International Student Day 2022



Visiting the British Museum



Afternoon tea in the British Museum



Outing for students from SWUFE, China





Visiting students from UIC Barcelona

### 1.53 *Employability events*

Birkbeck Careers and Enterprise continued its collaboration with Student Circus, an award-winning employability platform for international students during 2022-23. Access to tailored career portals or resources, jobs and micro placements, employer partnerships, career and skill development programmes, startup and freelancing support, and latest industry insights was provided via the team's dedicated online platform. Connections to mentors and career advisors and access to interactive social media were also provided to enhance international students' employability prospects.

Box 3 briefly describes a recent event to celebrate the contribution of mentors.

#### Box 3: Celebrating Mentoring Pathways

Birkbeck's Mentoring Pathways give final-year students the opportunity to be mentored by alumni and corporate volunteers working in a diverse range of professions and industries. These mentoring relationships provide students with guidance, advice, and support as they navigate the steps to their future careers and professional development goals. In 2022-23, participating organisations and partnerships included Price Waterhouse Coopers, Arts Council England, Clifford Chance, Goldman Sachs, and North Highland.



The Development and Alumni team also hosted dozens of students, alumni, and corporate mentors in July 2023 to an event marking the end of this year's programme, which altogether produced just shy of 240 mentoring partnerships, the largest to date. Inaugural Mentoring Pathway awards were given to selected volunteers and students by Birkbeck Governor, Simon Davis, in recognition of their outstanding contributions.



**“Birkbeck’s Mentoring Pathways programme is hugely rewarding as you get to see your student grow, and to feel like you helped them in their journey. To see your mentee flourish with a successful job application or interview is very fulfilling.”**



**Millie, Goldman Sachs  
mentor**

Students interested in entrepreneurship, including how to secure startup or scale-up finance, were equally supported with relevant knowledge and skills-building events. One such session, on 24 November 2022, addressed topics, notably opportunities for securing finance, what investors look for in organisations/teams/innovators seeking investment, how to secure initial funds and follow-up investment, and tips and advice when pitching for investment. The event featured Ed Phillips, Partner at Future Planet Capital, and Farhan Lalji, Managing Director and Investor at Anthemis Group. Future Planet Capital is an impact-led, global venture capital firm that invests in high growth potential companies, while Anthemis Group is a global platform that invests in growing and sustaining businesses committed to resiliency, transparency, access, and equity.

## 2.0 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS, ACCOLADES AND DISSEMINATION

### 2.1 Major research contributions

The paragraphs below offer a sample of important research contributions made by Birkbeck academics during the 2022-23 academic year.

#### *Physical activity improves children's cognitive and academic outcomes*

Research at Birkbeck analysing the impact of physical activity on children's cognitive and academic outcomes has found that physical activity improves on-task behaviour, creativity, problem solving and memory in typically developing primary school-aged children. The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded research was undertaken by doctoral scholar Fotini Vasilopoulos under the supervision of Professor Iroise Dumontheil of the Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development and Centre for Educational Neuroscience. It analysed results from 92 intervention studies published between 2000 to 2022 and covering approximately 25,000 children from 21 countries aged 5 to 12 years old. The findings, in Ms Vasilopoulos words, "support the argument that sufficient time for physical education should be provided in school, as physical activity leads not only to health-related benefits, but also has a range of beneficial effects on cognition and academic achievement. Importantly, however, schools may want to tailor the type of physical activity carried out to improve specific outcomes."

#### *Toddlers with autism sleep less well as babies*

New Birkbeck research has found that children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis in toddlerhood often had poorer sleep during infancy, including shorter sleep durations, more frequent wake ups at night and longer interval before falling asleep. The study, which examined sleep in 164 babies at aged 5, 10 and 14 months, also found that babies who have a parent or sibling with ASD sleep less well at night compared to babies with no family history of ASD. The researcher, Dr Jannath Begum Ali, Senior Post-Doctoral Researcher at Birkbeck's Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, identified a link between the amount of sleep at night and the developing of social attention (such as looking to faces), suggesting that sleep quality influences brain development. The results indicate the need to explore sleep interventions for babies with a family history of autism.

### *Our 'stubborn brains' use past experiences to shape how we perceive the present*

A new study led by Birkbeck researchers has found that our perceptual sense of clarity and vividness does not just depend on what our eyes can see, but on what our brains believe. The results of the study, led by Helen Olawole-Scott, PhD researcher, and Dr Daniel Yon from Psychological Sciences, are important for scientists trying to understand how our brains build up conscious awareness of our surroundings. Understanding how beliefs and experience are linked could also be important for thinking about how our sensory abilities change as we get older.

### *New strides toward addressing antibiotic resistance*

New collaborative research from Birkbeck, University College London and the Indian Institute of Technology, published in the *Antibiotics* journal, has successfully introduced molecules that block the enzyme responsible for antibiotic resistance, a condition which occurs when bacteria change over time and no longer respond to medicines. This new research finding resulted from the British Council and ASEM-DUO India-funded international exchange fellowships granted to Birkbeck's Professor Sanjib Bhakta and Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur's Professor Anindya Sundar Ghosh, aimed at fostering inter-institutional collaboration and international research and knowledge exchange between UK and India. The next step, according to the researchers, is to validate the identified molecule against various other conditions inside the human cell model to better understand their potential to be a useful bedside medicine to tackle resistance.

### *Changes to how autism research is conducted advocated*

A new report by a team of expert researchers, including Birkbeck's Professor of Translational Neurodevelopment, Emily Jones, has called for a shift of research culture to ease perceived tensions between the autistic community and the biomedical research community, and outlined recommendations for building bridges between the autistic community and the research community. The team collaborating on the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2 Joint Undertaking-funded AIMS-2-TRIALS, one of the world's largest autism research programmes aimed at improving outcomes for autistic people, included UK-based researchers and international colleagues. The UK institutions are King's College, Universities of Cambridge and Manchester, Brighton and Sussex Medical School, and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. Université Paris Cité, Trinity College Dublin, University of Toronto, and the Community Health Centre Domzale, Slovenia, are their international counterparts.



### *Improving work environments is more effective than prioritising individual support*

A new report led by Birkbeck's Dr Kevin Teoh and Dr Rashi Dhensa-Kahlon, with funding from Birkbeck Wellcome Trust Institutional Strategic Support Fund and Society of Occupational Medicine, has shown that the wellbeing of National Health Service (NHS) staff might benefit more from interventions that target the organisation and staff working environment than those focusing solely on supporting the individual person. The identified organisational interventions include overhauling staff rotas and shift patterns, removing bureaucracy and reducing meeting times, changing patient care processes, co-designing fatigue management strategies, and improving team formation and psychological support. The research team, which include collaborators from the University of Sheffield, University of Nottingham, and Norwegian Science and Technology University, summarised learning from these interventions into six guiding principles: staff wellbeing is a systems issue; interventions must be tailored to fit context; staff should be involved in the process; getting support from leaders is vital; interventions are iterative; and long-term planning is necessary.

Another Society of Occupational Medicine (SOM)-funded project by Professor Gail Kinman and Dr Kevin Teoh similarly urged that new strategies be introduced at institutional levels and that more be done to prevent staff burnout. Suggested interventions include ensuring that workloads are manageable, and that adequate support be available to staff; managers be trained in wellbeing; improving workers' ability to use stress management tools; more focus on treating burnout; and encouraging a safe return to work.

### *Fear of discrimination among neurodivergent employees persists*

New research from Birkbeck's Research Centre for Neurodiversity at Work, commissioned by the charity Neurodiversity in Business (NiB), has found significant barriers to neurodivergent employees disclosing their neurodivergence to employers, noting that these employees reported low levels of wellbeing. The research led by Birkbeck's Professors Almuth McDowall and Nancy Doyle found that neurodivergent employees, despite their remarkable abilities and work strengths such as hyperfocus, creativity, innovative thinking, detail processing and authenticity, feared discrimination from management (65%) and colleagues (55%). Employers also reported barriers to adjusting, including lack of disclosure (69%) and insufficient knowledge by managers (65%). As Dan Harris, CEO of Neurodiversity in Business (NiB) observed, "The findings make the business case for supporting neurodiverse



talent. Tailored adjustments are crucial and support a case for specialist career pathways.”

### *Cooking techniques dating 70,000 years reveal the role of plants in Neanderthals' diet*

A research team of archaeologists from Birkbeck, Cambridge, Queen’s University Belfast and Liverpool John Moores University has uncovered insights into the cooking techniques used by prehistoric humans. Using electronic microscope on ancient charred food at the Neanderthal and early modern human sites of Shanidar Cave, Iraq, and Franchthi Cave, Greece, dating back 70,000 years, archaeologists, including Project Co-Investigator Dr Tim Reynolds from Birkbeck, discovered that Palaeolithic diets were diverse and prehistoric cooking was complex, involving several steps of food preparation. The study published in the *Antiquity* journal found that plants played a major dietary role, with wild nuts and grasses often combined with pulses, like lentils, and wild mustard, contradicting previous research that typically emphasised the importance of meat in the diet of ancient hunter-gatherers. Flavour was important and plants with bitter, sharp, tannin-rich tastes were often made to taste better through, for example, leaching and the pounding of pulses.

### *A complete neolithic cursus discovered on the Isle of Arran in Scotland*

A leading inter-disciplinary team comprising Birkbeck’s Dr Lesley McFadyen and colleagues from Universities of Glasgow, Bournemouth, Reading, Coventry, Birmingham, and Southampton, as well as archaeologists from Archaeology Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland, have discovered what is believed to be a complete Neolithic cursus (a vast monument made up of one or more rectangular enclosures) set within a rich prehistoric landscape on the Isle of Arran, Scotland. This monument type could date to perhaps as early as 3500 BC and is amongst the first that was built by farmers in Neolithic Britain. It is also huge, measuring 1.1km long and 50 metres wide, and its construction would have involved staggering amounts of labour. Prehistoric field boundaries, clearance cairns and round houses were also found in the same landscape, all preserved within peatland, sealing the archaeological layers.



Ancient soils representing the original Neolithic land surface, together with cultivated soils from the Bronze Age period, provide an unparalleled opportunity to understand how contemporary farming practice and settlement interacted with the cursus monument and how early farmers transformed the place. The research team employed archaeological prospection, excavation and geoarchaeology, coupled with cutting-edge environmental scientific techniques, including ancient DNA, to understand how this unique landscape was constructed and used.



### *Humans underestimate the weight of their hands by nearly 50%*

A new study by Birkbeck researchers has found that people perceive their hands to weigh much less than they actually do, underestimating their weight by nearly 50%. The research team led by Dr Elisa Raffaella Ferre, Reader in Cognitive Neuroscience, and Professor Matthew Longo, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience, investigated, for the first time, how the brain perceives the weight of body parts as spatially extended objects. They developed a new method of measuring perceived hand weight, which asked participants to judge whether weights suspended from a wristband were heavier or lighter than perceived hand weight and found that hand weight was underestimated on average by 49.4%, an effect the team has called “terrestrial weightlessness”. They also found that inducing fatigue by hand exercise resulted in an increase in perceived hand weight. These findings demonstrate that everyday experience of body weight is strongly underestimated and may have implications for the understanding of disorders of body weight, including anorexia nervosa and obesity.

## **2.2 Prestigious accolades and honours**

Birkbeck staff were recognised and honoured for their internationally excellent research contributions during 2022-23. Some recipients of these prestigious accolades are presented below.

**Professor Ian Crawford**, Professor of Planetary Science and Astrobiology in the School of Psychological Sciences, won the 2023 NASA Michael J. Wargo Exploration Science Award, an annual award given to a scientist or engineer who has significantly contributed to the integration of space exploration and planetary science throughout their career. Award winners are nominated by their academic peers, recommended by a committee based at the NASA’s Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute (SSERVI) central office, and selected by SSERVI leadership.



Author of over 150 papers in scientific and professional journals on astronomy, planetary science, astrobiology and space exploration, Professor Crawford has had longstanding interest in space exploration and development and its central importance for the future of humanity. His leadership is reflected in roles on the European Space Agency (ESA) Human Spaceflight and Exploration Science Advisory Committee (2014-2017) and the European Space Sciences Committee (ESSC) of the European Science Foundation (2008-2015) among others.

**Professor Mark Crinson**, Professor of Architectural History, was elected Fellow of the British Academy, one of 86 leading international humanities and social sciences’

researchers welcomed to the British Academy's Fellowship in 2023. An architectural and art historian with strong interests in colonialism, historiography, industry, and post-1945 Britain, Professor Crinson has authored and edited several books, supervised over twenty successful PhDs, served as external examiner for multiple UK and international universities, and as President of the European Architectural History Network. Professor Crinson's fellowship makes him part of the UK's national academy for the humanities and social sciences, a community of over 1,600 distinguished intellectuals.

**Dr Ori Ossmy** of the Birkbeck's Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development won two prestigious awards, specifically the International Congress on Infant Studies (ICIS) Distinguished Early Career Contribution Award and the International Society for Developmental Psychobiology (ISDP) David Kucharski Young Investigator Award 2022. These awards were in recognition of Dr Ossmy's outstanding and innovative research in developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience, including record of academic accomplishments and independent, significant, and sustained contributions to the field. Dr Ossmy's work focuses on problem solving in human development and neuro-divergence using cutting-edge technology and aims to have a profound impact on clinical and educational interventions for those with developmental issues.

**Professor Alex Colás**, Professor of International Relations, won the British International Studies Association (BISA) International Political Economy Group (IPEG) Book Prize for 2022. The book co-authored with Queen Mary's Professor Liam Campling is entitled *Capitalism and the Sea* and it analyses the relationship between the land and sea in capitalist development and reveals how struggles over sovereignty, exploitation and appropriation in the capture and coding of maritime spaces and resources have shaped the modern world. The IPEG Book Prize Committee who awards the annual book prize praised the duo for offering the first systematic attempt to think through the implications of the earth's geographical separation into land and sea for capitalist development. They noted that "Campling and Colás are worthy recipients of this year's IPEG Book Prize and the committee congratulates them on this immensely important work."

**Dr Frederick Cowell and Dr Jan Rybak of the Law School and Social Sciences respectively also won coveted book awards.** Dr Cowell won the 2023 European Society for International Law Monograph Prize for his 2022 book, *Defensive Relativism*, the use of Cultural Relativism in International Legal Practice, published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2022. **Dr Jan Rybak** won the 2023 book prize





of the British and Irish Association for Jewish Studies also for his Oxford University Press book entitled *Everyday Zionism in East-Central Europe: Nation-Building in War and Revolution, 1914–1920*.



**Professor Karen Wells**, Professor of International Development and Childhood Studies, was elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in recognition of her excellence in the field of international development and childhood, as well as her wider contributions to the social sciences. Professor Wells has over twenty years of experience in research on childhood in developing countries. Her current research, funded by the British Academy, explores children's language learning in Ethiopia, and the culture and learning of young children in West African farming and craft communities. *The Visual Cultures of Childhood*, Professor Wells' latest book, examines how children are depicted in imagery used for social reform.

Several other Birkbeck academics received coveted **fellowships** and **recognitions** during 2022-23. Notably, **Professor Anthony Bale**, Professor of Medieval Studies, and **Professor Julia Lovell**, Professor of Modern Chinese History and Literature, separately received the esteemed Leverhulme Major Research Fellowships, granted to only thirty well-established, distinguished humanities and social sciences' researchers in the UK in 2022 to enable the completion of a piece of original research. Professor Bale's research, 'Medieval News Media and the Writing of the Siege of Rhodes (1480)', will explore the rise of 'news' as topical mass media against the backdrop of the unsuccessful Ottoman siege of Rhodes in 1480. Professor Julia Lovell's project, 'The history and practice of Chinese archaeology, 1900 to the present day', will produce the first English language book length history of Chinese archaeology, extending her career-long focus on the troubled relationship between modern and contemporary Chinese nation-building, intellectuals, and culture.

**Dr Esther Breithoff**, Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Archaeology and Heritage, and **Dr Sarah Marks**, Senior Lecturer in Modern History, similarly won the prestigious three-year UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Future Leaders Fellowship (FLF) renewal funding. The competitive awards, available to talented people in universities, businesses, and other research and innovation environments, provide additional funding of up to £567,000 to support the continuation of an extant FLF fellowship. Dr Breithoff and Dr Marks will build on their original 4-year projects, focused on leadership initiatives and innovative research-led teaching activities in their respective fields of Contemporary Archaeology and Critical Heritage Studies and the History of Science and Medicine and Interdisciplinary Mental Health Studies.



Dr Breithoff's renewal project, *Ecologies of violence: heritage and conflict in more-than-human worlds*, focuses on the local impacts of violence on landscapes, ecologies and people in Paraguay, Laos, and France. Her work in Paraguay and Laos will be joined by Birkbeck postdoctoral researcher Dr Matthew Leonard while co-Investigator Dr Layla Renshaw (Kingston University London) leads on the 'Zone Rouge' case study in France. Dr Marks' renewal project, which supports her Directorship of Birkbeck's Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Mental Health, is entitled 'Experiencing CBT' and it focuses on understanding service-users' perspectives, past and present. She will work with postdoctoral researcher Becka Hudson on a history and anthropology of CBT-based interventions in the UK criminal justice system; and postdoctoral researcher Rachel Starr and co-investigator Professor Jonathan Smith to develop approaches for researching individuals' lived experiences of psychotherapeutic treatment.

**Professor Jacqueline Rose**, feminist writer, critic with a psychoanalytic orientation, and co-Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities, was the subject of an extended feature in the prestigious US magazine, *The New Yorker*. The piece, on 14 August 2023, entitled 'How the Writer and Critic Jacqueline Rose Puts the World on the Couch' drew heavily on staff writer Parul Sehgal's interview with Professor Rose and credited the latter with enlisting Freud and feminism to reveal the hidden currents in poetry and politics alike. It describes Rose as follows:

She is singularly influential, both within and without the academy. Since the nineteen-eighties, she has explored a range of topics—modernism, motherhood, the Middle East. But mourning has long been a keynote in her work, nowhere more emphatically than in her new book, "The Plague: Living Death in Our Times." A collection of essays incubated during the COVID lockdown and structured around readings of Albert Camus, Sigmund Freud, and Simone Weil, it is perhaps her most scarred and harrowed volume and yet one strangely energized, full of possibility.

**Professor Sarah Hart's** new book, "Once Upon a Prime: The Wondrous Connections Between Mathematics and Literature", recently topped the Amazon Top 30 Book Chart and also received a *New York Times Book Review* Editors' Choice accolade. The book, which sparked a renewed interest in the connections between mathematics and literature, was recently excerpted in the *New York Times* and reviewed by the *New York Times*, *The Economist*, *The Sunday Times* and *The Guardian/Observer*. It has also attracted widespread praise globally, with sample comments including: "charming...a playful, generous book" - *Washington Independent Review of Books*; "spirited...entertaining" - *Publishers Weekly*; "generally awesome" - *The Washington Post*; "a joyful romp" - *The Times*; "compelling...detailed and amusing" - *New*

Scientist; and "an absolute joy to read!" - Steven Levitt, a New York Times bestselling author.

**Professor Joanna Bourke's** distinguished career as one of the UK's leading public intellectuals and internationally renowned scholar was celebrated with a retirement event organised by Birkbeck, Gresham College and Woman of the World (WOW) Foundation. The event featured reflections by Professor Sir Richard Evans, Professor Pat Thane, Professor Julie-Marie Strange, Robin May Schott, Professor Julia Laite, and Jude Kelly, CBE, CEO of the Woman of the World (WOW) Foundation on the significance of Professor Bourke's work, including on the Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters (SHaME) project.

Box 4, below, presents additional accolades received by Birkbeck staff during the 2022-23 year.

*Box 4: Additional accolades for Birkbeck staff during 2022-23*

- **Dr Ian Sanjay Patel** (Psychosocial Studies) had his book, 'We're Here Because You Were There', shortlisted for the prestigious English PEN Hessell-Tiltman Prize, which celebrates the best historical non-fiction.
- **Dr Rachel Lewis** and **Mark Stringer** (Organizational Psychology) were included in *HRmagazine's* list of the top 30 influential thinkers in human resources in the UK. First published in 2006, the HR Most Influential list is compiled by HR magazine's editorial team and research partners, Hult International Business School.
- **Dr Yi-Ling Lai** and **Professor Almuth McDowall** (Organisational Psychology) won the 2022 Research Paper of the Year Prize at the Henley Centre for Coaching for their paper in the *Journal of Work-Applied Management*. Professor McDowall was also commissioned to do an industry-wide survey for Neurodiversity in Business (NiB) by the Centre for Neurodiversity Research at Work.
- **Dr Luca Andriani** (Management) and co-author Dr Gaygysyz Ashyrov received The Best Conference Paper Award from the Transition International Scientific Conference held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, for their paper entitled 'Life Satisfaction and Tax Preferences in Transition Economies'.
- **Professor Alexandra Beauregard** (Organisational Psychology) co-authored a paper, 'Contextualising intersectionality: A qualitative study of East Asian female migrant workers in the UK', in the *Human Relations* journal, which was accepted into the Honor Roll of Responsible Research in Business and Management.

### 2.3 Funding from research councils, major charities, and international sources

Reflecting the outstanding quality of Birkbeck research, several staff members were successful in securing significant external research grants during 2022-23.

Notably, **Professor Emily Jones**, Professor of Translational Neurodevelopment, was awarded £2.4 million by the Medical Research Council (MRC) to lead major research project involving three studies that aim to better understand attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), particularly how it progresses over time. The project, 'Understanding early causal pathways in ADHD: can early emerging atypicalities in activity and affect cause later-emerging difficulties in attention?', also involved Professor Sam Wass, Developmental Cognitive Neuroscientist at the University of East London. The Head of Neurosciences and Mental Health at the MRC, Dr Joanna Latimer, commented thus: "Previous research has shown that intervening at an early stage is crucial. Our hope is that these projects will mean a greater number of people can be offered evidence-based interventions at the right time, so that the condition does not hold children and young adults back from reaching their potential."

Birkbeck academics also secured three large research grants totalling £4.2million from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the MRC and the Wellcome Trust. Specifically, **Professor Fiona Candlin**, **Professor Alex Poulouvassilis**, **Professor Peter Wood** (and **Dr Andrea Ballatore**, King's College London) received £997,000 from the AHRC for a trans-disciplinary project to provide the first dataset on museum closure, analyse the distribution of museums that close, investigate flows of objects and knowledge in the wake of closure, and develop new concepts of the museum's life cycle.

**Professor Carolyn Moores** and **Dr Virginia Carter Leno** (Birkbeck from October 2023) attracted £1.5million from the MRC for a study entitled "regulation and resilience of the neuronal microtubule cytoskeleton in health and disease." This project will focus on a part of the cytoskeleton (i.e. skeleton of neurons) called microtubules and is expected to extend understanding of how to target and repair the broken parts of the cytoskeleton machinery in diseased or damaged neurons as well as shed light on new treatments for dementia, stroke and physical injury. **Dr Virginia Carter Leno**, sponsored by Professor Denis Mareschal, additionally received £1.9million from Wellcome Trust for a project on "Career Development Fellowship: atypical sensory responsivity in early childhood and identification of brain-based risk and resilience features and characterisation of developmental cascades". This study is expected to help explain why some children respond very differently to sensory inputs and contribute important insights regarding where to best target support for children with atypical sensory responsivity to promote positive outcomes.



**Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism** (BISA), the only higher education research centre in the UK and one of a few in Europe dedicated to promoting the understanding of antisemitism, was granted £500,000 by the Open Society Foundations (OSF) to pursue an ambitious programme of research, policy, and public engagement. As Ayisha Osori, Director of the Executive Vice President's Office at the Open Society Foundation noted, this award was in recognition of the Institute's well-established record of "doing groundbreaking work in the study of antisemitism, its connection to other forms of bias, and policy solutions for combating its insidious effects."

**Prof Clare Press** and **Dr Ori Ossmy** from Psychological Sciences also received Leverhulme project grants of £326,991 and £478,683 for their respective projects entitled "Learning to perceive: Optimally sampling our dynamic environment" and "The effects of multi-modal information on the development of action planning. These grants, capped at £500,000 and available for up to five years, aim to enable researchers to undertake an innovative and original research project.

**Dr Olivia Sheringham**, Lecturer in Geography and Social Justice, was awarded a £130,000 British Academy/Wolfson Fellowship, which aims to support high-quality research in the Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy/Environment (SHAPE) disciplines. The fellowship rewards 'scholars who show outstanding talent in both research and public engagement and will communicate their research to a global audience'. Dr Olivia Sheringham's collaborative and multi-disciplinary project entitled "Home-city spaces of care: networks of solidarity and belonging for refugees and asylum seekers in London" will explore the role of care and solidarity in the lives of people seeking asylum, in a policy environment characterised by an absence of care.

**Dr Maheen Faisal Siddiqui** of the Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development received the prestigious Wellcome Trust Early Career Award for Research to investigate brain activity in autism spectrum conditions. Given to only 16 people worldwide, the award provides funding to early-career researchers from any discipline who are ready to develop their research identity via innovative projects that advance understanding to improve human life, health, and wellbeing. Dr Siddiqui's research project entitled "Imaging the metabolic basis of atypical brain development" aims to improve understanding of infant brain development and atypical neurodevelopment conditions such as autism with a view to enabling earlier intervention.

**Professor Muthu De Silva**, Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Birkbeck, is part of a new network of researchers from UK universities, the Innovation



and Research Caucus (IRC), funded by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to build a thriving research and innovation ecosystem. Co-directed by Professor Tim Vorley and Professor Stephen Roper of Oxford Brookes Business School and Warwick Business School respectively and including researchers also from the University of Cambridge and the University of Manchester, the interdisciplinary IRC will connect academics from various fields to provide robust evidence and practical insights to UKRI on research and innovation policy development, implementation, and evaluation. Professor Silva will, *inter alia*, lead the IRC workstream on co-creation.

**Dr Laszlo Horvath, Professor Deborah Mabbett and Dr Chao-Yo Cheng** of Birkbeck's Centre for British Political Life received funding from the British Academy and the Prime Minister's Council for Science and Technology to investigate public perspectives on the role science plays in public policymaking. The project entitled "Exploring citizens responses to science in public policy through natural language processing and conjoint experiments", aims to explore and address issues of citizen engagements, public interactions with science, and trust in policymaking, including the positives and pitfalls of science-based policies.

**Dr Pamela Yeow** and **Dr Neil Pyper** of the Birkbeck Business School and their counterparts from Birmingham City University secured competitive Seed Funding for their innovative teaching approach to tackling marine dumping on UK coastlines. The project, entitled 'Marine Dumping on UK Coastlines: Raising Sustainability Awareness through a Stakeholder-Oriented Experiential Learning Approach,' aims to address the recent increase in marine dumping across the south-east of England. The Innovative Pedagogy Competition was developed to encourage innovation, experimentation, and impact in Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME)-related teaching.

## 2.4 Appointments to expert panels/boards

The professional expertise of Birkbeck academics was equally recognised through appointments to important national and international panels during the 2022-23 year.

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

*Box 5: Sample appointments of Birkbeck staff to expert panels/boards, 2022-23*

- **Professor David Latchman**, Birkbeck's outgoing Vice Chancellor, was appointed Distinguished Trustee of the Foundation for Jewish Heritage. He also took on the Deputy Vice-Chancellor role at the University of London for a two-year term effective from 1 August 2023.



- **Dr Caroline Edwards** (English, Theatre and Creative Writing), Executive Director and co-founder of the Open Library of Humanities, was elected to the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association Board of Directors.
- **Professor Lynda Nead** (History of Art) was appointed a Trustee of Campaign for the Arts, a charitable organisation that works to champion, defend and expand access to the arts and culture, for and with the public.
- **Professor Kevin Ibeh** (Management) was appointed Member of the British Council Higher Education Sector Group. He was also invited by the African Union/OECD to contribute to the African Development Dynamics Report 2023.
- **Professor Helen Lawton Smith** (Management) was appointed Academic Lead for the Innovate UK and Innovation Caucus 'Road to Wonder' research award, September 2022 – April 2023. She was also appointed Editorial Board Member for Progress in Economic Geography and De Gruyter Studies in Knowledge Management and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems.
- **Dr Horen Voskeritsian** (Management) was appointed member of Greece's National Scientific Committee for Skills Development, which advises the National Bureau of Employment on public policy.
- **Dr Luca Andriani** (Management) was appointed External Evaluator of the Government of Ireland's Postgraduate Scholarship and Postdoctoral Fellowship Schemes in the areas of Political Economy and Institutional Economics.
- **Professor Julie Gore** (Organisational Psychology) was part of the Scientific Research Committee for the 16th International NDM Conference held in Florida, USA, in October 2022. She was also appointed co-Guest Editor of the *Frontiers in Psychology* journal.

## 2.5 Vibrant international presence

Birkbeck staff sustained their typically vibrant presence in international scholarly and related fora during 2022-23. These international activities, including delegation trips, keynotes and conference and seminar presentations, served to develop and nurture relationships, disseminate research findings, and share insights at the international stage.

Sample activities are outlined in Box 6, below.

### *Box 6: Sample International Presentations and Activities by Birkbeck Staff, 2022-23*

- **Dr Lisa McEntee-Atalianis** (Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics) participated as one of five scientific experts at the United Nation's Forum on Building Common Understanding through Multilingualism.
- **Professor Almuth McDowall** (Organisational Psychology) gave a keynote on 'Work life Balance through a Diversity Lens' at the CIM Cyprus Business School



Conference in September 2023. She also gave another keynote at the 'Celebrating Neurodiversity at Work 2022' online Conference, 27 October 2022.

- **Dr Luca Andriani** (Management) spoke on 'Life Satisfaction and Tax Preferences in Transition Economies' at the 63rd Annual Conference of the Italian Economic Association, University of Torino, Italy, October 2022.
- **Dr Libby Drury** (Organisational Psychology) presented a paper entitled "Intergenerational programmes: Bridging the gap between theory and practice" at the Policy and Practice Conference, Ageing Connects, *Gereontology Institut*, Prague, Czech Republic.
- **Professor Kevin Ibeh**, Pro Vice Chancellor (International), was part of a delegation of UK University Leaders which visited Saudi Arabia from 28 October to 4 November 2022. The delegation led by the UK Government's International Education Champion visited Riyadh and Jeddah and met with top officials of the Saudi Ministry of Education and their counterparts from leading Saudi universities. Professor Ibeh was also invited delegate to a major African Union Policy Conference on the Security-Development Nexus held in Morocco in October 2023, and two Expert Consultations on 2023 African Development Dynamics Report hosted by the African Union-OECD in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in December 2022 and February 2023 respectively.
- **Professor Julie Gore** (Organisational Psychology) presented findings from her funded research entitled "The Psychology of Decision Making & Executive Reward" at the Vlerick Business School, Ghent, Belgium, September 2022.







### 3.0 OUTSTANDING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Birkbeck's commitment to addressing matters of global significance was again richly evidenced during the 2022-23 year. Contributions spanned across a range of critical themes, including supporting forced migrants, climate emergency, mental health, human rights, and advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion. These global citizenship activities are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs and outlined in Box 7.

#### ***Supporting forced migrants to access to higher education***

Birkbeck's award-winning, nationally recognised Compass Project, which has been supporting forced migrants by offering pathways into higher education since 2016, was sustained. In addition to offering financial and pastoral support, forced migrants were paired with staff mentors as part of a new academic mentoring scheme. The Compass project also marked the Refugee Week by organising a private film screening of 'Silence Heard Loud', a film directed by Anna Konik which chronicles seven stories of individuals living in the UK after fleeing from war, domestic violence, or ethnic hatred.



Supporting forced migrants to join the Birkbeck community with minimal barriers aligns strongly with the College's longstanding mission of facilitating access to non-traditional learners. Birkbeck's University of Sanctuary status and membership of The Council for at Risk Academics (CARA), the Universities in Exile Consortium, and the Open Society University Network's Threatened Scholars' initiative all reinforce the College's clear commitment to partnering with like-minded institutions to support current and prospective students, staff, refugees, and asylum seekers affected by international crises.

#### ***Addressing the climate emergency***

Birkbeck community's longstanding interest in confronting the climate crisis was again richly illustrated during 2022-23. For example, our academics participated in the Open Society University Network's Worldwide Teach-in on Climate Justice on 29 March 2023. This event focused on Zoe Svendsen's 5-minute collaborative play, *Love out of the Ruins*, commissioned for the 2021 Climate Action Theatre Anthology, which explores worlds other than the "extractive, transactive, individualist, colonising, fossil-fuel addicted 'high carbon culture'" that humanity currently inhabit. Staff also used the opportunity of the #WorldEnvironmentDay on 5 June 2023 to highlight in-house

research on how household decision-making on the recycling and reuse of single-use plastic bags impacts longer-term sustainability goals.

Other new activities include a joint City of London-Birkbeck Roundtable on the unseen influences on climate, sustainability and resources, and involvement in the Queen's Green Canopy Project, a tree planting initiative aimed at celebrating Britain's longest-reigning monarch and enhancing UK's natural landscape for future generations. This project brought together schools, communities, and other organisations across the UK, including the eighteen member-institutions of the University of London.

### ***Championing human rights around the world***

The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck sustained its human rights advocacy and justice reform work during the review period. Notably, the fifth edition of the World Female Imprisonment List was released, reporting the number of women and girls in prison globally to be 740,000, a 60 percent increase since 2000. This represented a much faster growth in female than male prisoner population - the latter increased by around 22% over the corresponding period. The List compilers, Helen Fair and Roy Walmsley, expressed hope that the profoundly concerning data would reinforce reformers' calls for an end to the damaging imprisonment of women and girls.

Catherine Heard, Director of ICPR's World Prison Research Programme, commented: "It is deeply troubling that the number of women and girls imprisoned worldwide has risen so dramatically in just two decades...Huge increases have been seen in developed and less developed countries alike, with poverty, structural inequality, and the failed war on drugs the key underlying factors. Incarcerating more women for longer does nothing to address social injustice, simply causing further harm to those incarcerated, their families and communities."

### ***Advancing equality, diversity, inclusion, and opportunities***



Commitment to advancing equality, diversity, inclusion (EDI), and opportunities was demonstrated in various ways. These include commemorating special days (e.g. International Women Day, World Refugee Day, Holocaust Memorial, Global Accessibility Awareness Day), dedicated weeks/month (e.g. Pride Month, Refugee Week, Black History Month), and providing or facilitating funding to improve underrepresented and disadvantaged communities' access to educational and career opportunities.

The International Women's Day, for example, was marked with an online roundtable on gender equality, education, knowledge, and sustainable development. A talk by consultant Chris Paouros on "Equity Rather Than Equality" further reinforced the year's message that gender equity needs to be part of every society's DNA and that equity isn't just a nice-to-have but a must-have.

The Black History Month was also marked by activities, including the 16 October 2022 screening and discussion of a film on the untold story of Emmett Louis Till, a 14-year African American kidnapped and lynched in August 1955 for whistling at a white woman in public in Mississippi. The documentary by American filmmaker Keith Beaucham won the USA Freedom of Expression Award, the American Bar Association's Silver Gavel Award among others, and its screening at Birkbeck coincided with the release of the 2022 feature film, *Till*, directed by Chinonye Chukwu. The screening was organised by the Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism (BISA) in collaboration with the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research and History, Classics and Archaeology colleagues. The Month was additionally marked with a blog piece, "Black History Month and beyond: in conversation with Dr William Ackah", and a seminar on 31 October 2022 entitled "A foul and violent orgy - James Baldwin on Holocaust Exceptionalism and Black Revolt". The featured speaker was Ben Ratskoff of the Hebrew Union College and the University of Southern California, USA.

The quest to expand educational access and opportunities through reducing financial barriers for students from underrepresented communities was also pursued in several ways. These include the award of Diversity 100 PhD scholarships for the fourth successive year to five doctoral students of Black background; the provision of ten Goldman Sachs and Birkbeck Diversity scholarships worth £5,000 per year to Black undergraduate students to increase diversity in finance; and scholarships allowing underrepresented candidates to study MSc Data Science and Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Data Science. The scholarships supported by an Office for Students' grant cover full fee payment and assistance for living and study costs.

Box 7, below, outlines additional activities aimed at promoting racial equality, diversity, and inclusion.



*Box 7: Addressing EDI themes.*

- Birkbeck's Criminology scholars continued their successful 'Race and Justice' Event Series by launching a fresh programme of activities on 7 December 2022, in collaboration with the British Society of Criminology's Race Matters Network. The 2022-23 programme, organised by Dr Monish Bhatia, explored themes, including racism, oppression, violence, and injustice across the world.
- Birkbeck's Teaching Learning Team hosted Advance HE's Tinashe Verhaeghe on 22 February 2023 for a talk on Race, Racism & Belonging and Bystander Intervention. The event organised as part of the Team's Seminar Series aimed to support staff in managing racism in the classroom.
- A seminar entitled "In the Black Fantastic: Ekow Eshun in conversation" was hosted by Dr Caroline Edwards of Modern & Contemporary Literature on 24 February 2023. The discussion addressed questions, including how contemporary Black artists are reimagining fantastic genres and motifs to address racism and social injustice.
- Birkbeck's Responsible Business Centre hosted Professor Rashedur Chowdhury of the University of Essex on 24 February 2023 for a discussion on how firms can co-innovate with marginalised stakeholders. The talk was entitled "Toward a theory of marginalized stakeholder-centric entrepreneurship".
- The Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism (BISA), founding member of the International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism (ICRAR) which views antisemitism as one element in a family of racisms, co-organised the 7th International Multidisciplinary Conference on 4 January 2023. The theme was "Beyond Camps and Forced Labour: Current International Research on Survivors of Nazi Persecution."

### ***Addressing mental health challenges and employee wellbeing***

Birkbeck staff sustained their focus on aspects of mental health challenges confronting humanity by marking both the University Mental Health Day and the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Mental Health Awareness Week. The Wellbeing Team and Student Union took advantage of the former to raise awareness regarding available support services as well as remind the community to look out for colleagues who may be struggling with their mental wellbeing. The College also used the Mental Health Awareness Week to draw staff attention to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), a confidential employee benefit designed to help colleagues deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting their home life or work life, health, and general wellbeing.

Cognisant also of the potential impact of the cost-of-living crisis on student mental health and wellbeing, the College worked with the Student Union to develop and offer support to particularly affected students. This collaboration led to a service that



provided students with non-perishable food items free of charge on weekdays through the summer term. Furthermore, in response to the mental health issues associated with pervasive digitalisation, the Birkbeck Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Mental Health collaborated with the Centre for Global Mental Health at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) to host an online symposium on Innovation and Inclusion in Digital Mental Health on 17 November 2022.

Interestingly also, The Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre hosted a Wellcome ISSF-supported hybrid event on 17-18 November 2022, which explored the role of theatre, performance and related art practice in the experience and expression of grief in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bringing together artists, academics, community organisers, health and social care professionals, the symposium explored why and how people grieve and don't grieve, where and when this happens, the role of art, ritual, social and cultural practices in this process, and the nuances of grieving in the wake of COVID-19. The featured keynote speaker was Sarah E. Wagner, Professor of Anthropology, George Washington University, USA.

### ***Promoting neurodiversity***

Birkbeck's commitment to promoting the understanding of neurodiversity was also sustained during 2022-23. The Centre for Neurodiversity Research at Work hosted Judy Singer, an Australian sociologist credited with coining the term "Neurodiversity" in 1997-98, to a special evening on 26 April 2023. This enabled students, industry partners and Advisory Board members to meet and engage with this leading figure of the Neurodiversity Movement on the current debates and progress in the field. Dr Singer who was in London to receive an Honorary Fellowship from Birkbeck in recognition of her contributions was joined at the event by the Directors of the Centre, Professor Almuth McDowall of Organizational Psychology and Professor Nancy Doyle, Visiting Professor and Founder of Genius Within, a social enterprise focused on helping neurominorities to unlock their talents.

### ***Influencing the future of work***

Birkbeck academic, Dr Pedro Gomes, is coordinating a pilot programme funded by the government of Portugal to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the four-day working week. Approximately forty Portuguese companies are involved in the project, which aims to measure the impact of reduced work time on the physical and mental health of workers as well as the economic and functional impact on organisations. The participating firms, drawn from sectors, including professional, scientific, technical, human/medical, manufacturing, retail, and not-for-profit sectors, have voluntarily committed to reducing weekly hours while maintaining full pay.

### ***Expanding access to valuable research to the public***

Birkbeck continued to expand access to valuable research and deliver free, online, and more sustainable future for Open Access books. Significantly, a new Arcadia and Research England Development (RED)-funded project, Open Book Futures (OBF), involving Lancaster University, Birkbeck, Coventry, Loughborough, Cambridge, and Open Book Collective (OBC), will significantly increase community-owned Open Access book publishing and improve the quantity, discoverability, preservation, and accessibility of free academic content to all. This will be done by building the infrastructures, business models, networks and resources that are needed to deliver a future for Open Access books, led not by large commercial operations but by communities of scholars, small-to-medium-sized publishers, not-for-profit infrastructure providers, and scholarly libraries.

Martin Eve, Professor of Literature, Technology and Publishing at Birkbeck, welcomed the project and associated £900,000 grant to Birkbeck (part of a £5.8 million pot) thus:

With this generous funding, Birkbeck and our partners will be able to continue and extend the previous work on "Opening the Future", which has, after two years, released over 14 new monographs and accrued enough funding for approximately 45 titles to be published Open Access.

Furthermore, The Open Library of Humanities (OLH), an award-winning, academic-led, diamond open access journal publisher, and Janeway, a ground-breaking open-source scholarly publishing platform, celebrated their tenth and fifth-year anniversary respectively with a symposium on 7–8 September 2023. The hybrid symposium, which included presentations on best practice, future developments, and breakout sessions, explored future directions for Janeway engineering and open access publishing.



## 4.0 INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AND STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Birkbeck sustained strategically important collaborations with international counterparts and related organisations and developed new relationships during 2022-23. The paragraphs below provide examples of these collaborative links.

### *Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, Chengdu, China*

The collaboration between Birkbeck and the Southwestern University of Finance and Economics (SWUFE), Chengdu, China, involving a dual degree undergraduate provision and progression into postgraduate Business and Management programmes, continued. The year's highlights include the graduation of the third cohort of the dual degree students and two-way summer visits by students from both institutions.

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

Academic collaboration between Birkbeck and *Universitat Internacional de Catalunya* (UIC), Barcelona, enabling UIC undergraduate students of Economics and Marketing to gain Bachelor's degrees from both Universities upon successful completion of the prescribed curriculum was similarly sustained during 2022-23. Highlights include the graduation of first cohort of the Dual degree programme and another visit by staff and students of UIC Barcelona to Birkbeck.

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

International exchange relationships with Japanese universities, including Sophia, Hosei, ICU, Ochanomizu, and Waseda University based in Tokyo and Osaka-based Kansai University, also continued during 2022-23. The period saw the resumption of international exchange trips by Birkbeck students and their counterparts from partner universities following the extended disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### *Seoul Business School, South Korea*

Birkbeck recently established a dual degree collaboration with Seoul Business School, aSSIST University, South Korea, to enable eligible doctoral students from the latter institution to gain a second PhD degree from Birkbeck. The Dual degree PhD offer involves a blend of in-person studies and virtual learning and supervision allowing enrolled students to maintain their job whilst working on their doctoral studies.

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

Birkbeck and the University of Bicocca continued to develop their recently established academic relationship, which enables eligible postgraduate students from the latter to gain Master's degrees from both Universities upon successful completion of prescribed curriculum. Under the agreement, Birkbeck awards MSc in Quantitative Risk Management with Machine Learning while UNIMIB awards *The Laurea Magistrale* in Economics and Finance.

### *University of São Paulo, Brazil*

The longstanding relationship between Birkbeck's Psychosocial scholars and the Department of Social Psychology and the Psychology Institute of the University of São Paulo, Brazil, was similarly sustained during the 2022-23 academic year.

### *Athens University of Economics and Business, Greece*

Birkbeck and the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) made further progress toward developing dual degree Master's collaboration in the areas of business, management, and economics. The arrangements when finalised would enable AUEB postgraduate students to gain Master's degrees from both institutions upon successful completion of prescribed curriculum.

### *Additional links with European and North American Universities*

Birkbeck also sustained international exchange and summer study links with several other European and North American universities. These include France's *Université Lumière Lyon 2 and Université De Strasbourg, Université De Catholique Lyon*, and *Centre International D'etudes De Langues De Strasbourg*; Germany's *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Universität Potsdam, Leuphana Universitaet Lueneburg, and Universität Bremen*; Spain's *Universidad De Alicante, Universidad Pablo De Olavide, and Fundacion De La Lengua Espanola*; Italy's *Università Degli Studi Di Palermo, Università Di Pisa, University of Verona*, and European University Institute (EUI); Columbia University, USA; and Queen's University, Canada.

### *European Elite Sports Federations and Academic Centres*

Birkbeck Sports Business Centre's longstanding collaboration with leading European sport federations (UEFA, FIBA, IIHF, and EHF, and the Council of Europe EPAS) and academic partners (University of Limoges, France, University of Lausanne,





Switzerland, University of Mainz, Germany, and University of Lleida, Spain) thrived during the focal year. Notably, the collaborative Executive Master's in Global Sport Governance (MESGO) which supports ex-international footballers to make the transition into football business and governance after their playing careers enrolled its fifth cohort. The programme's third cohort also graduated in Autumn 2022. These graduates include Lise Klaveness and Aaron Hughes, President of the Norwegian Football Association and Technical Director at the Irish Football Association respectively.



### *The Open Society University Network (OSUN)*

Birkbeck sustained its active membership of The Open Society University Network (OSUN), a global network supported by the Open Society Foundations, during 2022-23. Comprising over 30 Universities and research and educational institutions from Europe, Americas, Africa and Middle East, and Central Asia, the network aims to advance knowledge and expand access to higher education to underserved communities across geographic boundaries. It also promotes the development of engaged citizenry by exposing students of partner institutions to globally integrated academic programmes on open society and democracy, sustainability and climate, inequalities, human rights, transnationalism, and arts and society. Examples of opportunities advertised during the review period include doctoral research positions in European Literature and Gender, Visiting Faculty Fellowships, including short-term ones, and The OSUN Threatened Scholars Integration Initiative's Afghan Challenge Fund Initiative (ACF), which offered fellowships to eligible newly arrived Afghans in the UK.



## 5.0 INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND VISITORS

### 5.1 Hosting international events

Birkbeck's standing as a centre for world class research, scholarship and knowledge exchange was abundantly illustrated during this bicentenary year via the hosting of influential international events and visitors. The next several paragraphs provide relevant examples. Appendix A further outlines events organised to mark Birkbeck's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

*Birkbeck Institutes continue to attract important international voices*

Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities' renowned annual London Critical Theory Summer School was held from 26th June to 7th July 2023. As in previous years, the intellectual fest brought together acclaimed critical thinkers, academics, and graduate students to stimulate progressive ideas. A 30-minute tribute to the American philosopher and feminist theorist Drucilla Cornell preceded the 7 July public panel debate, which featured Sarah Nuttall, Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, and Sisonke Msimang, an Australia-based South African writer and activist best known for her memoir "Always Another Country: A memoir of exile and home" (2017).



Another all-South African speaker line up - Faniswa Gxamza of Stellenbosch University and Vanessa Mpatlanyane, Juhi Kasan, and Elena Moore of the University of Cape Town – led a seminar, on 3 May 2023, organised by the Birkbeck Institute for Social Research (BISR) on the Feminist Ethics of Care. The online event critically investigated Ubuntu, a southern African conception of care from an intersectional perspective, providing a multi-scalar understanding of the power dynamics embedded in the concept, discourse, and practice of Ubuntu. The feminist angle was also reflected in the BISR Urban Intersections Working Group's 25 May 2023 seminar,



which featured Dr Anna Viola Sborgi, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow at the Department of Film and Screen Media, University College Cork, Ireland. Her talk touched on women's crucial role in the production of "precarious home" films, situating this in the wider context of transnational housing activism.

The Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities hosted additional international events on 8 November 2022 and 25 May 2023. The former, a panel discussion on "How to co-exist in a time of rage or Thinking with *Giocherendan*" - *giocherendan* meaning cooperation and negotiated coexistence in the West African language of Fula - featured Sarah Schulman, a New York-based writer, gay activist, professor, and author of "Conflict Is Not Abuse". Dine Diallo, founder/president of *Giocherenda*, a collective project and workshop based in Palermo; Clelia Bartoli, a civil rights campaigner, university lecturer, and co-founder of *Giocherenda*; and Tomiwa Owolade, a London-based essayist and journalist, also contributed alongside Birkbeck's Julia Bell and Marina Warner (Chair). The May 2023 event featured Gaza's pre-eminent psychiatrist Dr Yasser Jamei, Director General of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, an independent NGO.

#### *Art, Media and Culture scholars continue to show enviable international reach*

The Birkbeck Arts Week, the annual summer festival of talks, walks, workshops, screenings and performances, and celebration of creativity and intellectual endeavours, was marked from 24 to 28 April 2023 with over 30 free events. The Week, offered in a hybrid format, featured several highlights, including a workshop about AI's potential impact on museums, an interactive workshop on humanity's connection to trees inspired by Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, a panel



discussion on the contemporary experience of crossing borders between countries, and writer, theorist, and filmmaker Kodwo Eshun's exploration of the aesthetic of Black Industrialism in the work of musical artist Trevor Mathison. Another highlight was a discussion, on 27 April, involving Carwyn Morris of Leiden University, The Netherlands, and Amy Y. Zhang and Asa Roast, all experts in urban planning and digital culture, on what happens when places achieve celebrity status online.

"Wanghong urbanism", or the rise of a new urban-digital spectacle in the Chinese context, was one of the interesting take-aways. Prolific Singapore-based Filipino writer, Victor Fernando R. Ocampo, similarly discussed his work and influences in an event on 28 April 2023 moderated by Malaysian editor, writer, and Birkbeck's PhD researcher Zhui Ning Chang. Other highlights include a theatre scratch night and a walking tour of the lost medieval town of Westminster led by Birkbeck's Professor Anthony Bale.



*Birkbeck Interdisciplinary Research in Media and Culture Group* also hosted several international events as part of their series on Memorial sites. The series organised by Marcos Centeno, University of Valencia and Birkbeck, in collaboration with University of Bologna's Centre for the Semiotic Study of Memory (TRAME), the Frankfurt Memory Studies Platform and others, studies contemporary representations of perpetrators of mass crimes. A seminar, on 12 May 2023, on "Acts of remembering through media and visual culture" featured Ljiljana Radonin and Zuzanna Dziuban of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and Ivo Plsek of Masaryk University, Czech Republic. Another event, on 15 June 2023, similarly featured international speakers, including Dr Francesco Mazzucchelli of the International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities "Umberto Eco", Bologna, Italy, who spoke on difficult heritage and visual re-enunciations of fascist architecture. Other speakers - Zoe de Kerangat, Maria C. Puche-Ruiz, Maria Jose Romero-Ternero, Pilar Diaz-Cuevas & Alfonso Fernandez-Tabales - presented individual case studies on memorial sites in post-fascist Southern Europe. Though not part of series on memorial sites, the talk on Making Monuments from Mass Graves of the Spanish Civil War by art historian Dr Daniel Palacios González of the University of Barcelona, hosted by the Birkbeck Centre for Iberian and Latin American Visual Studies, aligned well with the foregoing theme.

Elsewhere, *The Murray Seminars on Medieval and Renaissance Art* hosted Dr Denva Gallant of Rice University, USA, an internationally recognized scholar and specialist in European medieval art and architecture, on 16 November 2022. Dr Gallant's talk was entitled "The Dynastic in the Monastic: King Robert of Anjou and Pierpont Morgan Library Ms. M.626". An earlier seminar on 18 October 2022 featured Dr Erik Gustafson, recently of George Mason University, USA, who addressed the question, Were Franciscan Churches a Betrayal of St. Francis? In addition, The Peltz Gallery hosted a new art exhibition on the work of South African photographer George Hallett (1942-2020). Curated by art historian and critic Christine Eyene, the exhibition themed, "Embedded Text - Embodied Narratives", presented photographs from Hallett's 1960s District Six series - a culturally mixed neighbourhood of Cape Town that was declared *White-only* by the apartheid government in 1966. In 1968, before the forced removals and demolitions, Hallett captured some of the district's landmarks, its community, everyday life, and social events. This series, one of Hallett's first major bodies of work, has become part of South Africa's heritage.

*Social Science Scholars continue to bring the world to Birkbeck*

*Politics at Birkbeck* hosted a practitioners' workshop on National Parliaments and European Integration on 26 June 2023, which X-rayed the opportunities and difficulties faced by these parliaments as they work to hold national executives to account on EU policy making. Featured speakers include Dr Menelaos Markakis of

the Erasmus University, Rotterdam, and Lord Norton of Louth, considered one of the UK's greatest living experts on Parliaments.

*The Centre for British Political Life* and Dr Dimitrakopoulos-held *Birkbeck's Jean Monnet Chair in Parliamentary Democracy & European Integration* equally hosted multiple events on important European themes. These include a talk on 23 March 2023 by Professor Katy Hayward of Queen's University Belfast to mark the Good Friday Agreement's 25th anniversary; a talk on 24 April by former Italian Prime Minister Professor Enrico Letta on European Union's political systems and contemporary risks; and a workshop involving several European contributors to the Palgrave/Springer book expected in 2024 on the politicisation of EU executive leadership selection. The book project is led by Matilde Ceron (European University Institute, Florence), Thomas Christiansen (LUISS Guido Carli, Rome) and Dionyssi Dimitrakopoulos (Birkbeck).

Other notable events include a seminar on The European Parliament, 'Qatargate' and the EU's Legitimacy on 19 May 2023; a workshop on multi-level regulators and EU governance on 25 May 2023; and an ex-post evaluation of Greece's economic adjustment programmes on 6 July 2023. The 19 May event attracted Brussels-based commentator and journalist Caroline de Gruyter and retired European Parliament Official Emilio De Capitani. The 25 May event featured Prof Michelle Everson, a recent Lead of the Jean Monnet network on European Regulatory Agencies, Prof. Ioannis Lianos, Head of Greece's Competition Commission, and Prof. Yannis Papadopoulos, leading authority on accountability in multi-level governance based at Université de Lausanne. Dr Fragiskos Koutentakis, Head of Hellenic Parliamentary Budget Office and Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Crete, Dr Marylou Hamm of ULB and College of Europe, and Julia Lendvai, Head of Unit at the European Commission, featured at the 6 July event.

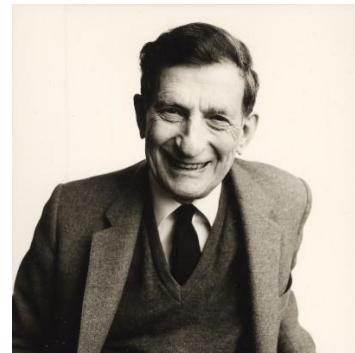
Relatedly, *the Birkbeck Centre for the Study of Internationalism* hosted Rohit De and Ornit Shani of Yale University and Haifa University, Israel, respectively for a panel discussion on a new book by University of Nottingham's Stephen Legg. The book focuses on a major international conference in 1930s' London that shaped India's constitutional future in the British Empire. The Centre's Professor Alex Colas additionally chaired a symposium, on 18 May 2023, on the culinary landscape of Turkey and neighbouring Levant countries. The symposium featured international speakers, including Derya Nizam Bilgiç from Izmir Economy University, Candan Turkan from Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Daniel Monterescu of the Central European University, Vienna, Ariel Handel from Bezalel, Jerusalem, and Atak Ayaz from Geneva Graduate Institute, IHEID.



Elsewhere in the faculty, *Psychosocial scholars* hosted the EPSC Annual Lecture on 14 June 2023, which featured Dorothea Harris of the University of Victoria (UVic), British Columbia, Canada, and discussants from the University of Oslo, University of Sydney, and University of Edinburgh. The online lecture entitled “Helping to move each other forward” focused on the Guest Lecturer’s collaborative work, in her role as Director of Indigenous University Initiatives at UVic located in the Coast Salish territory, to move UVic away from colonial thinking and systems. The MA Psychosocial Studies Annual Lecture also attracted Samir Gandesha, Director of The Institute of Humanities at Simon Fraser University, Canada, who spoke on “The Trauma of Thinking” on 11 July 2023. The 97th annual Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association Conference was equally hosted by *Birkbeck Philosophers* from 7 to 9 July 2023. The joint Conference attracted international scholars, including Anandi Hattiangadi (University of Stockholm), Dan Zahavi (University of Copenhagen), Kate Manne (Cornell University USA), Carla Bagnoli (Modena University, Italy), Véronique Munoz-Dardé (UCL/Berkeley), Mike Martin (Oxford/Berkeley), Errol Lord (University of Pennsylvania, USA), and Katalin Farkas (Central European University, Vienna, Austria).

*Birkbeck Scientists sustain international reach via digital and traditional channels.*

Birkbeck’s annual *festival of science* took place on campus during the week, 30 May to 6 June 2023. The events livestreamed to a global online audience featured free and engaging public lectures, panel discussions, poster sessions, lab tours, and related activities designed to share cutting-edge research. As in previous years, there were brief talks by Birkbeck scientists from Psychological, Biological, and Earth and Planetary Sciences on themes, including AI and its applications to biology, the future of humanity, and how research in cognitive neuroscience, psychology and genetics can help facilitate better understanding of how the brain develops and children learn. Other highlights include the return of the annual Rosalind Franklin lecture and the screening of ‘Infinite Potential’, a compelling portrait of late Birkbeck Professor of Theoretical Physics, David Joseph Bohm FRS (1917-1992). This Professor described by Einstein as his “spiritual son” was widely regarded as one of the twentieth century’s most significant theoretical physicists.



The Science faculty had earlier in March 2023 hosted young leaders and academics from India and the UK for the Y20 Young Minds Conference, the official youth engagement group for the G20, a grouping of the world’s largest and most advanced economies. The event organised in conjunction with UCL and championed by Birkbeck’s Professor Sanjib Bhakta was a Y20@G20 and Young India Dialogue

initiative, and it featured keynotes on major global development themes, including health and wellbeing, innovation and industry, energy access and climate change, and gender rights. International speakers include Mr Sidharth Yadav, Founder President of Young India Dialogue, Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, India's Former Sherpa to G7 & G20, and Mr Falit Sijariya, India's Y20 delegate.

Furthermore, *Birkbeck Knowledge Lab* hosted Dr Stavros P. Adam of the University of Ioannina, Greece, on 1 December 2022 for a talk on how set membership estimation based on interval arithmetic can be applied to tackle challenges in neural computation and explain and interpret neural classifiers' decisions. Another seminar on 12 October 2022 featured Dr Ellie Small of Drew University, New Jersey, USA, whose talk on "Principal Phrase Mining and Clustering Text" introduced a method that eliminates double counting without the need to identify lists of quality phrases. Dr Small gained First Class Honours in Mathematics and Statistics from Birkbeck in 1992.

#### *Business and Law Scholars equally hosted international speakers*

The Business School's Meet the Editor Series welcomed Ohio State University's Professor Jennifer Clark, Deputy Editor-In-Chief of the highly ranked *Regional Studies* journal, and Morten Huse, Professor Emeritus at BI Norwegian Business School (Oslo), on 12 December 2022 and 30 January 2023 respectively. Professor Huse spoke on how to become and thrive as an impactful scholar. The school also hosted Professor Dr Hannah Hottenrott of Technical University, Munich, and Dr Jan Kinne of Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research [ZEW] and Harvard. Their seminar on 28 March 2023 focused on "Technology Mapping using Webai: The Case of Sustainability Engaged Blockchain Companies in the US". In addition, Dr. Annalisa Caloffi of the University of Florence, Italy, Dr Anna Colovic of NEOMA Business School, France, and Dr Laura Kreiling of the OECD Science and Technology Policy (STP) division were guest speakers at The *CIMR Debates and Workshops in Public Policy Series* event held on 19 October 2022. The seminar focused on "Innovation policy and the Covid-19 pandemic: what role for co-creation and crowdsourcing instruments?"

Relatedly, the Birkbeck Responsible Business Centre welcomed Ms Slavka Eley, Head of Governance and Coordination Unit, European Labour Authority, for a talk on 25 January 2023 entitled "How is sustainability impacting financial services and reshaping labour markets?" Another event led by the School's Organisational Psychologists attracted speakers from Australia, Canada, Ethiopia, Japan, Switzerland, the UK, and USA, and nearly 100 medical doctors and doctors-in-training from across the world. This international conference, funded by the Wellcome Trust Institutional

Strategic Support Fund, was co-organised by Dr Caroline Kamau-Mitchell, Reader in Occupational Health, and medical doctor Dr Khalid Bin Waleed.

The *Birkbeck Law School* also hosted University of Oslo's Professor Katja Franko and Dr David Goyes on 9 March 2023 for a seminar on "Profiting from Pablo: Consumerism, Memory and Global Hierarchies of Victimhood." Another talk on "Mediated Politics and Crime in the Post-Truth World of Trump" by Gregg Barak, award-winning author, editor, and Emeritus Professor at Eastern Michigan University, USA, also took place on 27 March 2023. In addition, The Centre for Law and Humanities hosted Jennifer Culbert, Professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University, USA, on 9 June 2023. The event focused on Emilios Christodoulidis' book, "The Redress of Law: Globalisation, Constitutionalism, and Market Capture", which is considered a profound work of legal and constitutional theory.

Notably also, The Birkbeck Law on Trial programme, an annual week of free, public events, was held from 19 to 23 June. This year's programme, which also marked the Birkbeck Law School's 30th anniversary, featured international panellists, including Professor Allison Tait of the University of Richmond, USA, and Fleur Ramsey, Australia-based Samoan human and indigenous rights lawyer with keen interest in climate and environmental law/justice. The panel discussions focused on themes such as resisting injustice, the social and political lives of trials, and ecological destruction and climate litigation.

## 5.2 Hosting international visitors

Birkbeck hosted several international scholars and visitors during the 2022-23 period.

**Jeffrey Wasserstrom**, Chancellor's Professor of History at University of California, Irvine, spent the Spring term at Birkbeck as a Leverhulme Visiting Professor. A social and cultural historian with research focus on China and issues of gender, revolution, and global cities, Professor Wasserstrom contributed to several events during his visit. These include a talk on 4 May 2023 entitled "St. George and The Dragon: Orwell's 20th Century Novel, China's 21st Century Realities", a 5 June roundtable on Hong Kong's Struggle 2003-2023 that also featured Isabel Hilton, contributing editor at Prospect magazine, Edmund Cheng, political scientist at City University of Hong Kong, and Jessie Lau, editor with the Nu Voices collective. Equally notable was a roundtable on 22 June on the erection and toppling of statues and associated issues of public commemoration, which featured Professor Mary Beard, from Cambridge, Toby Lichtig, a TLS editor and freelance cultural critic, and Dr Renie Chow Choy of St Paul's Cathedral.

**Dr Silvia Di Battista**, Social Psychology Research Fellow at the University of Bergamo Italy, also visited Birkbeck for academic collaboration. During her visit, she gave a





talk, on 2 December 2022, on “Cross-cultural attitudes toward couples who are planning to adopt children: LGBTIQ+ Parenthood in Italy and the UK”, which highlighted similarities and differences in attitudes to LGT parenting.

**Professor Jerome Branche**, Professor of Latin American Literature and Cultural Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, concluded his Visiting Professorship at Birkbeck’s Department of Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics (LCAL) during 2023, with multiple seminars on 18 January, 7 March and 8 March, 2023. The January event entitled “The great reset is not a conspiracy theory’: critique, connection, and convergence across post-covid social networks” also featured Dr Marc Tuters of the University of Amsterdam’s Media Studies Department. Professor Branche is renowned internationally for his pioneering work on race, colonialism, and literature in the Latin American, Caribbean and the Luso-Hispanic worlds.

Box 8, below, offers examples of other international visitors to Birkbeck during 2022-23.

*Box 8: Sample International Visitors, 2022-23*

**Jim Lowden** of the Mechanics Institute Victoria, Australia, visited Birkbeck to commemorate the College’s 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He was received by Vice Chancellor, Prof David Latchman, who presented him with a copy of a new book on the 200-year history of Birkbeck, which started out as the London Mechanics Institute.



**Naomi Klein**, award-winning journalist, columnist, international bestselling author, and founding co-director of the University of British Columbia Centre for Climate Justice, was hosted by Professor Jacqueline Rose, feminist thinker, and co-Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities, on 27 April 2023. The online event covered areas of shared interests, including climate justice and assaults on political freedoms.

**Nobel Prize winner** and Cypriot economist **Professor Sir Christopher Pissarides**, University of Cyprus and LSE, gave a talk to the Birkbeck’s Brainstorming Grants Group on 15 June 2023 on how to become an intellectual pioneer.

**Harvard Professor Armitage**, best known for his work on the Atlantic World in the Age of Revolutions, contributed to a masterclass hosted by History, Classics and Archaeology scholars on 26 June 2023. The event took the form of a dialogue between two historians, Professor Armitage (Harvard) and Professor Wasserman (UCLA, Irvine), who teach at very different institutions and focus on different topics, periods, and places.



**Olga Smith**, a historian of contemporary art, writer, curator, and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the University of Vienna, Austria, gave a talk on 21 November 2022. The presentation was based on her lauded first monograph, *Contemporary Photography in France: Between Theory and Practice*, which also won grants from the *Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft* and Association for Art History.

**Professor Dr Agnieszka Radziwon** of Aarhus University, Denmark, and University of California, Berkeley, USA, visited Birkbeck on 8 December 2022 for a workshop on networking for research that discussed strategies for growing a network of helpful co-authors.

**Srila Roy**, acclaimed author and Professor of Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, joined colleagues on 21 November 2022 to discuss gender and sexual politics in India. She presented on "Changing the Subject: Feminist and Queer Politics in Neoliberal India".

**Professor Maren Niehoff**, Max Cooper Professor of Jewish Thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, was welcomed by History, Classics and Archaeology scholars for a talk, on 9 February 2023, entitled "A substantive critique of slavery in antiquity? The changing perspectives of Philo of Alexandria."

**Dr Giovanni Cerulli**, Researcher/Director at the Research Institute on Sustainable Economic Growth, National Research Council of Italy, was hosted by the Centre for Applied Macroeconomics at Birkbeck on 10 May 2023. He presented on the fundamentals of machine learning (ML) for social scientists, exploring theory, usefulness, and fields of application.

**Dr Amanda Cravens**, Social Research Scientist for the US Government based in Fort Collins Science Centre, Colorado, creator of a longstanding research collective, and author of a fascinating book on creativity in research, facilitated an online workshop on Collective Strategies to Developing Research on 9 February 2023.

**Dr Catherine Lord**, author, scholar, and Lecturer at the University of Amsterdam presented a two-part seminar to researchers and students of Creative Arts and Theatre on 14 and 21 June 2023. Dr Lord teaches Literature and Cultural Analysis as well as Media and Culture, and her research explores the interdisciplinary fields between environmental humanities, philosophy, queer studies, psychoanalysis, and feminism.

**Dr Kathleen Gallagher**, Distinguished Professor and current Director of the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto, gave a talk, on 25 May 2023, entitled "Young artists and their soundwaves: theatre-making and ethnographic research for more hopeful futures." Her presentation shared the work of a multi-site, five-year, ethnography undertaken in Toronto (Canada), Lucknow (India), Athens (Greece), Tainan (Taiwan), and Coventry (England) that centred on young



people and their theatre-making practices, probing questions about “hope” and “care” amid intersecting and overlapping global crises.

**Deepanshu Mohan**, Professor of Economics and Director, and **Jignesh Mistry**, Photographer, Field Researcher, and Lead for the Visual Storyboard Team, both based at the Centre for New Economics Studies (CNES), O.P Jindal Global University, India, contributed to a seminar on “The Use of Visual Storyboards to Study Vulnerability in India” hosted by Birkbeck Social Scientists on 28 April 2023.

**Einat Adar**, Lecturer in English Literature at the University of South Bohemia in Budvar, Czech Republic, and Joseph Brooker joined Birkbeck’s Toby Harris as panellists on 26 April 2023, for the launch of Radio Myles, a new podcast produced by the last named, which showcases under-explored archival material and new perspectives on the Irish writer Flann O’Brien / Myles na gCopaleen / Brian O’Nolan. Einat’s research interests include Samuel Beckett, Flann O’Brien, Irish modernism, and philosophy.

**Maurya Wickstrom**, Professor of Theatre at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York and the author of *Fiery Temporalities in Theatre and Performance: The Initiation of History* (2018) among others, shared thoughts on her latest book project provisionally entitled “The Whale and the Waters” on 23 March 2023. The project focuses on Homer’s *The Odyssey*, Caribbean poet and playwright Derek Walcott’s epic poem *Omeros*, and Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick* as oceanic texts connecting slavery, inter-species relation, and alternative (watery) epistemologies.

**Carolina Cosse**, The Mayor of Montevideo, Uruguay, visited Birkbeck to speak with our international students about her journey from engineer to politician, the role of women in political leadership, & environmental challenges she is tackling in Uruguay.





## 6.0 ALUMNI AT THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

With thousands of alumni currently living in about 150 countries around the world, Birkbeck’s international reach runs wide and deep. The USA, Greece, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Canada, Republic of Ireland, China, and Australia remain the top 10 countries reflected in our international alumni database, but this order may change in the future given the increased enrolment of students from other countries.

As part of Birkbeck’s 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, the Development and Alumni team “took to the road” to meet members of our alumni community in several global cities. Pictures from some recent gatherings can be seen below:



Singapore, 3 March 2023



Dublin, 18 May 2023



Paris, 8 June 2023



Athens, 8 June 2023



Madrid, 15 June 2023



Berlin, 15 June 2023

This bicentenary anniversary year also saw many of Birkbeck’s international alumni making significant strides at the world stage. The paragraphs and Box 9, below, offer interesting examples.

### ***Curating the British Pavilion at Venice Biennale 2023***

Birkbeck alumna, Sumitra Upham, was commissioned as a curator for the British Pavilion at Venice Biennale 2023. As the FT.com (2023) remarked, her exhibition, “Dancing Before the Moon”, took architecture beyond buildings and celebrated the global rituals and cultural practices of UK diaspora communities and how they impact built space.

### ***A new UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ambassador with a refugee past***

JJ Bola, 2017 MA Creative Writing graduate of Birkbeck, started life in the UK as a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, speaking no word of English in his council estate neighbourhood. He, however, found writing and later Birkbeck, and is now a successful writer, poet, with poetry collections and novels incorporating themes from his family background and youth worker experience. JJ is also a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Ambassador and passionately advocates for the importance of education in society in this role.

JJ’s second novel, *The Selfless Act of Breathing*, is currently being developed as a feature-length film by Bron Studios, a Canadian motion picture company that has produced recent acclaimed films, including *Joker*, *Queen & Slim* and *Greyhound*.

Birkbeck’s flexible schedule, a supportive community of student writers, and the accountability of academic deadlines assisted JJ to hone his craft. His words:

“I used to think that my process was sporadic and intuitive, but I didn’t realise how much I needed structure to write until I started at Birkbeck... I’m fortunate to have a unique lens on the world that reflects my many conflicting identities — refugee, anglophone, francophone, Black, working-class. With my work, I hope to offer an alternative perspective on issues across lines of race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality.”

### ***On a mission to improve lives***

Dr Rachel Glennerster CMG, graduate of Birkbeck’s MSc and PhD programmes, has spent her working life so far seeking to reduce poverty worldwide and improve the lives of people in developing countries. She did so through evidence-based policy interventions, providing advice to ministers and senior officials on the most effective ways to address international development challenges, and by serving as an intermediary between the policy and academic worlds.



The above focus, triggered by Dr Glennerster’s experience in Egypt as an 18-year-old, has remained constant through her various professional roles, notably as Chief Economist at the UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and UK Civil Service, and Policy Economist in the UK Treasury and International Monetary Fund (IMF). She noted thus:

“Everything else pales into insignificance when you spend time in low- and middle-income countries and see the challenges people are facing. I believe we have a responsibility to people everywhere in the world. Richer countries are not even close to doing enough...”

Dr Glennerster cites her proudest career achievement to date as the crucial role she played in developing the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), an economics research centre at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where she pioneered the use of randomised trials to test and compare the outcomes of new economic policies. Dr Glennerster recently moved into academia, taking on an Associate Professor of Economics role at the University of Chicago. She noted thus: “My time at Birkbeck persuaded me that I could make that switch and enjoy it....”

### ***Leading the way for women in tech***

Emma Rees, Birkbeck’s 2010 graduate of Management and thriving tech entrepreneur, has a remarkable back story. Brought up just outside Perth in Western Australia, Emma left school at 16 to work as a hairdresser, subsequently buying and building up a successful salon before moving to London, aged 25, in search of opportunities and enhanced business acumen. She recently won the globally respected Melinda Gates Female Founders award for enterprise technology and is CEO and Co-Founder of Deployed, a start-up designed to digitize and improve efficiency in acquiring and delivering complex services.



Reflecting on her Birkbeck days, Emma observed that she quickly “found my tribe...a class full of ambitious, driven people who wanted to do something more.” Just six months into her Birkbeck studies, she started a new venture, one of the first on-demand digital platforms for hair, makeup, nails, and massage. This venture, however, failed, teaching Emma invaluable lessons. With three co-founders, Emma next pursued an opportunity to build tech infrastructure to support the rapidly growing project economy, through enabling clearer definition of the work, tracking progress, and collaborating in one system. This project, Deployed, proved to be game changing, attracting two government grants, a major global award, and significant funding and investors enabling Emma’s team to grow further. The venture has also given Emma a platform to help elevate other women in tech and address how pertinent barriers can be overcome.



### ***Birkbeck graduate shatters another glass ceiling***

Preeti Shetty, 2012 graduate of MSc Sports Management, was recently appointed as a non-Executive Director of Brentford Football Club, making her the only South Asian woman in a Premier League boardroom. Formerly Chief Executive of Upshot, a social enterprise start-up originally created by the Football Foundation that helps over 1,000 not-for-profit organisations measure the impact of their community work, Preeti was also named as one of the Sport Industry Group 'NextGen Leaders'. She credits her dissertation on impact measurement at Birkbeck with giving her a foot in the door at Upshot and helping her develop the company from infancy to one that demonstrates sport's social value to communities worldwide. Reflecting on the significance of her latest appointment, Preeti noted:

"Other South Asian women can look at me and say, 'if I want, I can do that too!' But equally, there are so many other roles we haven't touched. There are so many glass ceilings. We are living in a difficult, divisive time and it has never been more important for us to be inclusive, to be tolerant and to focus on equity before we even think about equality."

### ***The 2023 Paul Boesch Art Prize goes to Birkbeckian Okudzeto***

Dr Senam Okudzeto, Birkbeck's 2023 PhD graduate of Cultural Studies recently won the prestigious Paul Boesch award, one of Switzerland's highest art awards, for her socio-politically relevant work. The Prize, given annually by the Paul Boesch Foundation since 2014, aims to support artists and art students whilst also honouring the Bernese artist of the same name, renowned for his woodcuts, coats of arms and stained glass.

A multi-faceted British-American-Ghanaian artist - painter, social sculptor, installer, film maker, researcher, writer -, Okudzeto was also Founder-Director of an Art NGO based in Ghana and a co-curator of the exhibition 'Fun Feminism' at Kunstmuseum Basel (September 2022 – Mar 2023). Her fluid identity and identifications as a West African who is also European and of North American descent bring unparalleled depth and richness to her work. Dr Okudzeto's methodological practice of "Afro-Dada", for example, forges narrative connections between unexpected vectors and continually explores identity politics, material culture and critical responses to previously overlooked socio-economic and political histories.

### ***Award-winning alumna adapting 'Alice in Wonderland' for South African stage***

Birkbeck alumna Néka Da Costa graduated MA in Text and Performance from Birkbeck and RADA, during which she honed her creative practice as a



director/theatre maker and her research in Performance Studies in the global South. A disabled, queer theatre-maker, collaborator and academic at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, Néka is currently working to design and mobilise a radical pedagogy in Theatre and Performance which prioritises inclusive access as part of her PhD research at the Wits School of Arts. Néka recent creative work include narratives for children such as “Tiny the Tokoloshe and Other African Tales”, which won a Naledi Theatre Award for Best Production for Young Audiences in 2019. She is currently working on a South African adaptation of “Alice in Wonderland” to be staged in February 2024.

### ***Creative journey kickstarted at Birkbeck is making waves***

Lemady Rochard who gained her Master’s in Culture and Critical Studies from Birkbeck was recently shortlisted for The Association of Illustrators’ World Illustration Awards 2023 in the Children’s Publishing category. She was also shortlisted for the Northern Illustration Prize. Currently based in Switzerland, Lemady is a queer, feminist artist, illustrator, storyteller, teacher, and creator of children’s art and storytelling studio, Storycraft. Her illustrations take a mixed-media collage approach, combining digital drawing with hand-made elements. Lemady credits Birkbeck for reigniting a love of illustration: “I was luckily enough to be taught at by Michael Rosen at Birkbeck, who reawakened a love of children’s books and kickstarted her creative journey!”



### ***Alumna’s work reaching more theatre and festival audiences***

Jaswinder Blackwell-Pal completed her doctorate at Birkbeck in 2022, having previously gained MA Text and Performance in 2015. Her thesis, “Serving the Self: authenticity, performance and emotional labour”, used primary data from British workplaces to expand and develop an understanding of the theatrical and performative influence in contemporary service and hospitality work. Currently Lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies at Queen Mary, University of London, Dr Blackwell-Pal has worked with Old Vic New Voices and Kali Theatre and her work has been performed at the Old Red Lion, Brighton Fringe, RADA, and VAULT festivals.

#### *Box 9: Other Birkbeck alumni making strides*

- **Jude Whiley**, MA Creative Writing graduate, won the 2023 Moth Short Story Prize for her work entitled “The Brain Named Itself”, which was published in the Summer Fiction series of the Irish Times. His entry was commended in the previous year.





- **Michelle Conway**, 2019 MSc Data Science graduate and lead data scientist at Lloyds Banking Group, was recently selected in the 2023's top "Twenty in Data & Tech" by Women in Data®, a platform for female and gender diverse data professionals to share knowledge and experiences, and to improve representation in the industry.
- **Elizabeth Freemantle's** new book, "Disobedient Firebrand", recently made the Waterstone's Hot Title list. The book is the seventh in Elizabeth's decade-long career as a novelist.
- **Amanda Lim** won a national competition with over 300 entries, and a year's tuition fee, for her idea on how to help mental health on campus. Her entry, an app that streamlines the student onboarding process and provides the tools and resources for continuous support whilst at university, was praised by the judges "for providing a logical, practical and feasible solution that effectively incorporates the variability of the student experience".
- **Handa Majed**, undercover reporter, producer of the documentary "The Crossing", won the Royal Television Society award for the best UK current affairs programme of 2022 and RTS award nomination for her ITV documentary. Judges acclaimed the film as "a stupendous piece of film making, displaying great bravery and compelling storytelling". Handa is also founder of Kurdish Umbrella, an independent charity helping Kurdish Asylum Seekers and their families with Immigration issues, age disputes and destitution.
- **Nicole Moore**, graduate in MA Culture, Diaspora, and Ethnicity, recently exhibited her artworks as part of the launch of a special issue of the Dandelion Journal. Nicole is a writer, published poet, interdisciplinary visual artist, and editor of three anthologies of poetry and personal essays, two of which received Arts Council England's Grants.



## APPENDIX A: 200TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

The programme of activities and events designed to celebrate Birkbeck's 200th anniversary during 2022-23 include the following:

- A book, 'Birkbeck, 200 Years of Radical Learning for Working People', by Professor Joanna Bourke was launched with an insightful chat between the author and Professor Matt Cook, covering how the book was conceived and how it took shape.
- Birkbeck President Baroness Bakewell hosted an Anniversary Reception at the House of Lords on 7 February 2023. This featured remarks by Science Minister George Freeman MP, Education Secretary Gillian Keegan MP, Chair of Governors Sir Andrew Cahn, and Vice Chancellor Professor David Latchman.
- Sir Paul Marshall, a Trustee of the Education Policy Institute and one of founding trustees of ARK, an education charity that aims to facilitate access to great education and real-life choices to all children, regardless of their background, gave an anniversary lecture on 21 March 2023. He shared "Lessons from two decades of investing in inner-city education."
- Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE, British actor, playwright, director and broadcaster and the Artistic Director of the Young Vic since 2018, gave a lecture on "The Dramaturgy of Leadership" on 23 May 2023. The talk explored the role of leadership in catalysing people to fulfil their artistic vision and how this can serve wider national interests.
- Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE, Founder of Stemettes, Craig Fenton, Managing Director of Strategy and Operations at Google, and Chris Yiu, Director of Public Policy at Meta, Northern Europe, took part in a panel discussion on Creating a More Equitable Tech Sector on 28 June 2023. The event was moderated by Rachel Neaman, Birkbeck Governor.
- Lord Holmes of Richmond MBE gave an anniversary lecture on "Our Digital Future" on 15 June 2023.
- Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London to King Charles III, gave an anniversary lecture on 18 September 2023 entitled "Lifelong learning - an indulgence or a strategic imperative?"
- The University Library also marked the bicentenary with a series of displays showcasing items from Birkbeck's archives and image collection. The displays are



organised around themes, including the founding of Birkbeck (March to mid-May 2023); Student Life (mid-May to August 2023); Birkbeck during the wars (August 2023 to mid-October 2023); and The life of Birkbeck Library (mid-October to December 2023). The Founding of Birkbeck theme featured an exciting talk by Professor Joanna Bourke on Birkbeck's beginnings held on 24 April 2023.

- The 'Birkbeck Effects' Series offering stories, achievements, and societal impact of 200 people from our diverse and vibrant community appeared on the Anniversary website and College campus throughout the bicentenary year. Examples of featured Beckbeckians include Nobel Prize winners Professor Roger Penrose and T S Eliot, pioneering DNA researcher Rosalind Franklin, UK Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald, and political activist Marcus Garvey.

## APPENDIX B: SOME INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS HOSTED BY BIRKBECK

**19, Interdisciplinary Studies in the Nineteenth Century**, an open access, refereed online journal established in 2005 to advance interdisciplinary study in the long nineteenth century. Supported by the Centre for Nineteenth Century Studies at Birkbeck and published by the Open Library of Humanities, the journal has two themed issues annually as well as special forums advancing critical debate in the field. The general editor is Dr Ana Parejo Vadillo.

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

**Dandelion** <https://dandelionjournal.org/> is a postgraduate arts journal and research network also hosted by the Centre for Contemporary Literatures at Birkbeck. It publishes two special issues per year, bringing together new articles from a wide variety of disciplinary approaches within the humanities. A special issue of the Journal on the theme of intersectionality and the arts edited by Naomi Smith, journalist, freelance writer, alumna and former Governor and postgraduate researcher at Birkbeck, was launched on 24 April 2023.

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

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

**The Open Library of Humanities (OLH)** is an award winning, academic-led, diamond open-access publisher of 28 journals based launched in 2015 by Birkbeck



academics Professor Martin Eve and Dr Caroline Edwards. Part of Birkbeck since May 2021, OLH offers free, permanent access to scholarly work in the humanities disciplines, covering its costs via payments from an international library consortium. OLH's initial funding came from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and subsequently Arcadia, a charitable fund of Dr Lisbet Rausing and Professor Peter Baldwin. All OLH journals' academic articles are subject to rigorous peer review.

## APPENDIX C: SOME NEW BOOKS FROM BIRKBECK

- Konstantinos Chalkias of the Birkbeck Business School Management co-authored a new book, *Disaster Insurance Reimagined: Protection in a Time of Increasing Risk* (with Paula Jarzabkowski, Eugenia Cacciatori, and Rebecca Bednarek), Oxford University Press, August 2023.
- Benedetta Crisafulli of the Birkbeck Business School Management co-authored a new book *Brands and Consumers: A Research Overview* (with Jaywant Singh), Routledge, December 2022.
- Sarah Hart, Professor of Mathematics, authored a new book, *Once Upon a Prime: The Wondrous Connections Between Mathematics and Literature*, Flatiron Books, April 2023.
- Sacha Hepburn, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in History, Classics and Archaeology, published a new book, *Home Economics: Domestic service and gender in urban Southern Africa*, Manchester University Press, August 2022.
- Klaus Nielsen, Professor of Institutional Economics, recently co-edited a new book *Professional Team Sports and the Soft Budget Constraint* (with Rasmus K. Storm and Zsolt Havran), Edward Elgar, 2022.
- Jean-Marc Dewaele of Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics co-authored a new book, *Questionnaires in Second Language Research* (with late Zoltan Dörnyei), Routledge, New York, November 2022.
- Avtar Brah, Professor Emeritus in Sociology, authored a new book, *Decolonial Imaginings: Intersectional conversations and contestations*, Goldsmith Press, July 2022
- Joanna Bourke, Professor of History, authored a new book, *Disgrace: Global Reflections on Sexual Violence*, Reaktion Books, August 2022.
- Elena Loizidou of the Birkbeck Law School authored a new book, 'Anarchism: an art of living without Law', Routledge, September 2022.
- Basak Ertür of the Birkbeck Law School authored a new book 'Spectacles and Specters: A Performative Theory of Political Trials', Fordham University Press, 2022.
- Lisa McEntee-Atalianis of Applied Linguistics co-edited a book (with Professor Humphrey Tonkin), 'Language and Sustainable Development', Springer, March 2023.

## APPENDIX D: SOME BIRKBECK STAFF EDITING INTERNATIONAL JOURNALS

- Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele of Applied Linguistics and Communications is the General Editor of the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*.
- Professor Julie Gore from Organizational Psychology is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. Professor Almuth McDowall, also from Organizational Psychology, is Senior Editor of the same journal.
- Professor Clare Press from Psychological Sciences is Associate Editor at *Cortex*, an international journal currently in Volume 168.
- Dr Suzanne J Konzelmann from Management is Editor of the *Cambridge Journal of Economics*.
- Professors Fiona Macmillan and Costas Douzinas of the Law School are Managing Editors of the *Law and Critique: The International Journal of Critical Legal Thought*.
- Professor Mark Cook, David Feldman and Julia Laite are Editors of the *History Workshop journal*.
- Dr Sophia Connell of Historical Studies is Associate Editor of the *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*.
- Dr Sarah Marks of Historical Studies is Editor of the *History of the Human Sciences*.
- Professor Lisa Baraitser of Psychosocial Studies is co-Editor of the *Studies in the Maternal*.



## APPENDIX E: SOME BIRKBECK VOICES IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

### Some Birkbeck Voices in the International Media

- Professor Ian Crawford (Earth and Planetary Sciences) commented on a *Guardian* piece about how digitised works of 30,000 artists are to be archived on the moon.
- Prof Denis Mareschal (Psychological Sciences) commented in *The Guardian* about a study which showed that adults' penchant for Van Gogh is mirrored in babies.
- Dr Luca Andriani (Management) was interviewed for the Association for Social Economy Newsletter on the relationship between current global crisis and institutions. The Segment is entitled 'Dialogos: A Corner for Dialogue and Change'.
- Professor Gail Kinman and Dr Kevin Teoh (Organisational Psychology) commented in an *Al Jazeera* article, 'A silent emergency: The rise in suicides among UK doctors'.
- Dr Elisa Raffaella Ferre & Prof. Matthew Longo's (Psychological Sci.) study about humans underestimating the weight of their hands featured in *New Scientist*.
- Professor James Hammond (Earth and Planetary Sciences) was quoted in a piece for *The Washington Post* about a Taylor Swift concert triggering seismic activity.
- Professor Bill Bowring (Law) commented on piece in *The Guardian* entitled 'Contempt threat against climate activist may undermine trial by jury, lawyers say'.
- Professor Anne Sibert (Economics, Mathematics and Statistics) provided comment for a piece in *INews*, for a piece about the expected inflation rate fall.
- Professor Rosie Cox (Geography) commented on The Guardian's article 'The no-wash movement: would you wear underpants for a week without cleaning them?'
- Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele (Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics) commented on an article in *The Atlantic* entitled 'How to Fall in Love When You Don't Speak the Same Language'.
- Dr Nancy Doyle (Organisational Psychology) wrote a piece for *Forbes*, entitled 'Recognising Our Neurodivergent Leaders: Judy Singer Gets Her Dues'.
- Professor Julia Lovell (Historical Studies) co-curated exhibition for the British Museum, 'China's Hidden Century', received a five-star review in *The Guardian*.
- Dr Nancy Doyle (Organisational Psychology) commented for a piece in the *Financial Times* about the rise of adult diagnoses of neurodiversity
- Professor Sarah Hart (Economics, Mathematics and Statistics) published an extract from her book, *Once Upon a Prime*, in the *New York Times*. It is about the wonderful connection between mathematics and literature.
- Professor Gail Kinman (Organisational Psychology) commented on a piece in *The Guardian* article about what the past three years taught us about hybrid working.
- Professor Ian Crawford (Earth and Planetary Sciences) commented on a piece in *The Guardian* about how glass beads on the moon's surface may hold billions of tonnes of water.





- Professor Lisa Baraitser (Psychosocial Studies) had her Wellcome Trust funded research project called 'Waiting Times' featured in *The Lancet*
- Professor Sarah Hart (Economics, Mathematics and Statistics) provided comment for a *New York Times* piece entitled 'The quest to find rectangles in a square'
- Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele (Languages, Cultures and Applied Linguistics) had his work exploring language preferences of multicultural couples who express love, cited in the *New York Times*.
- Dr Paul Watt (Geography) provided comment for a *Guardian* article entitled 'Britain is addicted to the wrecking ball. It's trashing our heritage and the planet'.
- The Peltz Gallery's new exhibition 'Embedded Text – Embodied Narratives' was featured in *Art Africa* Magazine.
- Professor Laura Mulvey (Film, Media, and Cultural Studies) commented on a *Guardian Online* piece about the first woman to top Sight and Sound's greatest all-time films poll.
- Professor Ian Crawford (Earth and Planetary Sciences) commented on a *Guardian* piece, 'From Apollo to Artemis: 50 years on, is it time to go back to the moon?'
- Professor Julia Lovell (Historical Studies) commented on a piece in *Newsweek*, entitled 'Fact Check: Has China Initiated Zero Conflicts Since Founding of PRC?'
- Birkbeck's Baby Lab research was featured in 'Kids' TV: The Surprising Story'.
- Dr Kojo Karam (Law) provided comment for a piece in the *Guardian* entitled 'What one change would you make to achieve black equality in Britain?'
- Professor Rob Singh (Politics) commented for a *Newsweek* item entitled 'Joe Biden Warns of 'Consequences' for Saudi Arabia After OPEC Oil Cut'
- Dr Kai Heron (Politics) commented for a piece for *Vice*, entitled 'Pakistan Lost \$30 Billion in Floods. Should Rich Polluting Countries Pay Up?'
- Dr Kojo Karam (Law), wrote a guest piece for the *New York Times*, arguing that 'Britain's New Prime Minister Is Still in Thrall to the Empire'.
- Kathleen Booth, Birkbeck's pioneering computer scientist and author of the earliest books on programming, attracted an obituary in the *Times* when she passed away in Autumn 2022.



**Sources:**

Inside the Birkbeck Community

Birkbeck News

BBK Magazine

Birkbeck blogs

Birkbeck tweets

Birkbeck Facebook

Departmental websites/blogs/tweets

Research Centre reports/websites

Newsletters

Birkbeck alumni blog

Miscellaneous

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