



## Double success for Leeds academics

Two Leeds academics have been awarded prestigious National Teaching Fellowships by the Higher Education Academy.

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## Paving the way for international partnerships

Leeds academics attended the Tech Summit in India to highlight the University's world-leading research.

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## New centre for engineering and physical sciences gets go-ahead

Plans to create an international centre for engineering and physical sciences were approved by the University Council.

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## Postgraduate researchers put on a show

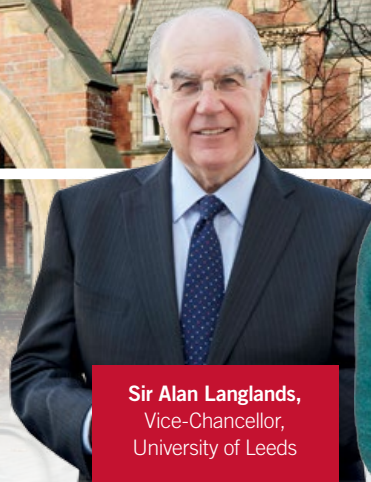
The work of the University's outstanding postgraduate researchers was presented at this year's Showcase Postgraduate Research Conference.

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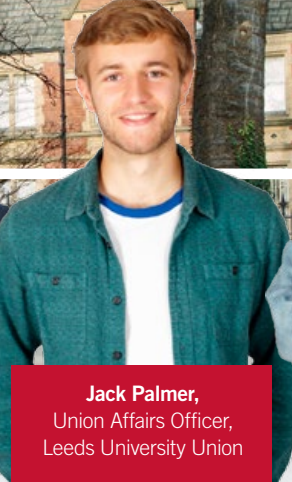


## Leader column

# Looking to the future – a joint statement from the University and Leeds University Union



**Sir Alan Langlands,**  
Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Leeds



**Jack Palmer,**  
Union Affairs Officer,  
Leeds University Union



**Melissa Owusu,**  
Education Officer,  
Leeds University Union

This has been a great year for the University. We have achieved notable success, progress and recognition. Some of the most significant achievements of students and staff and our determination to create a world-class environment for education and research are detailed in a new University publication – the Annual Review 2015-2016\*.

This provides an overview of major initiatives including the establishment of our first China-UK joint school; a step-change in digital learning provision; the launch of important new research facilities in structural biology, clinical imaging and robotics. The Priestley International Centre for Climate, the Cultural Institute and the Leeds Institute of Teaching Excellence will also add lustre and academic rigour to the work of the University. Please take time to read the Review and be proud of the depth and breadth of your achievements.

It has also been an exceptional year politically; the result of the EU Referendum, changes in political leadership in the UK and policy changes for higher education and research will result in new challenges and new opportunities. Against this background, it is more important than ever that we continue to foster the strong Partnership that exists between the University and Leeds University Union (LUU). In a departure from the usual Leader Column, this edition is shared with Jack Palmer and Melz Owusu through a joint statement on higher education reform.

*“The University of Leeds is proud of ‘The Partnership’ which was developed by students and staff some time ago to describe the mutual expectations of us all as members of the University community.*

*It is in this spirit that the University and Leeds University Union (LUU) have been considering the Government’s Higher Education and Research Bill, particularly in relation to the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and its link to student fees. Our shared position is set out below.*

*The Government’s reforms aim to give student education parity with research and, putting aside the detail of implementation, this is a principle which both the University and LUU support. Indeed it is a cornerstone of the Leeds approach and is reflected in recent successes, including our National Student Survey (NSS) results and the Times and Sunday Times University of the Year award for 2017.*

*The University broadly supports the TEF and will use its influence to help ensure that it is implemented carefully and that the methodology is refined in light of experience. Our opposition to the link between the TEF and fee setting is firmly on the record. Nonetheless, the Government appears to be proceeding with this approach.*

*At Leeds we have tried to implement the recent TEF-linked £250 fee increase as fairly as possible by exempting current and deferring students; a step that LUU agrees was necessary in light of its overall opposition to fees.*

*More broadly, in recent years we have seen the financial burden for higher education increasingly shift from the taxpayer on to graduates and their families. This represents a reduction in the permanent investment which society makes in future generations. Passage of the Government’s Bill should not be read as setting the pattern of university funding for all time.*

*We are very conscious of the financial pressures faced by students and we recognise that recent changes – including the ill-advised shift from grants to loans – only serve to make these pressures more acute. We also recognise that the available loans cannot fully cover the cost of study, creating challenges for students from families less able to contribute.*

*This puts an even greater onus on the University to provide students with the best possible educational experience and the best possible opportunities for personal development and growth. We are committed to preparing genuinely independent, critical thinkers who can make a real and telling contribution to the world around them.*

*These growing financial pressures also highlight why we must continue to invest in supporting access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds - we will spend nearly £18 million on this in 2016-17 – and why we must do what we can to drive down additional costs. We are taking steps on the latter, such as investing to reduce sports club membership fees, and the University and LUU will work together to explore what more can be done here.*

*Away from fees and costs, both the University and LUU are concerned that the Bill threatens the autonomy of universities. Specifically we believe that the new regulator, the Office for Students (OfS), should be an arms-length body that can speak truth to power, and not an organisation that slavishly implements the will of Ministers.*

*We are also concerned about the proposal that the OfS “may assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of...the standards applied to higher education.” It is reasonable that the OfS should have an interest in the process of determining standards but the assessment of standards should be a matter for autonomous universities. We hope that this concern will be tackled during the passage of the Bill in the House of Lords.*

*Finally, we want to see very careful consideration of the proposal to allow the OfS to award degree awarding powers and university title to institutions and to close under-performing universities. Unless implemented very carefully, this could damage the lives and life chances of students and put the reputation of UK higher education at serious risk.*

*The University and LUU have a strong record of working together to deliver an excellent student education and experience. This applies to all home and EU students and to international students from about 150 countries around the world and ensures a vibrant, outward looking campus. We therefore ask the Home Secretary to abandon plans to reduce the number of international students coming to study in the UK.*

*‘The Partnership’ between the University and LUU is sector leading and, although we do not agree with a number of the recent policy and funding changes, we will continue to work closely together to protect students’ access to, and experience of, higher education.’*

We also join together to thank ALL students and staff for the part they play in the continued success of the University and we hope that everyone will have an opportunity to relax with friends and family over the holiday period.

\*Copies are available to download from [www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff)



## News

# Postgraduate researchers put on a show

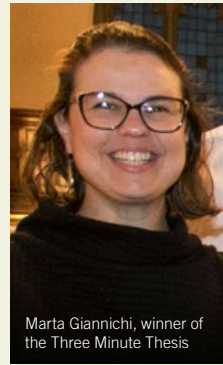
The work of the University's outstanding postgraduate researchers (PGRs) was presented at this year's Showcase Postgraduate Research Conference, an annual celebration of the immensely valuable contribution made by the PGR community to the University.

Applications were up on the previous year with more than 130 entries received across the four categories of Postgraduate Researcher of the Year, Three Minute Thesis, Research poster and Research image.

Presenting the prizes, Sir Alan Langlands, said: "Postgraduate researchers are the lifeblood of the University, and the growing numbers of them



Jane Blackwell, Postgraduate Researcher of the Year



Marta Giannichi, winner of the Three Minute Thesis

make for a vibrant campus and community. There's a complete lack of inhibition amongst these students about working across disciplinary boundaries. Rather than patrol the boundaries, today's postgraduate researchers realise it is much more exciting to explore areas where disciplines intersect."

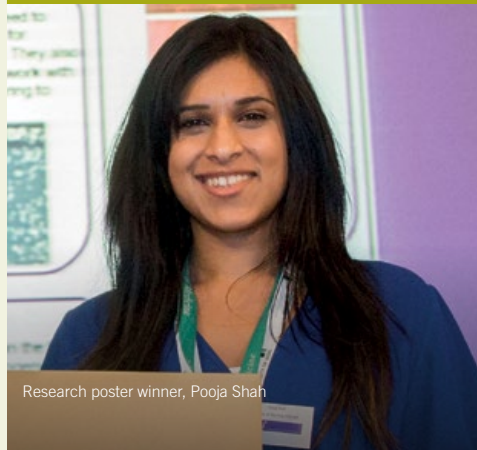
To find out more visit [www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff)

### Postgraduate Researcher of the Year

- Jane Blackwell** (Medicine and Health – M&H), The Paediatric Narcolepsy Project
- Devesh Mistry** (Mathematics and Physical Sciences), Novel liquid crystal optical devices for the ageing eye
- Andrew Moore** (Arts, Humanities and Cultures – AHC), Touching Documentaries

### Research poster

- Pooja Shah** (M&H), Ischemic heart disease: a multicultural model
- Maria Hayley** (AHC), Reconstructing revenge: Thyestes tragedies before Seneca
- Faye Bennett** (M&H), Forget me not: do medical students want to know more about the lives of body donors?  
**People's choice – Polly Galis** (AHC), French Feminist Erotica



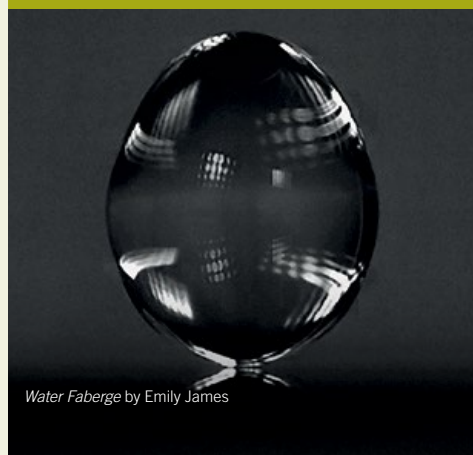
Research poster winner, Pooja Shah

### Three Minute Thesis

- Marta Giannichi** (Environment), Merchantable Forest: solution or conservation fallacy?
- Michellie Young** (M&H), Scratching the surface of contagious itch
- (Joint) Adam Churchman** (Engineering), Oil layer inside microbubbles: a novel production method, towards hydrophobic drug delivery  
**Sanah Mehnaz** (AHC), The honour of Muslim women

### Research image

- Emily James** (Engineering), Water Faberge
- Ben Vincent** (Education, Social Sciences and Law), Ash's map of their non-binary body



Water Faberge by Emily James

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## About the Reporter

The *Reporter* is the University's staff magazine and goes out to 7,600 colleagues. It is produced by the Internal Communications team.

If you have an idea for a story or want to comment on this issue please contact us at [the.reporter@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:the.reporter@leeds.ac.uk) or 0113 343 6699.

The front cover shows some winners of the Postgraduate Research Conference competitions (l-r): Adam Churchman, Devesh Mistry, Jane Blackwell, Marta Giannichi, Michellie Young, Polly Galis, Sanah Mehnaz, Andrew Moore, and Faye Bennett.

### Stay up to date with University news and events:

- [universityofleeds](https://www.facebook.com/universityofleeds)
[@UniLeedsStaff](https://twitter.com/UniLeedsStaff)  
[universityofleeds](https://www.instagram.com/universityofleeds)
[University of Leeds](https://www.linkedin.com/company/university-of-leeds)  
[leeds.ac.uk/forstaff](http://leeds.ac.uk/forstaff)

## News

# Leeds academics recognised for teaching excellence

**Two Leeds academics have received a National Teaching Fellowship (NTF), one of the most prestigious awards for higher education teaching.**

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) announced that Dr Raphael Hallett, Director of the Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence (LITE) and Associate Professor in Early Modern History, and Dr Sarah Underwood, Associate Professor of Enterprise and the Director of the Centre for Enterprise & Entrepreneurship Studies, have been made NTFs in recognition of excellence in teaching.

NTFs have now been awarded to 24 academics at the University since the scheme began. This is one of the highest tallies of any university.

Dr Hallett says: "The NTF award helps shine a light on the amazing community of educators we have at Leeds, now given fresh prominence by LITE. It is especially satisfying for me since it rewards the experimental curriculum design projects I have been involved in at Leeds, and recognises the value of innovation as a catalyst for improving student learning."

Dr Underwood comments: "Delivering high quality and effective teaching is front and centre in my approach to student education. I strongly believe that enterprise education should have a long-term impact on students and, as such,



Dr Underwood (l) and Dr Hallett

I strive to create learning environments that develop entrepreneurial mind sets that will have value well beyond the classroom. NTFs highlight what works in teaching and learning, and I am very happy to have received this recognition."

Professor Tom Ward, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Student Education, says: "The NTF scheme is an important national recognition of teaching excellence and achievement. The University continues to excel in student education and it is with great pleasure that I congratulate our two latest NTFs."



Akeela Bertram's Chorus: Legacies of War in Parkinson Court. Credit Adam Dodson



stage@leeds theatre company and UIBE perform A Midsummer Night's DREAMING Under the Southern Bough



Members of SAA-uk perform THREAD in Clothworkers' Court

## New Cultural Institute to inspire research, boost engagement and enhance student opportunity

**The new Cultural Institute at the University has three main aims: to increase pioneering research collaborations with creative sector partners; to widen cultural engagement and participation, and to create more opportunities for – and build the skills of – our students.**

The Cultural Institute offers expertise to academics and students so they can harness the power of partnership in a city and region rich in artistic innovation and cultural aspiration. Through the launch of this initiative, the University has taken the next significant step in strengthening our position as a global centre of research and teaching excellence in the study and creation of cultural activity.

Since October, the Institute has hosted four public lectures showcasing new interdisciplinary research, covering a range of topics from the introduction of electricity in country houses to the story of the American sculptor behind one of campus's previously overlooked works of public art. The team is also working with the wealth of renowned cultural attractions on campus to promote and integrate the University's wide array of outstanding creative facilities.

The Cultural Institute has also run a series of workshops in collaboration with the University Library, for academics from all disciplines to explore new research opportunities with

specific collections. This is part of an ongoing programme to nurture pioneering research in collaboration with funders and professional partners in the cultural and creative industries, including a research workshop on the Cultural Economy.

The learning experience and life chances of our students will be enhanced by connecting them with the most creative and curious minds in the network of partnerships we are building. The Cultural Institute offers a single point of contact for cultural and creative organisations that might wish to work with our students, whatever their academic discipline.

To find out more visit [www.leeds.ac.uk/culturalinstitute](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/culturalinstitute)

All staff are welcome to a reception in Parkinson Court on 2 February at 5.30- 7.30pm to find out more about the Cultural Institute and meet the team.



## News

# Aiming to make housing vision a reality

**A Leeds academic's shared vision of establishing widespread, community-led, affordable eco-housing has taken a step closer to reality with the launch of a share offer that is open to members of the public.**

Leeds Community Homes (LCH) – which was co-founded by Paul Chatterton, Professor of Urban Futures (Geography) – aims to support the creation of 1,000 affordable homes in Leeds over the next 10 years. Through its share offer, LCH is seeking to raise a minimum of £200,000, with a maximum of £360,000; the minimum that individuals can invest is £100.

LCH was founded as a direct result of the Low Impact Living Affordable Community

(LILAC) project which Professor Chatterton was instrumental in establishing. He says: "There is growing interest in the public investing in community shares, and it is wonderful that research at the University has helped to launch the UK's first community-led housing share offer. This offer by LCH is an excellent and simple investment opportunity for members of the public and University colleagues who want to help support community-led, ecological and affordable housing right here in Leeds."

LCH has also secured the support of the Booster Programme, which is funded by the Power to Change charitable trust and run by the Community Shares Unit. This means that for every pound invested by individuals, up to £100,000, they will invest another pound in match shares. LCH only needs £100,000 from the public to reach its minimum target.

## Find out more

Details of the offer – which is due to close in mid-January – and the full business plan can be found at [goo.gl/QscXfE](http://goo.gl/QscXfE)

Professor Chatterton and members of LCH are holding a briefing session about this pioneering investment opportunity on Thursday 15 December at 1pm in the School of Geography, seminar room 1, Garstang Building (use the ground floor entrance, just off Chancellor's Court).

## Research and innovation

# Multimillion-pound investment in pig research

**Yorkshire will soon become one of the best places in Europe for pig research, thanks to significant investment from the University and the government.**

The University is launching new facilities at its farm to carry out research into outdoor-reared pigs, and will significantly upgrade its indoor-reared pig research centre. The combined investment is worth in excess of £7m.

Leeds' pig research focuses on themes identified by the livestock industry as central to improving quality and productivity: animal nutrition, production systems and reproduction, behaviour and environment.

Professor Helen Miller, Director of the University Farm, says: "We are making the investment to create new knowledge which will benefit British pigs and the pig industry. Animal feed is the largest variable cost and one of the areas we will study is how to improve outdoor sow nutrition to maximise the wellbeing and productivity of individual animals."

The investment includes a threefold increase in the number of sows from 200 to 600. Larger sample sizes will increase the scope of research and provide information to commercial farmers and the livestock support industries to enable them to make informed choices that could help them to be more profitable and sustainable.

New equipment and facilities will include a CCTV network to monitor the pigs, devices which will let pigs choose what they want to eat and monitor their choices, teaching centres and on-site laboratories, and improved animal accommodation.

The University is recruiting a number of key staff to open up new areas of expertise. The most high-profile recruit is Professor Lisa Collins, an epidemiologist who has developed computer models to predict animal behaviour, who comes from the University of Lincoln.

The investment in the farm's facilities is majority funded by the University, with support from the government-funded Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Livestock. This UK-wide programme links leading livestock research bodies with industry partners to improve livestock quality and husbandry.





## Research and innovation

# Going viral – Leeds researchers target brain cancer cure

**Leeds research could see the development of a revolutionary new treatment for brain cancer.**

Around 9,000 people are diagnosed with brain cancer in the UK every year. And while treatments for many cancers have improved in recent years, the prognosis for brain cancer patients has barely changed.

Though rare, brain cancer presents a number of major challenges. It's impossible to diagnose early because the symptoms develop so rapidly – and it affects children, adults and the elderly, with no apparent links to their lifestyle.

Professor Susan Short is leading a research team, based at Leeds Cancer Centre, St James's Hospital, which is investigating a revolutionary viral therapy. The team is running a two-year clinical trial on the use of an oncolytic virus which can be injected into patients to target and kill brain cancer cells.

If successful, the virus will work in two ways. First, it will target cancer cells, attacking tumours while leaving healthy cells unharmed. Second, it will 'switch on' the natural defences of the patient's immune system to recognise cancer cells and destroy them. Similar techniques have been used to treat other types of cancer but this is the first time this approach has been used for brain cancer in the UK.

Initial findings have been very promising, and have shown that a virus injected into a patient is able to make its way to brain cancer cells without doing harm to the patient's healthy tissue.

Funding from Cancer Research UK has enabled Professor Short and her team to test the virus on 30 newly diagnosed patients, while a donor gift will support a trial with patients whose tumours have returned after radiotherapy. A current



Professor Susan Short

appeal for further support has raised more than £40,000 from alumni and other donors to the University's Footsteps Fund.

If the trials are successful, they could provide fresh hope of an effective treatment. "For decades it was felt nothing could be done for brain cancer patients," says Professor Short. "Now a concentration of expertise at Leeds and our promising early results are finally holding out the hope of success."

More details can be found at [goo.gl/4nCLA1](http://goo.gl/4nCLA1)

## Research Hub in Edward Boyle Library now open

*"There's lots of space to really spread out with your research if you're in a very intensive period of writing up. I will be using this space a lot."*

*"We liked the silent area and study rooms – just perfect for students who may not have the desks or space to be able to carry out their research properly."*

**The much anticipated Research Hub has now opened on level 13 of the newly refurbished Edward Boyle Library. Exclusively for staff and postgraduates, it is designed to support and facilitate the University's research activities.**

Facilities include:

- bookable group study rooms with large LED screens and Airmedia screen-sharing hardware
- research meeting rooms (available for researcher training and networking events), with excellent presentation equipment including a whiteboard wall and lecture capture technology
- bookable individual study rooms
- extra-large study desks with individual lighting, good internet connection and sockets for charging mobile devices
- comfortable seating areas and lockers.

At the launch, Professor Lisa Roberts, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation, said: "I think this new Research Hub is an absolutely fabulous facility for our postgraduate researchers and it's a real privilege for them to have such a facility. It will also be a wonderful venue to bring researchers together for events and training courses that help underpin our culture of research excellence."

The Library's Research Support and Research Data Management teams are based in the Research Hub to help provide an integrated, accessible service to support researchers.

For more information visit [library.leeds.ac.uk/researcher](http://library.leeds.ac.uk/researcher)

## Open access reminder

To ensure that research papers reach the widest audience and are eligible for submission to the next REF, publications need to be uploaded to Symplectic on acceptance. For advice and

guidance, contact the Library Research Support team or your school's open access contact.

[library.leeds.ac.uk/university-publications](http://library.leeds.ac.uk/university-publications)



## Students

# Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence opens

**The new Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence aims to generate exciting ideas in teaching and learning, drawing on creative initiatives in education and examples of teaching excellence.**

Backed by a £3.5m University investment, the Institute supports and encourages a pioneering, international community for research and debate. Building on the success of Leeds' current community of 21 National Teaching Fellows, it aims to attract visiting fellows from across the world.

The Institute offers time – as well as funding – to University staff to encourage excellent pedagogic research, through its new Teaching Enhancement Projects (TEPs). Staff will be seconded from their current teaching roles, dedicating a day a week to the Institute, to

develop their ideas and to carry out research in support of student education and pedagogical scholarship. The TEPs will complement the Institute's prestigious Excellence and Innovation Fellowship Scheme, which offers year-long secondments and one visiting fellowship.

Professor Tom Ward, Deputy-Vice-Chancellor: Student Education, says: "Leeds has consistently led the way in student education and in particular in how to exploit the digital environment to further enhance the learning experience, especially among research-intensive universities. We have ambitious plans for the Institute, which include establishing the University as an international leader in pedagogic research and debate.

"As well as shaping teaching and learning policy here at Leeds, and more widely across the sector, one of the Institute's main goals is to

host the University's first international student education conference in 2018.

"At a practical level, too, I want to be sure that Leeds is able to contribute rigorous research evidence and thinking to help shape the development of the Teaching Excellence Framework. The Institute's research will give rigour to our aspirations in relation to the TEF."

Dr Raphael Hallett, Director of the Institute, adds: "The Institute carries the ambition for student education at Leeds to new levels. The time is ripe to invest in a talented community of innovators and pedagogic researchers, and to showcase their outputs. The mission of the Institute is clear: to help shape the Leeds curriculum of the future and to lead sector-level developments in student education and teaching scholarship."

## Resources for inclusive teaching

**A new series of 'Being inclusive' guides has been produced to support and promote inclusive teaching practice and learning activities across the University.**

The guides cover a wide range of areas, including using technology to support learning and teaching, supervising projects and dissertations, assessing work and giving feedback, personal tutoring, and planning placements and fieldtrips

"The guides are practical and underpinned by research on inclusive teaching practice, so each refers to literature where people can find more information to support further study and development," says Jenny Brady from Disabled Students' Assessment and Support. Jenny had overall responsibility for producing the guides, alongside Rebecca Dearden from Organisational Development and Professional Learning (formerly SDDU), and support from the Inclusive Learning and Teaching Development (ILTD) working group, including colleagues from across the Student Education Service and Leeds University Union.

As well as the written guides, short videos have been produced featuring colleagues talking about their approaches to inclusive learning

and teaching and students discussing their experiences of inclusive practices at the University. The new resources align to areas of activity in the UK Professional Standards Framework

**The resource will be launched at the Student Education Conference in January 2017, and will then be made available online.**

The ILTD group also recognised the important relationship between inclusive teaching practice and specialist support for students with particular learning needs, so work will continue in 2017 to produce further disability-specific guidance that will incorporate and cross-refer to the new resources. The group also aims to collect subject-specific case studies which exemplify inclusive practice in action.

*"Aside from the best practices the guides are trying to lay out, I think the most useful thing for me is having a framework to think about issues which affect students in ways I had not realised. Simply being aware of these issues has helped me design my teaching to be inherently more inclusive for all students, traditional or otherwise."*

**Felix Janeway**, ILTD group and lecturer in chemistry, based in the Lifelong Learning Centre



I-r: Rachel Myers, Claire Flegg, David Ireland, Jenny Brady, Rebecca O'Loughlin, Sabiha Patel and Rebecca Dearden



## People

# Team talk – Online Distance Learning Centre team

### Tell us about the Online Distance Learning Centre (ODLC) team.

ODLC was launched in August this year to support the increasing University portfolio of online distance learning modules and programmes. We aim to ensure that students studying these courses get a University of Leeds experience no matter where they are based. To do this we provide the administrative support for online distance learning degree programmes and modules that are delivered as part of University partnerships. We support staff from across the University to develop and deliver online programmes and modules.

### Who are the team members and what are their roles?

Dr Megan Kime is the Head of Student Education and is responsible for the development of ODLC's learning and teaching strategy and quality assurance. She works with academic schools to help them develop the curriculum for online programmes. There are currently three Student Education Service team members, Helen Billington, Gail Hardwick and Lisa Ronkowski, who share the student administration and liaise with external partners.

### How does ODLC fit in with the University's Digital Learning Service?

Based in the same building (Hopewell House on Woodhouse Lane), ODLC works with the Digital Learning Service (DLS) to provide academic and student education service advice and expertise. Our DLS colleagues deliver the learning content for students on our online programmes, while ODLC ensures that the student journey runs smoothly from registration to graduation.

### What initiatives has ODLC been involved in at the University?

We are working on three projects at the moment:

- the expansion of the University's extensive portfolio of FutureLearn MOOCs – [goo.gl/SXh1EV](http://goo.gl/SXh1EV) – into credit-bearing modules, and the development of complementary Discovery Theme modules, which will be delivered on the FutureLearn platform
- planning for new, 100% online distance learning Masters programmes
- increasing the uptake of 'Studying in a digital age' – a digital literacy module offered by schools and faculties.

### What are the benefits of online distance learning (ODL) for students, academics and institutions?

The main benefit for students is the opportunity to study flexibly, wherever they are in the world. That is particularly beneficial for students who are working full-time or have caring responsibilities which prevent them from moving to study on campus. Offering modules and programmes online opens up the University to a wider audience than ever before, enabling us to share our inspirational research-led teaching with students across the world. The richness and diversity of student cohorts on ODL programmes makes the experience of teaching them highly rewarding. In addition, the digital learning objects developed for ODL modules can be reused for the benefit of campus-based students, enhancing our existing programmes.

### Where can people go to see some great examples of ODL?

Distance learning has a long history and there are some very successful high-profile institutions such as the Open University which are built around distance learning courses. However, there is a huge variety in the kinds of experience

that ODL programmes around the world provide. Here at Leeds we are confident that our ODL modules and programmes provide the same immersive experience as our campus-based programmes. Students learn collaboratively in small groups, supported by academics who are experts in their fields. To see an example of the award-winning digital objects that support this learning, take a look at any of our FutureLearn MOOCs.

### Leeds has a reputation for being a leader in digital learning; what innovations are coming up?

The first thing that University staff will see is our expanding portfolio of credit-bearing courses on the FutureLearn platform. Online digital learning is a rapidly changing landscape, so colleagues can join us to find out more at the University Digifest and Student Education Conference in January – [goo.gl/Ummaod](http://goo.gl/Ummaod)



l-r: Dr Megan Kime, Dr Helen Billington, Gail Hardwick, Professor Neil Morris and Lisa Ronkowski



## News

# Seeking out new ways to save money

**New tools introduced by the University's Purchasing department are already saving thousands of pounds on a range of goods and services.**

The first new tool is a reverse e-auction. The way it works is similar to eBay but, instead of the price increasing, suppliers bid to reduce the price based on a customer's requirements. It saved £5,000 – or 5% – on the first tender for IT equipment, and continues to make substantial savings.

"The auction tool is useful for branded, commonly provided items that are available from many suppliers, such as stationery, laboratory supplies and IT equipment," says Purchasing's David McLaren, who is a Category Manager. "It works well for one-off requirements or regular orders where volumes can be accurately forecast. Colleagues who think they might benefit from this tool should get in touch with their Procurement team."

Purchasing and IT have also jointly invested in new software to help deliver efficiency savings across all IT equipment purchasing. KnowledgeBus IT Edition is a simple online

tool that uses UK supply chain data to enable IT buyers to quickly benchmark purchases against daily trade guide prices and stock levels on over 150,000 products – from PCs to print cartridges – offered by more than 2,500 suppliers.

The tool has already proved its worth by challenging price increases requested by the University's suppliers. It has also enabled Purchasing and IT staff to negotiate on the margins they pay and, for the first time, have access to 100% validated benchmark prices. For more information contact [d.mclaren@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:d.mclaren@leeds.ac.uk)

Finally, a new framework for IT contractors is now in place, including technical roles, general consultancy roles and National Institute for Health Research IT requirements. For more information please see the IT Contractors Framework at [goo.gl/MLjF3U](http://goo.gl/MLjF3U)

## International

# Paving the way for international partnerships

**Four professors from Leeds were in India in November for its government-backed Tech Summit. They were there to talk about the University's world-leading research, and its relevance for the Indian government's plans for its own research and development work.**

The summit was supported by the UK government, and the Prime Minister and other cabinet members spoke at the event. Professor Hai-Sui Yu, our Pro Vice-Chancellor, International, was part of the ministerial delegation.

The Leeds team highlighted opportunities for collaboration between the University and India, especially in the fields of robotics, engineering and precision medicine.

Professor Yu has also played a key role in facilitating a recent series of high-level meetings spearheaded by the Russell Group of research-intensive universities and its counterpart, the China 9 group. The meetings discussed how best to foster excellence in research, innovation and higher education and to consider the benefits of, and opportunities for, collaboration between Leeds and other Russell Group members and Chinese universities.

Following formal discussions, delegates signed a joint Russell Group–China 9 statement on: exploring ways to deepen engagement and strengthen existing relationships; sharing information and approaches to addressing complex global challenges; and considering opportunities to further facilitate the exchange of ideas and knowledge.

Professor Yu also met and discussed possible new research and teaching partnerships with the Presidents of Shanghai Jiaotong University, Zhejiang University, Zhejiang University of Technology in Hangzhou, and the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

## On the move...

Central Purchasing and the three Purchasing satellites for the faculties are now located in Lifton Villas. All phone numbers and email addresses remain the same. The Purchasing satellite for Facilities remains on Cromer Terrace.





## International

# Network welcomes new members

**The Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) is extending its footprint in Sino-Asia and in Africa with three new partners: Renmin University, China; National Cheng Kung University of Taiwan (NCKU); and the University of Nairobi, Kenya.**

Renmin University is a leading, research university, ranked number one in China in the humanities and social sciences, with a liberal arts core alongside competitive science and engineering. It has 28 graduate schools (including an international graduate school with a centre in Suzhou near Shanghai). Many of the disciplines are highly relevant to the WUN focus areas of health, environment, education and culture.

Situated in the historic city of Tainan in the south of Taiwan, NCKU is a research-led university and is the second largest university in Taiwan. NCKU is renowned for its academic

performance in engineering, as well as a strong reputation in science, medicine, management and design.

The University of Nairobi's request for membership is currently under consideration by the WUN Partnership Board. Its presence in WUN would provide the network with three African regional hubs, in South (Cape Town), West (Ghana) and East (Nairobi) Africa. The University of Nairobi is the leading research university in East Africa and is strongly committed to international engagement.

Universities in Kenya and China are eligible as Co-Investigators for the Newton Fund and for

the Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF).

Professor Hai-Sui Yu, Pro-Vice-Chancellor: International, says: "I am delighted to see WUN expanding and welcoming new overseas partners. Access to high-value equipment, rare facilities, fragile environments and different cultural perspectives benefits researchers and PhD students at Leeds and enhances the development of our research and innovation."

If you would like to know more about WUN, the Newton Fund, GCRF or University funding to facilitate international research collaborations and mobility, please email [internationalresearcher@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:internationalresearcher@leeds.ac.uk)



## Enjoying the challenges of working in China

**Learning a language, adapting to a different culture, working out the transport system and getting to grips with a new cuisine – as well as teaching an inaugural course to the first cohort of students – are challenges being enjoyed by Faculty of Engineering colleagues now working at the new joint school in China's Southwest Jiaotong University (SWJT).**

The joint school has 200 students studying electronic and electrical engineering, computing, mechanical engineering, and civil engineering. One-third of the teaching is done by University of Leeds colleagues, with the remaining two-thirds carried out by staff from SWJT.

"All our academics visit Chengdu prior to commencing teaching so they can familiarise themselves with the campus but, even so, the differences still take some getting used to," says Dr Andy Kemp (Electronic and Electrical Engineering).

"Unlike Leeds, which is relatively compact, the SWJT campus covers a vast area – it takes around 40 minutes to walk across it. It is part of a high-technology park and facilities are purpose-built to house around 60,000 students and staff so, again, it's much bigger. When I first visited Chengdu three years ago, there were just two metro lines linking the

campus to central Chengdu. Now there are four and the plan is to have 10 lines by 2020. With construction work ongoing, all day, every day, the pace and scale of construction is astounding. The city has a population of 14 million people, but westerners are still relatively unusual, so people are curious to know who you are and where you come from."

On the Electronic and Electrical Engineering programme, four Leeds academics teach over two months, although arrangements differ depending on the course. The four-year programmes include a foundation year to ensure students have a good grounding in English, maths and physics.

Dr Kemp continues: "With a cohort of really bright, enthusiastic tier 1 students, and the experience of working in a relatively unknown part of China, our academics are finding the experience extremely interesting and very rewarding."



Dr John Stell (Computing) visits a Chengdu market



## Campus

# Nexus gets underway

**Preparatory work for the construction of Nexus – the University’s new £38m innovation and enterprise centre – have commenced.**

Contractor Galliford Try has taken ownership of the site which is at the southern edge of campus, immediate work includes ground clearing and site preparation. Traffic around the site will be diverted to a new route controlled by temporary traffic lights, but access to campus will not be disrupted. Hoardings are expected to be fully in place by the end of January.

As part of the project the trees on the current site will be removed, however three new trees will replace each tree taken out, to be planted in close proximity to the current site and in others areas across campus, mainly western campus. The new trees will be carefully selected to encourage biodiversity and planting will commence in the New Year.

Regular updates on Nexus and details of access routes can be found at [campusdevelopments.leeds.ac.uk](http://campusdevelopments.leeds.ac.uk)

## Biodiversity becomes the standard

**The University has launched its first Biodiversity Standard to support its new strategic ambition to become ‘an exemplar of urban biodiversity’.**

The standard directs the University’s management of biodiversity across all its sites by looking at ecosystem services provided. These include the provision of food and water for wildlife, climate change mitigation, supporting nutrient cycles, and the recreational and spiritual benefits to wellbeing. It also links to research and teaching to ensure our students and academics can use the campus to develop innovative approaches to biodiversity management. Each University site will have its own bespoke action plan.

If you would like to find out how you can get involved in promoting biodiversity across the University, email [sustainability@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@leeds.ac.uk)

# New centre for engineering and physical sciences gets the green light

**Plans to create an international centre for engineering and physical sciences on the north-eastern part of campus have been given the go-ahead by the University’s Council.**

The £96m project is set to position the University as a world-leading research platform and is the largest, single-project investment ever to have been made on campus.

It is proposed that the new 15,700m<sup>2</sup> centre will bring together schools in the Faculty of Engineering with those in Physical Sciences, involving the relocation of the Schools of Computing and Physics and Astronomy. This will help to foster a culture of interdisciplinary working to address challenges in areas including energy-efficient computing, telecommunications, sustainable magnetic materials, sensors for use in biological systems and extreme or remote

environments, pharmaceutical formulations, ‘smart foods’ and medical technologies.

Professor Lisa Roberts, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation, explains: “The University already has a strong, global reputation for its pioneering science and engineering research, but currently some disciplines that are, and should be, working together are spread across campus. This investment is about creating a modern, highly flexible space to bring teams and facilities together in a single location to support, stimulate and inspire interdisciplinary approaches to tackling big research questions.”

Dennis Hopper, Director of Facilities Management, says: “The development will provide impetus and academic acceleration in our Engineering and Physical Sciences disciplines. It’s also great news for the Leeds City Region, with the investment further strengthening the University’s ability to attract major research funding and a consequential impact on the Leeds City Region economy.”

Plans will be presented to the Leeds City Council Planning Committee later this year and project completion is scheduled for 2020.





## In the news



The University's investment in its **pig research facilities** was featured on *BBC Look North* and reported widely in the farming press, such as *Farming Online*, *Farming UK* and *Farmers Guardian*. Supported by funding from the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Livestock, our facilities are set to become among the best in Europe for such work. (Also see the feature on page 5.)

Dr Paul Kay (Geography) was interviewed on *Buzzfeed* about his study on **pharmaceuticals polluting our rivers** and how this could contribute to the global challenge of antibiotic resistance. His research also featured in the *Western Daily Press*.

Research by Dr Stephen Griffin (Medicine) and his team has found that the **virus that causes coughs and colds in children could be harnessed as an immunotherapy** to fight primary liver cancer and the hepatitis C virus that often causes it. This was featured in *The Sun*.

Dr Jack Holland (Politics and International Studies – POLIS) appeared on *BBC Breakfast* stating that there will be **important constraints on what Trump can and can't do as US President**, which is important because he is not a normal President-Elect.



Professor Piers Forster (Earth and Environment / Priestley Centre) was quoted in the *Financial Times*, *Guardian* and on BBC Online regarding the US coal industry in light of Trump's election win, saying **"You don't need coal to drive economic growth."** In a special series on climate change for TheLADbible, Professor Forster also discussed how the impact of climate change could affect migration patterns, while Professor Andy Challinor (Earth and Environment) discussed his research on crop breeding.

Dr David Spencer (Leeds University Business School) featured in an article by *CNN* about the potential **benefits of the six-hour working day**, after a study in Sweden found that productivity is actually higher when people spend fewer hours working.

Dr Laura Gregory (Earth and Environment) commented on BBC Online and *BBC Radio 1* on research carried out at the scene of the **Norcia earthquake**, which will help to improve forecasting of earthquakes in the region.



Professor Kevin Theakston (POLIS) conducted a poll of academics specialising in British politics and contemporary British history for their opinions of postwar Prime Ministers, and found that **Cameron was considered the 'third worst PM since 1945'**. This survey was featured in the *Independent*, *Daily Mirror*, *ITV News*, *Daily Mail* and *Mirror Online* among other publications.

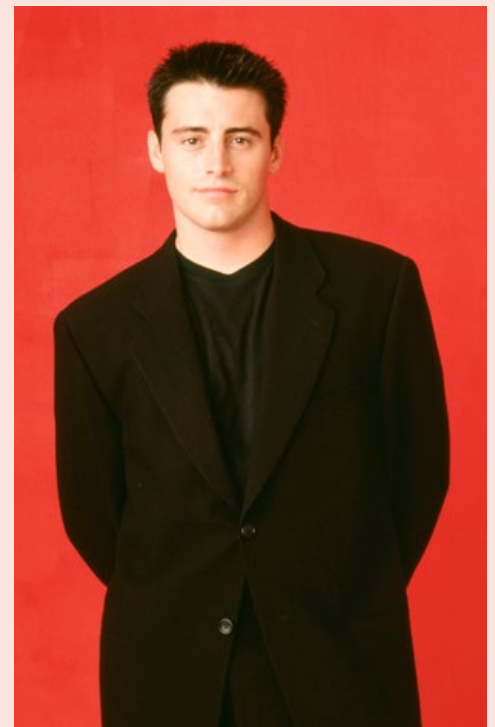
Professor Martin Levesley, Pro-Dean for Student Education (Engineering), commented in the *Daily Telegraph* on the **'exciting' developments in advanced robotics**, high-performance cars and sophisticated self-drive technology.

Research by Dr Adrian Gallagher and undergraduate Georgiana-Silvia Epure (both POLIS) was cited in the UK Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee report, *Libya: Examination of intervention and collapse and the UK's future policy options*. The research was also cited in the press, including the *Guardian*. The research highlights that **the failure of the UK's policy has to be understood within the broader context of the failures within Libya and the international community**.

Professor Christine Foyer (Plant Sciences) provided expert comment to *BBC News at 10* on US research showing that plants **modified to boost photosynthesis produced greater crop yields**.

Dr Christine Harlen (POLIS) featured on TheLADbible website, explaining the difference between **US Republican and Democrat policy** in key areas such as healthcare, social policy and tax.

James Charles, Professor David Hogg and Dr Derek Magee (Computing) were featured in the *Guardian* for creating 'virtual immortality' by **reanimating characters from TV shows**, specifically Joey from *Friends*. James Charles was also interviewed by The Ringer about the research.





## Honours

A tool developed by the **University and Leeds College of Art** that uses computer gaming to simulate field trips won a Times Higher Education award for Outstanding Digital Innovation in Teaching or Research.

Students on courses with a geology element can use the tool developed by the Virtual Landscapes team to help them to prepare for fieldwork. They explore a virtual landscape as they would a real one, interacting to collect real-time data, determine location, and map regional geology. This means that time can be used more profitably when they are out in the field. The tool can also be used by students who cannot undertake fieldwork due to illness or injury, enabling the same skills and processes to be taught in a manner not previously possible.

Dr Jacqui Houghton, lecturer at Leeds and Director of the Virtual Landscapes project, says: "This is a fantastic example of teamworking, using experts from different disciplines and institutions to find a solution to a problem we had been grappling with for some time. Virtual Landscapes was developed from a pencil and paper exercise originally devised by Dr Geoffrey Lloyd into a tool that has revolutionised the way that students learn about geology."

The tool is being evaluated by other UK universities, including Keele, Durham and Liverpool, and used in universities in the USA, South Africa and Guyana.



The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has found the quality of care provided by **Leeds Student Medical Practice** to be 'Outstanding' following an inspection earlier this year. The practice is a GP surgery that specialises in caring for students of Leeds and their immediate families. It is purpose-built and includes a three-bed day resting facility for students. Under CQC's programme of inspections, all of England's GP practices are rated in five key areas: safety, effectiveness, caring, responsiveness and leadership.

Beverley Cole, Head of General Practice in the North for CQC, said: "It is clear that Leeds Student Medical Practice is providing a caring, responsive and well-led service, which is a real asset to students in Leeds.

"We were impressed with the practice's responsiveness to the needs of students, who make up the majority of their population, and particularly with the in-house mental health team which offers early intervention to patients for a range of issues such as anxiety, depression and eating disorders. Feedback from patients shows the service is really valued by those who use it. This is a great example of what outstanding care looks like."

**Professors Giles Davies** (Electrical and Electronic Engineering), **Andrew Bell** and **Mojtaba Ghadiri** (both Chemical and Process Engineering) have been elected as Fellows of the Royal Academy of Engineering in recognition of their significant contribution to the field. There are just 1,500 Fellows of the Academy in total, and only 50 are elected each year. Fellowship is considered to be one of the highest national honours that an engineer can receive. The Senior Fellow of the Academy is HRH Prince Philip.

Offering his congratulations, Professor Peter Jimack, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, said: "Fellowship of the Academy is a highly regarded tribute by leading engineers in the country."

**Dr John Elliott** (Earth and Environment) has been appointed one of 44 new Royal Society University Research Fellows for 2016. The Fellowship scheme aims to provide outstanding early-career scientists, who have the potential to become leaders in their chosen fields, with the opportunity to build an independent research career. The title of Dr Elliott's Fellowship is 'The rise of mountains', and he will be building on his current expertise in analysing individual faults and earthquakes.



**Professor Alison E Ashcroft** (Biological Sciences) has been awarded Life Membership of the British Mass Spectrometry Society (BMSS) in recognition of her "lasting dedication to the British Mass Spectrometry Society and outstanding support of the community at large".

Life members have usually been members of BMSS for a significant part of their career and have made notable contributions to the Society. They will have attended, and made regular scientific contributions to, meetings sponsored by the BMSS throughout their career and played a role in the organisation and running of some of those meetings.

**David Richardson** (Civil Engineering) has been awarded the Fellowship of the Institution of Structural Engineers in recognition of his achievements and experience in the field.

The University has again been awarded a **first class ranking in the People & Planet University League Table**, which assesses the environmental and ethical performance of all UK universities. We rose in the League Table, and are now ranked 23rd, up from 30th place in 2015. People and Planet's Hannah Smith says: "Leeds has laid a strong foundation for sustainability in their strategy. By resourcing staff and bringing an understanding of sustainability into the curriculum, Leeds is stepping up to a unique opportunity to meet society's demands for the skills and understanding communities need to tackle the biggest challenges of our time." More information is available at [sustainability.leeds.ac.uk](https://sustainability.leeds.ac.uk)





## Public engagement

Schoolchildren explore some of the artworks in the Gallery

## Engaging young people with art

**University students and local schoolchildren are engaging with art in a whole new way thanks to the Footsteps into Art project, funded by the University's Footsteps Fund.**

Footsteps into Art is The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery's education programme which engages schools within walking distance of the University with art and art-making. The Gallery recently welcomed secondary school pupils from Leeds City Academy for the first time. Year 9 pupils learned weaving and rag rug techniques with artist Vinny James to celebrate

the Yorkshire Year of the Textile and explored some of the Gallery's collection by making felt and wool pictures.

The project also provides work experience, volunteer opportunities and one annual paid internship for undergraduates, enabling them to make a difference to the local community, gain valuable experience working in a gallery setting, and develop key transferable skills. A team of 25 student volunteers provide support for workshops, working with children on art tasks and collecting feedback, which contributes to the project evaluation. These students are able to share their passion

for creativity and art with the children and gain valuable experience in the education department of an art gallery.

Dominika Blazewicz, a third-year English, Language and Education Studies student, is the Footsteps into Art education intern for 2016-17. She says: "Footsteps into Art is teaching me how to create resources and workshops that foster an interest and love of art in children. The project also helps teachers and students access a rich cultural and art education, something which is too often missing in the regular school environment, and gives them valuable experience in questioning, discussing and creating artworks.

"My aim is to eventually run my own art activities during a workshop, learn more about gallery management, and create free online art guides for students, parents and teachers."

# Public engagement shines at national awards

**Two public engagement projects involving Leeds researchers picked up Engage 2016 awards, with a third project making the final shortlist.**

The Don't Smile COHESION Pilot Project won the Engaging Young People Award at the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement's 2016 Engage Awards.

Described by Lisa Jamieson, Head of Engaging Science at the Wellcome Trust, as "one of the most successful and high quality projects in the Wellcome Trust's Engaging Science portfolio", the project developed a collaborative pilot theatre production and debate about oral and dental health.

Staff and students from the Schools of Dentistry and of Performance and Cultural Industries worked alongside the nationally-acclaimed Theatre of Debate and patient advisors. The play, Don't Smile, was a love story with a dental theme, performed to schoolchildren.

The play and follow-up debates aimed to

increase awareness of the genetic condition Amelogenesis imperfecta and to highlight the pioneering new treatments being developed in the School of Dentistry. It was also used to get across some day-to-day public oral health messages. Audience feedback and surveys have enabled the dental students involved to shape the research design for a clinical trial grant application.

Dr Emily Cuming (English) was a collaborator in the Sheffield-led project Around the Toilet, which won the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences category. The project involved members of the public and planning professionals in a series of workshops exploring what makes a safe, accessible toilet space. The workshops considered issues of disabled access, gender neutrality, changing facilities, and availability and condition of toilets.

Using the stories gathered at the workshops, and working with architects and with Sheffield City Council's Access Liaison Group, the researchers went on to develop 'Servicing Utopia', a digital tool to support planners, architects and designers.

Georgina Binnie's (English) Writing Back project was shortlisted. This project involves School of English students and older residents recruited through the Leeds City Council Neighbourhood Networks. The scheme aims to target loneliness amongst the elderly by matching them with students as pen pals. Students are given copies of historic photographs of Yorkshire by the Library's Special Collections, which they use conversation starters to begin correspondence with older people.



## Events

### Opera North presents classic fairy tales Season begins at Leeds Grand Theatre on 21 January

Opera North celebrates the timeless appeal of classic fairy tales with three new productions: Rimsky-Korsakov's rarely performed *The Snow Maiden*, Humperdinck's much-loved *Hansel and Gretel* and Rossini's captivating *Cinderella*.

Based on a Russian folk story, the young Snow Maiden, sung by mezzo-soprano Aoife Miskelly, wants nothing more than to live amongst humans after meeting a shepherd boy, Lel (Heather Lowe). But she hides a tragic secret: her heart is made of ice and, if she falls in love, it will melt. Director John Fulljames has reworked the classic storyline in a contemporary setting, with video dreamscapes blending reality and fantasy.

*Hansel and Gretel* is perhaps the best-loved of operatic fairy tales but, in Director Edward Dick's new production, it is also a darkly compelling story of growing up and survival. It features one of Britain's leading dramatic sopranos, Susan Bullock CBE, as the Witch and the children's mother, alongside Katie Bray and Fflur Wyn as Hansel and Gretel. The action includes handheld cameras and live video set against Humperdinck's charming, melodic music.

Rossini's sparkling comedy *Cinderella* has dance woven into the very fabric of the music, and this contemporary production opens with Cinderella scrubbing the floor of a ballroom dancing school. In Rossini's work, it is music rather than magic that transforms Cinderella into a princess and enables her to outwit her stepfather Don Magnifico (Henry Waddington) and stepsisters. This fresh take on Cinderella is directed by multi-talented director and choreographer Aletta Collins.



- Tickets start from £16.50
- £10 tickets available for members of Opera North's Under 30s scheme
- Over 10,000 tickets at under £30 across the season

Details at [operanorth.co.uk](http://operanorth.co.uk)

### György Gordon – an exhibition exploring the life of Hungarian-born and Yorkshire-adopted artist The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery until Saturday 25 February

György Gordon (b1924), gained his diploma in Painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest in 1953; however he soon fled his native country following the 1956 Hungarian uprising. After a failed attempt to take refuge in America, and a period in London, Gordon moved to Wakefield and in 1964 became a lecturer at the College of Art where he taught for over 20 years.

Calm and gentle in person, Gordon used art to express the dramatic personal and political turmoil he experienced. The exhibition includes paintings and drawings spanning the 1950s to 1990s, reflecting on Gordon's life and artistic journey, from his experience as a refugee to later work exploring isolation, alienation and old age.



Artist Alinah Azadeh in the School of Law

### Race Relations Act and Equality Law – exhibition at the School of Law, Liberty Building, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

A banner created to mark the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the Race Relations Act 1965 (RRA 1965) is at the centre of a new exhibition in the School of Law. The banner was created by artist Alinah Azadeh and was exhibited at the Houses of Parliament before being won for the School of Law by Professor Iyiola Solanke.

The exhibition is curated by Antony Butcher, and the launch was attended by Hilary Benn MP and Baroness Usha Prashar.

## Save the date!

**Be Curious 2017**  
Saturday 25 March 2017, 10am-4pm

Planning is well under way for next year's Be Curious event, which will highlight University research that has a direct connection with Leeds and Yorkshire and show its relevance to people in local communities. It is also an opportunity

for our local research partners to showcase their involvement with the University.

"We've seen over 60 applications to run activities such as table-top demonstrations, health checks, talks, tours and even a dance class," says Dr Charlotte Haigh, Academic Lead for Public Engagement with Research.

"We're hoping that it will be an interactive, fun and informative day for all age groups. There will be live research taking place, opportunities

for the public to discuss the way forward for particular projects, and we'll be showcasing the outcomes of some current research. Activities will take place in the Parkinson Building and Michael Sadler, and all the major research themes will be represented.

Everyone is welcome to come with friends and family and enjoy what we hope will be a really stimulating and exciting day out."



## FAQs

# Jim Slack, Director of IT

### Tell us about your career and how you came to be at Leeds

I studied maths, stats and computing at Leeds Beckett in the 1970s. Computing was still in its infancy then, but I've always wanted to be involved in IT. I started work at Neill Tools as a trainee programmer, and worked my way up through programming roles before moving into programme management and senior management roles. I've worked in a range of financial services companies across the UK, from Brighton to Edinburgh. At the age of 56 I decided to take very late gap year, but then decided that I wanted a fresh challenge. I wanted a role where I could really make a difference, in an organisation that gave something back to the community. I hadn't lived in Leeds since my own university days, and we always enjoy moving to new cities, so this role seemed ideal.

### How do you find working at the University?

I've never worked in higher education before, so I tried not to come with any preconceptions, but it's been more rewarding and interesting than I was expecting. The diversity of what we do at the University is fantastic – much more exciting than credit cards and mortgages! And the people here are brilliant – I'm so impressed with the quality and technical ability of the people in IT. I'm not a big fan of offices – it's too easy to be hidden away behind closed doors – so every week I pack up my laptop and spend some time working in a different team's area. It's a great way to get to know people.

### What do you like most about working here?

Everything! I love the people, the diversity and the challenges.



### What are your main challenges?

I think my main challenge is to create a single IT service that is effective, efficient, consistent and future-proofed. I'd like to develop better strategic relationships across the University and see much greater collaboration between IT and the rest of the University. I've spent much of my first six months visiting faculties and schools and meeting lots of people outside IT to get a better understanding of the University and what IT needs to deliver. I want us to be a trusted partner enabling the University to achieve its goals.

### How do you think IT will change in the future?

The expectation from consumers is increasing enormously. We expect to be able to do everything through an app on our phones, we expect networks to be available 24/7 and to have great response times. It will be a completely different world in the future – that makes it more challenging and exciting.

### What's your most frequently asked question?

What's going to be different?

### What do you get up to in your spare time?

I love live events – any kind of live event: theatre, sports, music, flower shows, anything.

Most recently I've been to see *Relatively Speaking* at the Grand Theatre, Jake Bugg at the Academy and watched Man City play Barcelona at the Etihad. I think the best event I've been to so far was watching Europe make a magnificent come back to beat the US at the 2012 Ryder Cup in Medinah, Chicago.

### What would be your desert island book, piece of music, film/TV programme and luxury?

The book would probably be a Graham Greene novel, perhaps *The Human Factor*.

My favourite piece of music would have to be Holst's *The Planets*. My daughter is a professional musician and I love hearing her play this with a full orchestra.

My film would be *Brassed Off*. I come from a mining community. My dad was a miner and many of his friends played in the Creswell Colliery band, and I remember all the struggles through the miner strike. It's almost a documentary to me!

My luxury item would be my iPad – books, music, games, everything I need in one place. Although I'd need a good solar panel to charge it.