

# RESEARCH CULTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK







Professor Caroline Meyer, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)

At The University of Warwick, developing a positive research culture is a key priority for us and is central to our research strategy. The University is co-creating an inclusive environment where our research community can feel happy, creative and productive, and where the research itself is open and sound.

Warwick is exploring ways to foster creative research, thinking of how we remove barriers for researchers and how we recognise different contributions to research. We are assessing how we support researchers' wellbeing and career development, how to involve non-academic stakeholders in research, and how to maintain the highest levels of integrity in our research practice.

From postgraduate researchers to post docs through technicians to research managers and mid and senior career professors, we believe that a culture that supports talent and celebrates success can positively benefit research career paths and improve the quality of our research.

## NATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH CULTURE (NCRC)

### Setting the standard for research culture across the UK

All too often, universities work disparately on separate initiatives, when synergy would be far more likely to reduce duplication and achieve long-term change.

The National Centre aims to bring people together to share ideas and best practice. The NCRC network will enable the sector to tackle some important issues, such as how to determine the effectiveness of research culture initiatives, how to prioritise time for research and how to best support the career progression of our research support staff.

#### The NCRC will:

- ▶ Build a community of researchers and practitioners to strengthen the visibility of research culture
- ▶ Develop and implementing sector-wide initiatives
- ▶ Provide policy advice on research culture
- ▶ Facilitate empirical research and quality reviews into research culture
- ▶ Develop sector-wide training
- ▶ Raise the profile of research culture across the sector

*"When it comes to research culture, universities are not islands, they are part of a larger community. To improve research culture, universities and their partners must coordinate, cooperate and share their good practices. To help achieve this, The University of Warwick has established the National Centre for Research Culture, for the benefit of the entire UK research community."*

**Professor Sotaro Kita, Director of the National Centre for Research Culture and Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)**



## RESEARCH CULTURE FORUM

The University of Warwick's Research Culture Forum unites researchers, technicians, PGR students, and Professional Services Staff to have open and collaborative discussions about the University's research culture, to share best practice and influence developments in this area.

Established in 2020 and chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), the Forum's work complements the work underway in departments, the Doctoral College, HR and Research Executive. It provides an opportunity for ideas and suggestions to be shared with each of these communities.







## CREATING A FLOURISHING RESEARCH CULTURE

The Research Culture Forum has supported a series of research culture projects underpinned by Research England funding. These were designed to develop and initiate new activities in response to the UK Government's R&D People and Culture Strategy.

The below awards were made following a competitive internal funding call, with grass-roots projects put forward by researchers, postgraduate research students, technicians and professional services staff from across the institution to enhance research culture.

## ENGAGING THE PUBLIC WITH RESEARCH



### ► Dr Chiara Borsetto, School of Life Sciences

#### Rivers as a resource for all (Citizen Science: "Know your river")

Dr Borsetto has developed a citizen science programme hosted at the School of Life Sciences delivering public engagement in environmental pollution analysis, building upon new approaches to public dialogue and community-led research.

### ► Dr James Hodgkinson, School of Modern Languages and Culture

#### Delivering new approaches to co-producing research with communities

This project involved working with communities and cultural organisations to co-produce case studies. Dr Hodgkinson used creative activities to bring people from under-represented groups (such as Muslim, Latino and Afro-Caribbean) into the research process.



### ► Professor Margaret Low, WMG

#### STEM Connections: Engaging the public with the people behind our research and teaching

Professor Low works extensively with Early Career Researchers to develop technology demonstrators that plainly explain their research area at public events. This work facilitates the development of ECR transferable skills, whilst also supporting research impact and public engagement.



### ► Dr Kate Mawson, Centre for Teacher Education

#### Teacher researcher support network

This project involved creating a local support network for teacher researchers to create close-to-practice research, with training and support from The University of Warwick staff. It was designed to support underrepresented people to engage with research activity via more diverse routes.



## BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE R&D CAREERS PIPELINE

### ► School of Education, Learning and Communication Sciences (SELCS) | Education Sciences

#### Opening up the Black Box of Pre-application Doctoral Communications

Dr Burford's project is focused on the development of more inclusive and transparent strategies for the pre-application process for doctoral recruitment. It is designed to help supervisors and departments make inclusivity-aligned judgements about potential applicants.



### ► Dr Friederike Schlaghecken, Department of Psychology

#### "I, too, could be a scientist" - Building Pathways into R&D for Students from Non-Traditional Backgrounds

Dr Schlaghecken piloted a new initiative aimed at encouraging more Psychology undergraduates to consider PGR courses and graduate jobs in R&D, including the co-creation of case studies of Diverse Pathways to Careers in R&D. The project culminated in a video library which was widely shared across the University.



### ► Dr Ursula Clayton, English and Comparative Literary Studies

#### A Coventry-specific assessment of the barriers to HE, research and innovation careers amongst local young refugees and asylum-seekers

This is the first Coventry-specific assessment of the barriers to higher education, research and innovation careers amongst local young refugees and asylum seekers. The research also included the development of a strategy to address and reduce these barriers, collaborating with third sector organisations.



### ► Professor Sotaro Kita, Department of Psychology and member of Research Executive

#### Creating and supporting a diverse and inclusive research environment

Professor Sotaro created an in-depth report on research careers at The University of Warwick, viewing them through the lens of diversity and inclusion and identifying barriers for under-represented groups. Professor Sotaro also proposed recommendations for a series of transformational projects designed to deliver substantial long-term impact.



### ► Dr Damien Homer, Widening Participation

#### Social Mobility Student Research Hub

Dr Homer created a Social Mobility Student Research Hub to improve access to, and participation in, research for students from underrepresented groups, including those of low socio-economic status backgrounds, care leavers and refugees. The hub also provided funding for students' research projects exploring issues around social mobility, widening participation and inclusion.



### ► Dr Craig Carnegie, WMG

#### Giving young people from diverse backgrounds a taste of STEM

The project created an employability programme to host young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds in WMG. Dr Carnegie hosted five young people for EY Foundation and Nuffield Research Work Placements for work experience programmes.





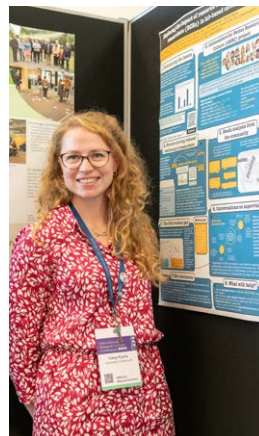
## THE ROLE OF EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS IN RESEARCH CULTURE



### ► Dr Cerys Currie, Warwick Medical School

#### Ambassadors for Better Research Culture

The group was founded by WMS early career researchers, with the single, yet multifaceted aim to improve the research environment for the wellbeing of all staff and students through ground-up fact finding and top-down engagement.



### ► Dr Lyudmila Grigoryeva, Department of Statistics

#### Data Science for Social Good UK 2022 (DSSG) Summer Programme

Dr Grigoryeva was centrally involved in supporting the 2022 Data Science for Social Good (DSSG) summer programme. He produced a research culture case study and collation of lessons learned from DSSG that will have wider application within The University of Warwick and beyond.

### ► Dr Nicola Knowles, WMG

#### A Positive Start

Dr Knowles developed a series of workshops and events focused on positive mental health within the WMG Early Career Researcher community. The materials and learning from the project were shared across the University and disseminated across the wider higher education sector.

### ► Dr Charlotte Hills, Institute of Advanced Study

#### Enhancing the Postdoc Research Culture with a User-Centred Design Approach

Professor Peter Scott (pictured) developed and deployed a consultation for the postdoctoral community at The University of Warwick to collate their views on existing provision, gaps and good practice in research. This resulted in the development of plans and targets to enhance the postdoctoral research environment, and the co-creation of online resources for postdocs to support career and leadership development.



### ► Dr Paul Strøm, Department of Physics

#### Warwick Astronomy Knowledge Exchange (WAKE)

Dr Strøm created and deployed a pilot exchange programme for visiting students and Early Career Researchers from countries with underrepresented astronomy programmes, and provided a forum for discussion of astronomy, physics and/or STEM as a whole.



## CREATING INCLUSIVE RESEARCH COMMUNITIES



### ► Maria Kariuki, Institute of Advanced Study (with Chemistry)

#### inVISIBLE Conference

Held in July 2022, the inVISIBLE conference featured two days of research talks by ethnic minority researchers, as well as one day of diversity-based talks in order to highlight projects targeted at addressing inequality gaps within academia. By reserving talks for ethnic minority researchers, the conference provided a dedicated platform for them to share their research contributions and feel celebrated in environments where they often feel underrepresented.

### ► Dr Elizabeth Fullam, School of Life Sciences

#### Re-imagining Research Culture

Dr Fullam created Wellcome Trust Café Culture Workshops – sessions designed to initiate discussions on research culture. These were followed by focused bespoke workshops to inform the development, improvement and support of research practices and skills development in the School of Life Sciences.



### ► Professor Kirstie Haywood and Adele Kenny, Warwick Medical School

#### Better Research Culture

Staff and students at WMS worked together to share their ideas about what research culture meant to them and to develop a future vision for research culture at WMS. This informed the creation of the 'WMS Research Culture Roadmap' to chart the course for our ongoing Research Culture development.



### ► Professor David Leadley, Department of Physics and member of Research Executive

#### Advancing Visibility, Knowledge and Collaborative Opportunities for Research Technical Professionals (RTProfs)

Professor Leadley has led the delivery of two events to build a national RTProf community, with dissemination of knowledge and best practice to support the careers of individual RTProfs. This has involved developing understanding of collaborations and knowledge exchange with business, and providing skill sessions focused on leadership.

### ► Professor Georgia Kremmyda, School of Engineering

#### Reimagining a STEM Research Culture: Lessons Learnt from 20 years of Evolution for Inclusive Representation in Science and Engineering



This project involved the development of a conceptual framework for introducing an inclusive culture for STEM research and innovation, identifying best practices, lessons learnt, barriers and opportunities, through a series of global virtual workshops, in collaboration with International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists.



A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white lab coat and clear safety goggles, is looking through a black microscope. The image has a purple tint.

## Connect with us

Our Research Culture | Research at The University of Warwick



National Centre for Research Culture | Research at The University of Warwick



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