The academic teaching year is now coming to an end, and this provides us with an opportunity not only to have a little bit of a rest, but also to pursue writing and research. The search for external funding may become a little harder given the new European funding landscape that comes with Brexit.

Nevertheless, as can be seen below, we have had many recent successes, and with the advent of the Global Challenges Research Fund, many more opportunities to access funding in order to carry out our research activities. We will also be supported by a new round of KE Vouchers (deadline 14 September 2016) to strengthen our impact activities; so, much to look forward to with the start of a new academic year.

Professor Barry Godfrey

Introducing Dr Ekaterina (Katia) Balabanova: Senior Lecturer in Political Communication

Katia’s research interests lie at the intersection of international politics and international communication. She has a particular interest in human rights, foreign policy and immigration policy and the way they are discussed, mediated and politicised. Her teaching reflects these interests – she teaches modules on media and war, media and human rights and political communication. Katia is the Director of the MA in Media and Communication, an interdisciplinary programme that offers specialisms in Media and Politics or in Digital Culture and Communication – both pathways allowing collaborations with other departments/schools in the Faculty.

Her latest book *The Media and Human Rights: The Cosmopolitan Promise* was published in 2014. In it she explored how developments in international relations and communications technology – from the advent of global television news to the internet and social media – have inspired, but then often dashed, hopes for a more widespread acceptance and implementation of human rights. Commenting on her research, Katia said, ‘These are extraordinarily interesting times for those interested in human rights. Many point to the media as weakening public support for liberal values, but alongside being a tool of populist propaganda it can also be an important site of resistance and renewal’.

Katia is keen to engage with non-academic partners and recently carried out a Knowledge Exchange project with the UNHCR to evaluate their communications strategies around World Refugee Day (Refugee Week in the UK). This highlighted the challenges in developing a truly global narrative to improve support for refugees, the difficulties in measuring impact of human rights campaigns, and the tensions and trade-offs for those seeking to spread the message and further human rights at the local national and international levels.

Among her current research is a collaboration with Dr Alex Balch (Politics) to examine media coverage of migration and free movement, exploring when and how economic arguments have become displaced by welfare chauvinism in the UK press. This work is set to be further developed and expanded into a book-length comparative study of political debates about the refugee crisis across the East and West of Europe. Or more information, follow @MediaPol on Twitter.

Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)

**GCRF** is a new five-year £1.5 billion funding stream, to be administered through Research Councils and other national academies, which will address global challenges through disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and will strengthen capability for research and innovation within both UK and developing countries.

**Research Policy intranet** - Research Policy have prepared a webpage dedicated to the funding calls they are coordinating under the GCRF, for instance ‘ESRC Centres: Foundations of Inclusive Growth’. Any colleagues interested in any GCRF calls should refer to this website, as well as liaise with their School Research and Finance Teams as usual.

Look out for more Funding Opportunities every week in the Faculty Bulletin and on Twitter @livuniHSS.
Public Engagement: Dr Yiota Vassilopoulou & Dr Paul Sapple

Dr Paul Sipple is the Public Engagement (PE) Manager for the University. His role is to develop and coordinate a plan for embedding PE across the whole Institution. Commenting on his role, Paul said, “We are starting from a strong tradition of engagement; one example being the excellent contribution HSS is making to the 2016 Being Human festival. I am creating a framework to formally recognise and support PE as a core part of what we do.”

Since starting in the role, Paul has introduced a new University-funded grants scheme for PE projects and launched a forum series for PE, designed to enhance understanding of PE and to provide a space for best practice exchange (details for 2016-17 to be launched soon). He is also currently in the process of creating a formal delivery plan, informed by consultation with the academic community.

Dr Yiota Vassilopoulou is the Public Engagement Champion for HSS. Her role is to act as an academic point of contact for developing a strategy and co-ordinated approach to PE with Research across the Faculty. She has contributed to the development of the RCUK Catalyst Fund proposal, the PE plan, and the University’s new grant scheme for PE projects and had many formal and informal discussions with colleagues across the Faculty.

Please contact either Paul (pjs1@liv.ac.uk) or Yiota (yiota@liv.ac.uk) if you would like to discuss your PE ideas and activities.

Faculty PGR Showcase event

On 8th June, HSS held a PGR Showcase to highlight the range of research being undertaken by PGRs across the Faculty. Professor Graham Kemp, Director of the LDC, attended to present the Academic Judges Prize to Department of English PGR Matthew McCall (pictured). External cultural partners (including the Open Eye Gallery, Tate Liverpool, Bluecoat, Liverpool Jazz and National Museums Liverpool) attended to judge the External Partner Prize, which was won by Rachel Cleaver (English). The Student Prize was won by Nur Husna Mohamed (English). Postdoctoral fellows funded by the AHRC Cultural Engagement Fund also presented posters on their projects with external cultural partners. Read more

Congratulations to...

Professor Helen Stalford, Dr Sarah Woodhouse and Mr Jeremy Marshall (Law) of the European Children’s Rights Unit have secured over €100,000 to complete the UK strand of a EU Commission-funded cross-national project aimed at bringing children’s rights law, theory and methods to bear on legal practice. The research will result in a package of online training materials for lawyers working across a range of justice settings. For further updates, e-mail stalford@liv.ac.uk.

Professor Sarah Peverley (English) has been awarded a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship of £44k for her project ‘Mermaids of the British Isles: A Cultural History, c. 450-c.1500’. This project is the first to consider the importance of mermaids in the arts and cultural imagination of Medieval Britain and it maps the place of these figures in the national maritime imaginary.

Dr Eleanor Drywood (Law) has been awarded a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship of £48k for her project ‘Children and the Globalisation of Football: Rights, Participation and Exploitation’ The project will theorise the intersection between the global football industry and the exploitation of children with reference to literature on children’s rights, cultural relativism, post-colonialism and globalisation.

Professor Nandini Das has been awarded a €2m European Research Council Consolidator Grant for her project ‘Travel, Transculturality and Identity in England, c.1550 – 1700’. The project will explore how mobility in the great age of travel and discovery (c.1550– 1700 Renaissance period) shaped English perceptions of human identity based on cultural identification and difference, and the ways in which literature facilitated and resisted such categorisations.

Dr Beatriz Garcia (Head of Research, Institute of Cultural Capital and Senior Research Fellow, Communication and Media) has been awarded US$18k as one of only six Advanced Olympic Research Grants by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Her project documents the implementation of the first IOC Cultural Action Plan during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. Dr Garcia has been accredited to act as official academic observer and will help shape the first Olympic cultural observers programme in Rio de Janeiro, as well as its handover to Tokyo, host of the 2020 Games. Follow project updates here and via the ICC website.

Dr Greg Lynall (English) has been awarded a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship (£15k) for the project ‘Imagining Solar Energy: The Power of the Sun in Literature, Science and Culture’. The project will explore the ways in which the possibility of harnessing solar radiance technologically has captured the cultural imagination from the Renaissance to the present day, and will consider how the history of literary encounters with solar power might aid our understanding of current perceptions of sustainable energy production.

Contact us about the newsletter

We would like to share news that is of interest to you so please let us know if you, or your colleagues, have success stories to share, or upcoming events. Please get in touch with Maeva (maeva.zimmermann@liv.ac.uk).