

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Board of Governors of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama	17 November 2014
Subject: Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2014-18, and annual R and KE report	Public
Report of: Vice Principal and Director of Academic Affairs	For Decision

SUMMARY

With the School's first Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy running to the end of its course in 2013/14, we now have a renewed Strategy for approval. This seeks to build on the previous one and set out an ambitious agenda for developing this area of activity in the School.

As a backdrop to the Strategy paper, the Research and Knowledge Exchange annual report is also provided for information. Both documents will set the context for a presentation by the Vice Principal and Director of Academic Affairs to further inform Governors about the nature and purpose of research at Guildhall, as requested by the skills working group.

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Guildhall School of Music & Drama

Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2014-18

Strategic Aim 1 Engage world-class staff to deliver innovative teaching, research and knowledge exchange, encourage experiment and lead ground-breaking professional practice.

Strategic Aim 3 Work with partners to create an international arts and learning centre without rival; encourage staff and students to find their voice, develop their craft and artistry, support them with continually improved services and facilities, and prepare them for successful careers in the performing arts.

Mission and Vision

Mission: empowering established and emerging practitioners in the performing arts to enquire, experiment and break new ground.

Vision: international leadership as a reflective conservatoire at the forefront of artistic innovation, transformational learning and exchange.

Background

The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is one of the world's leading conservatoires and drama schools. It is distinctive in combining established artistic excellence with championing research, experiment and innovation. We recognise that systematic enquiry into and through the arts promotes artistic depth and enables artists to make a difference in contemporary society.

In the last decade, support for research in the School has grown considerably, with a central tenet being to design our work and build expertise from within rather than commissioning work externally from seasoned academics. This ethos has ensured the integrity and relevance of our practice-based approach. We address questions that are meaningful to current practitioners, and outcomes can feed directly into undergraduate and postgraduate curricula, and into professional practice.

Following designation as an HEI in 2006, our first RAE submission was made in 2008. Feedback noted distinctive areas beginning to develop, particularly the interface between music and drama and a "productive tension between reinterpretation and stewardship of inherited culture and the creation of new work". Feedback also underlined the need for investment and sustainability. We have therefore focused on strategic and systematic development of the School's research environment for the long term, with QR and HEIF allocations from HEFCE ring fenced to achieve this, and specific objectives articulated in our first Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy (2009-13).

As noted in the School's second REF (November 2014) much has been achieved in relation to these objectives, including growing internal engagement with research, establishing a School-wide doctoral programme and an events programme, ResearchWorks, and engaging with key partners and world-leading researchers. We now need to establish a further ambitious agenda to deliver our vision and establish a position of international leadership in practice-based research and knowledge exchange. This research strategy (2014-2018) therefore takes up this challenge and unpacks the role of research and knowledge exchange in achieving the School's overall mission, as identified in the Strategic Plan (2010-2015).

A significant development in this strategy is inclusion of entrepreneurship and enterprise, which follows the introduction of a formal enterprise function in the School. This means that we will promote some more entrepreneurial approaches to research activity, ensuring that we seek all opportunities to support the full lifecycle of a research project, from initial ideas and project development to delivery, dissemination and impact. We will also establish an innovation fund for entrepreneurship and enterprise, with processes for selecting and supporting projects mirroring the existing framework for seed funding research. The innovation fund will be overseen by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (with an extended remit and membership) so that we can ensure that synergies between activities are explored where appropriate. The School's Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee will continue to advise the Teaching and Learning Board on all research and knowledge exchange matters, including development of the School's research programmes, evaluating research activity and overseeing the preparation of research bids to external bodies.

Aims and performance indicators 2014 – 18

1. To establish a position of international leadership in practice-based research

The School's research activity currently takes place within four clusters: Repertoire for the 21st Century; Performance practices; The science and art of artistry; and The application and impact of artistic and professional practice in society. Across these clusters, focused research groups create a context for collaboration and interdisciplinary exchange, including with non-HE partners.

- *Understanding Audiences*: investigating the multiple relationships between audiences, musicians and managers/ promoters in order to deepen musicians' understanding of, and connection to, their audiences in a way which enhances effective artistic development and practice.
- *Words becoming Music*: casting new light on the part that text, subtext and context play in the transformation of words into music. This research group engages in the world of song, in which poetry inspires music, and explores the literary and philosophical background to works by composers such as Liszt, Debussy and Ives.
- *The Creative Stage*: encompassing both new opera and music theatre, and exploring the interface between music and drama, both artistically and in illuminating the nature and potential of collaborative practice.

Each group will articulate its own objectives (including articulating shared research interests, activities, engagement with students, partnerships, events and international development). In addition up to two further research groups will be considered, for example:

- Comparative ecologies of historical and contemporary performance practices;
- Pedagogical development, leadership and entrepreneurship in professional practice

Researchers at the School have successfully established research partnerships, including with CMPCP (Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice), funded by the AHRC, and with the Royal Opera House. The School's location within the Barbican and the residency of the LSO has enabled us to establish the Centre for Orchestra, which will continue to generate research as part of its unique offer. The East London and City Culture Partnership currently emerging and led by Creative Learning, provides a key context in which to develop further collaborative research with non-HE partners, and demonstrate leadership in knowledge exchange between disciplines and across different areas of professional practice.

Central objectives within the next phase of the research strategy will therefore be to strengthen existing partnerships and build new relationships, particularly across disciplines and with non-HE partners, ensuring that these collaborations and their outcomes are communicated to a broad audience. We will also ensure that we continue to develop

methods of internal collaborative enquiry within the School, mirroring the approaches we evolve with external partners.

Key performance indicators

1. Increase in numbers of research-active of at least 20%, with a focus on increased research activity amongst existing staff, and creation of further research associates and artists in residence (research) . Increase quality of research outputs, such that FTE of staff submitted to REF 2020 increases by at least 30% compared to REF 2014 submission.
2. Research groups (including up to two additional groups) with international profile, at least four doctoral students affiliated to each, and collaborative projects between groups.
3. Established framework for visiting fellowships and exchanges with HE and non-HE partners to further research activity and relevant collaborations.
4. At least four collaborative research applications submitted with partners from existing/networks and including some international partners, producing work suitable for submission to the REF 2020.

Key evaluation points

In addition to the quantitative key performance indicators outlined above, contributions made by researchers to the ongoing concerns and conversation of the performance community in their chosen field is necessarily at the heart of consideration of the quality of practice-based research. The contribution made by Guildhall School researchers to the most current research conversations will also be considered as part of research evaluation, including engagement with the current research debates and the capacity to respond quickly to developments within these.

2. To nurture the next generation of performers, scholars and practitioners immersed in research.

Research at the Guildhall School is seen as a key element of a dynamic culture of artistic development and enquiry, which seeks to foster and sustain curious and articulate practitioners committed to artistic and social innovation. Systematic enquiry is led by research-active staff, many of whom develop research as an integral part of their ongoing creative and professional practice or who seek to engage with the wider roles and cultural value of the arts within society.

Development for the next generation of performer-scholars will encompass students and staff at all levels within the School, and will include a focus on embedding practice-based research skills throughout undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. With increasing awareness of and participation in research, students will be encouraged progressively to enhance their capacity to experiment and reflect in ways which complement and enrich their practical studies, thus better equipping them to create and sustain flexible and fulfilling careers in the arts.

Postgraduate provision will be broadened to include doctoral research in acting, music therapy and technical theatre. This will underpin further embedding of the research-teaching nexus to enable students and staff to inhabit research practices in all aspects of their learning and teaching.

Key performance indicators

1. Mature support structures for doctoral recruitment, admissions, teaching and supervision, including funded places for doctoral students. Increase in number of

- doctoral students to at least 40 across disciplines. Increase in internal doctoral supervision pool of at least 50%, supported by supervision and mentoring development schemes.
2. Embedded career development for doctoral students, including collaborative doctoral awards won, graduate assistantship roles per year including some affiliated to research groups, and regular platforms for students to showcase their research in an atmosphere of supportive discussion.
 3. An explicit mentoring framework for students and staff who wish to develop research activities, including support for internal staff who wish to undertake doctoral study.
 4. Wider scope for seed funding within the School to encourage collaborative research, development and entrepreneurship to complement existing activity. Increase in number of staff with seed funding by at least 50%.

Key evaluation points

Evaluation will therefore focus on how embedded a culture of research enquiry is at all levels of the School's activity, and on how robust and accessible the procedures are to support these.

3.To increase opportunities for public engagement and knowledge exchange

The current programme of ResearchWorks events is very successful in delivering high-quality research events which are open to the general public, and stimulates high-level exchange and debate between research and professional practice. Staff are also encouraged to participate in public engagement events relating to their own research. Further development will build on the success of ResearchWorks by developing an expanded and varied programme of events, developing further means of communicating event outcomes to reach wider and more invested audiences, and will also focus on creating mechanisms to ensure that discussions feed back into the School and further research.

Partnerships for international engagement (also noted at aims 1 and 4) will therefore increase opportunities for knowledge exchange and sharing of best practice for School researchers, with the aim of ensuring that researchers have the opportunity to both communicate their own research and engage in developments within the wider research field.

Key performance indicators

1. An expanded ResearchWorks programme, including increased support for researchers wishing to curate events, increase in overall audiences by at least 25%, increase in student audiences by at least 50%, and enhanced communication through integrated online presence.
2. Systematic engagement of speakers/presenters in ResearchWorks from the School's research partnerships, including from non HE partners, Reflective Conservatoire Conferences, ICON and Ecole des Ecoles.
3. Wider accessibility of ResearchWorks, profile of the current audience analysed, key target groups identified and relevant communication strategies implemented to reach these groups, including a social media communication strategy where appropriate.
4. Developed publishing and media partnerships, including an internal mechanism for self-publishing accessible to all Guildhall School researchers, and a range of established partnerships for publication at an appropriate level of all outputs likely to qualify for the REF.
5. Increased portfolio of research-led short courses and consultancy, including professional development for teachers in the performing arts, and presence and communication in responsible leadership.

Key evaluation points

Plans for the further development of knowledge exchange activities are necessarily ambitious, and so the qualitative evaluation points will rest on considerations of how successful the knowledge exchange activities are in building partnerships, developing a coherent intellectual identity for research events at the Guildhall School, and ensuring wider access to these activities by introducing innovative approaches to recording and publication.

4. To support research capacity and sustainability

In order to build understanding of the close alignment between artistic and educational development, research and entrepreneurship activity, we will work across departments in a collaborative way to ensure that innovative research ideas are supported throughout their lifetime, from development of a project through to its delivery and application. This will feed into the School's strategic aim of developing sustainable institutions.

Our current research environment and support infrastructure provide a practical and approachable resource for research staff and students, focussing on communicating and assisting with funding opportunities, supporting research project management and assisting with research communication and developing knowledgeable and engaged audiences. Easily-accessible and comprehensive research resources are essential to high-quality research and we will focus on the specifics relevant to practice-based researchers in a conservatoire, including considerations of intellectual property as ideas move between research and professional practice, and appropriate publication and open access models.

Attracting research grants to stimulate interdisciplinary research was a main objective of the 2008 – 2013 strategy. Significant strides were made in attracting research grant funding to stimulate interdisciplinary research, and we will therefore build on the national and international recognition achieved through these awards to compete for research funding at the highest level. This includes further developing partnerships with institutions with international research reputations within and outside HE. We will also continue to promote international engagement with the wider landscape of conservatoire and drama school research comes through membership of key networks including Conservatoires UK (CUK), the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), Ecole des Ecoles and Pentacon, and through directing the Innovative Conservatoire.

Key performance indicators

1. A clear and accessible resource for researchers at all stages of their careers seeking advice and information on opportunities for funding, research collaborations, research dissemination and communication. A practical framework for identifying and updating generic and individually tailored resources and support for researchers, including training in varied research methodologies and technologies.
2. Linking the research ethics review process to the frameworks for identifying resources and for professional development, to ensure that the research projects which staff and students participate in are included within considerations of research resources and sustainable capacity.
3. Strategic use of internal seed funding to fulfill objectives of this strategy and the School's Strategic Plan. An established innovation seed fund to support entrepreneurship and enterprise development, closely linked to the research and curriculum initiative seed fund .
4. Contractual and professional development frameworks for staff that facilitate engagement in research and entrepreneurship, with responsibility for identifying and communicating potential identified in line management roles.

5. Increase quality and number of bids to external research funding bodies by at least 30 per cent from 2013-14, actively seeking to contribute to larger interdisciplinary bids and ensuring that early-career researchers are included in order to develop bid-writing, research and research management skills, and increasing capability to support larger grant applications with an international focus .
6. Established policy, with accompanying resource allocation, for circulation of research outcomes within the School, including development of an appropriate institutional repository for the School's published research outputs.

Key evaluation points

Whilst the quantitative key performance indicators above will remain the focus of evaluation for this objective, key evaluation points will also consider the awareness of the resources amongst Guildhall School staff and students, the uptake of this resource by the broadest range of staff (reflecting the range of career levels and roles within the School) across all departments.