

BBK



#Our **Birkbeck**

Find out more about the #OurBirkbeck initiative and how you can get involved



CONTENTS

4

#OURBIRKBECK

An initiative to share and celebrate the impact members of the community are having

5

MAKING WAVES IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

Alumnus Abraham Adeyemi and his work in the world of film



6

NEWS: BIRKBECK INSPIRES AND ARTS WEEKS

7

WHITE ELEPHANT IN CHINATOWN

Dr Jackie Jia Lou on London's Chinatown and the community response to COVID-19

8

BIRKBECK LANDED MY DREAM JOB!

Alumna Chloe Stead and her illustrious career in art history

9

NEWS: SUPPORTING THE ALUMNI COMMUNITY AND GRADUATE EARNINGS

10

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Birkbeck's Get Talking and Mentoring Pathways programmes



12

MAPPING MUSEUMS

Professor Fiona Candlin on developing a database of information on over 4000 UK museums

13

INSPIRING MINDS, CREATING BRIGHT FUTURES

Alumnus David Andrade on why he continues to support Birkbeck

14

ONE WORLD, ONE HEALTH

Professor Sanjib Bhakta on leading the charge in the fight against tuberculosis



16

BIRKBECK IS A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

Alumnus Dr Harren Jhoti on why he supports and gives back to Birkbeck

17

NEWS: VIRTUAL AUTUMN GRADUATION AND 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BIRKBECK'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



18

NEWS: BAME STUDENTS RECEIVE PHD STUDENTSHIPS AND NOBEL PRIZE AWARDED TO FORMER BIRKBECK SCIENTIST

19

TACKLING A MAJOR GLOBAL KILLER

Professor Helen Saibil on her research into halting the progression of malaria

20

A NEW DIRECTION

Student Monir El Haimar on how Birkbeck's Careers Service has helped his career progression

21

NEWS: SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

22

SUPPORTING MENTAL WELLBEING OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES

Dr Kevin Teoh on establishing the scale of the problem and the changes that are needed

23

BALANCING LAWYERING WITH STUDYING

Student Hauwa Shehu on balancing studying whilst working

24

NEWS: CAREERS BOOTCAMP AND CAMPUS ESTATE UPDATE



25

THE WAR ON DRUGS

Dr Kojo Koram on the connection between drug laws and ethnic minority communities who receive criminal records as a result of them

26

THE LAST WORD

Nicholas Katona, Director of Development and Alumni

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S WELCOME

The past year has certainly been unprecedented and challenging.

I am immensely proud of how Birkbeck's staff, students and alumni have responded to the unpredictable challenges that the pandemic has presented, working together as a community and supporting each other greatly. To maintain the safety of students and staff, we transitioned to online teaching and assessment shortly before the first national lockdown. We invested time and resource in developing an online teaching platform and redesigning our courses for the virtual world, and our education programme has been very well received (p.21). Thanks to the hard work of staff across the College, we received over 20,000 applications during 2020/2021, a record number.

2020 marked 100 years of Birkbeck joining the University of London and we celebrated this milestone by holding a lecture series with each of our five Schools inviting a high profile guest to deliver a lecture, as well as welcoming HRH The Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, to Birkbeck (p.17). We continue to be extremely proud of our membership of the University of London and the value that holding a University of London degree brings.

Despite the pandemic, our academics have continued to work on a hugely diverse range of research projects. These include: drug policies and the implications for marginalised groups (p.25); mapping museums across the UK between 1960 and 2020 and exploring their patterns and trends (p.12); analysing the mental well-being of healthcare workers to inform future guidelines (p.22); and developing methods to halt the progression of malaria (p.19). Gifts from our alumni and supporter community have been hugely impactful in supporting our research. Alumnus Harren Jhoti, who studied in Birkbeck's Crystallography department, explains his personal story and why he supports Birkbeck (p.16). I thank all those that have supported Birkbeck and hope that others will join Harren in making a positive impact.

In September, I welcomed the Government announcement of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, intended to boost productivity and help the country rebuild after COVID-19 by making higher education more flexible. This ties in well with Birkbeck's mission; creating opportunity for anybody for the advantage of everybody. It will facilitate lifelong learning and make it easier for adults and young people to break up their study into segments, transfer credits between colleges and universities, and enable more part-time study. Birkbeck will continue to be at the forefront of lifelong learning, promoting its importance and impact.

At the annual Foundation Day celebration in December, we officially launched #OurBirkbeck, an important initiative for you, our alumni, supporters and friends. Over the next year we will be championing and highlighting your stories and we invite all alumni, friends, staff and students to share the impact they are having on their communities, professions and society and how their Birkbeck experience has played a part in that. Please visit the #OurBirkbeck website to learn more and to share your story: campaign.bbk.ac.uk. There are also other ways you can get involved, learn more and find the right way for you to become a part of #OurBirkbeck (p.4).

I am confident we will be able to weather this storm together and wish you all the very best for the upcoming year.



Birkbeck will continue to be at the forefront of lifelong learning, promoting its importance and impact



*Professor David Latchman,
Vice-Chancellor of Birkbeck*





#Our Birkbeck

When George Birkbeck convened a group of supporters in 1823, he brought together a community. Philosophers, politicians and philanthropists, workers, men, women and revolutionaries all united around one pioneering vision: to create an institution where the highest quality education is available to all who want it, regardless of background or circumstance.

Many organisations do not survive two centuries, but even fewer do so in a manner their founders would recognise. Today, at a time when we are facing unprecedented changes across the globe, Birkbeck's founding vision is more relevant than ever.

The challenges we see emerging in our society require bold and innovative solutions, and these will come from curious, thoughtful and ambitious people who recognise the importance of opportunity, who are inspired to explore new frontiers and who will champion diversity of experience. Providing access to flexible education and delivering high-quality research is key.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

This past year has been unlike any other; over our nearly 200-year history, the strength and diversity of our Birkbeck community have never been so apparent – we want to celebrate that.

In December, the annual Foundation Day celebration marked 197 years since the College's foundation in 1823. This year's celebration also marked the launch of #OurBirkbeck: an initiative to share, showcase and celebrate the impact members of the Birkbeck community are having around the world.

This edition of BBK magazine highlights inspirational stories from our whole community, including current students, alumni and staff, showcasing how they are making a difference.

HOW YOU CAN BE PART OF #OURBIRKBECK

Share your story

Whether you are making a difference in your community, bringing about change to your industry or shaping the lives of those around you. We want to hear from you. Share your story and help spread the word about the impact the 60,000 strong Birkbeck community is having in the world.

Get involved

Your knowledge, experience and expertise can help students thrive; from supporting them as they decide to come to Birkbeck to mentoring them as they navigate their next career step. Or reconnect with Birkbeck by joining us at an event.

Make a gift

Our community of alumni and friends play a significant role in helping Birkbeck forge ahead at the cutting edge of innovative education, opening our doors to students of all ages and backgrounds and carrying out world changing research.

Study with us

Whether you are looking to reskill, take the next step in your career or pursue a passion, Birkbeck offers study options from short courses through to PhD study.

Birkbeck has responded to the pandemic by doubling the discount from 10% to 20% for alumni wishing to undertake Master's courses during the 2021/2022 academic year.

Visit campaign.bbk.ac.uk today to share your story and find out more.

MAKING WAVES IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

We caught up with Abraham Adeyemi, South London-based award-winning screenwriter, director and playwright, who studied BA Creative Writing at Birkbeck between 2011 and 2015. Now a rising star in the industry, Abraham reflects on his time at Birkbeck and how he's paving the way for the next generation of writers.

Despite 2020 bringing a global pandemic, Abraham is busier than ever. Early last year, his short film 'No More Wings' won the Best Narrative Short award at the Tribeca Film Festival 2020 against 6,000 submissions. Abraham explains: "Life has been crazy and totally unexpected, but I've been very fortunate that my writing and directing have taken off. Winning the Tribeca award has really exploded my career and as a result of the award, my film is now eligible for Oscar and BAFTA consideration, so I'm busy working on everything that comes with that as well as developing original dramas for Channel 4 and ITV studios."

Abraham initially embarked on an International Politics degree, with the ambition of becoming a lawyer or working in finance. At the start of his

“ Birkbeck was perfect for me; during the day I was writing and starting to reach out to production companies and agents. ”

second year, he began to feel uncertain about whether he wanted to go down the career path he was carving for himself. The untimely passing of a friend led him to reflect on life and happiness



Image: (Joupin Ghamsari)

and inspired him to pursue his real passion, writing. He decided to make a change and applied to Birkbeck, choosing the BA Creative Writing degree.

Abraham comments: "Birkbeck was perfect for me; during the day I was writing and starting to reach out to production companies and agents. The course helped develop my playwriting and it has contributed to the success I've had in theatre and screen. Producers I work with often comment on how receptive I am to feedback and I know that's down to the interactive workshops I had with fellow students at Birkbeck."

A year after graduating from Birkbeck, Abraham started his business, Creative Blue Balls. His vision is for it to become a big production company, primarily in film and TV. Abraham explains: "With my work I want people to look within themselves and consider other perspectives. I'm also obsessed with writers. I see my company as supporting writers and helping them grow, giving them a platform to produce great film and TV that is diverse and original. I'm hoping that over the next 10-15 years we will see a change in the number of Black artists in front of and behind the camera, making waves and changes in the industry."

BIRKBECK INSPIRES - SHARING BIRKBECK IMPACT AND FUN

'Birkbeck Inspires' was created to inspire learning, provoke thought, entertain and excite curious minds during the pandemic. The programme includes videos, virtual events and podcasts across a range of topics, with academics voicing their opinions on topical issues, showcasing their research, and giving advice and support during this difficult time.

Highlights have included Professor David Latchman, Vice-Chancellor, and Baroness Joan Bakewell, President, conversing about life under lockdown; James Hammond, Reader in Geophysics, highlighting our understanding of the volcano Mount Paektu; Catherine Heard, Senior Research Fellow and Director of the World Prison Research Programme, introducing the World Prison Brief and global prison trends; and Ana Da Cunha



Lewin, Chartered Psychologist and Programme Director, giving advice on coping with anxiety, nurturing resilience and exercising for well-being. We've loved sharing the series via the alumni and supporter e-newsletter and your feedback has been hugely positive, with people describing the content as "informative", "inspiring" and "fascinating".

Visit www.bbk.ac.uk/birkbeck-inspires to view all the videos and podcasts to date and follow us on Twitter @BirkbeckUoL for regular updates on the series.

ARTS SCHOOL CREATES AN EXCITING, IMMERSIVE, ONLINE EXPERIENCE

With its doors temporarily closed during the pandemic, the Peltz Gallery launched its first online exhibition with three specially commissioned video artworks. The programme entitled 'Lessons from Lockdown: Learning from the Pandemic' ran from September to December and addressed critical concerns brought to the forefront during the global pandemic: decolonizing culture, pollution and lockdown experiences in the global South.

In May, the School of Arts took the Arts Week programme online and extended it from one week to five, bringing all of the creativity and vibrancy from the arts and humanities with a series of live and recorded events.



Vero's life in Hamburg during COVID-19 (2020), embroidery by Rosina Maepa

Topics ranged from local to global and brought life to the School's research through a variety of mediums, including an in-conversation between Birkbeck's Julia Bell and Booker Prize-shortlisted author Deborah Levy; and medieval scholar Isabel Davis teaching how to make a volvelle – a medieval fortune-telling device.

If you missed this year's Arts Week, catch up on all the content via www.bbk.ac.uk/annual-events/arts-week/arts-week-2020.



THE WHITE ELEPHANT IN CHINATOWN



Academics at Birkbeck put people at the heart of their research.

Image: (Getty Images)

When Dr Jackie Jia Lou, Lecturer in Sociolinguistics, visited London's Chinatown in May, two months after the lockdown, she noticed few references to COVID-19. Instead, she saw 'closed' and 'take-away' signs and other signage for face masks and hand sanitizers.

Research she's collaborating on, with Professor Zhu Hua at the University of Birmingham, examines community responses to COVID-19 in the linguistic landscape. Defined as the visual display of texts and signs in the physical environment, linguistic landscape is a relatively new subject in sociolinguistics, which bridges sociolinguistics and urban studies.

Following the publication of her book *The Linguistic Landscape of Chinatown: A Sociolinguistic Ethnography* in 2016, Dr Lou has been working on a new mobile ethnography of London's Chinatown funded by Birkbeck's Research Innovation Grant since 2018. The current project focuses on COVID-19 signage.

For Chinatown, these signs carried the additional burden of racist references to the "Chinese virus" and suffered not only the direct effects of the coronavirus outbreak but also the stigma of such labelling.

Jackie has been researching the linguistic landscapes of Chinatowns throughout the world since 2007, originally focussing on Chinatown in Washington, DC. She's analysed how language and discourse contribute to the racial prejudice, ethnic stereotypes, and urban gentrification in the traditionally ethnic neighbourhood. Just as the 2003 SARS epidemic negatively impacted New York's Chinatown, London's Chinatown was

affected by the coronavirus pandemic shortly after the outbreak in China and some time before the UK recorded cases.

This helps explain why London's Chinatown community was reluctant to explicitly mention COVID-19 in the context of the closure of business. Signs announced the closures with no clear reason. The researchers refer to it as the 'white elephant' in Chinatown.

Then in July, Jackie and her collaborator noticed a shift in the linguistic landscape with the Black Lives Matter movement and the Government's Eat Out to Help Out Scheme finding an unlikely link. They noticed that the shop windows of some Chinatown businesses were displaying signs for the scheme and also support for Black Lives Matter. As restaurants and shops sought to reinvigorate business, an interracial solidarity appeared to be taking shape. Only 25 out of 312 signs (8%), photographed in London's Chinatown by the research team on 10 July, explicitly mentioned COVID-19.

Jackie expresses her hopes for Chinatown: "We're keen to share our research with community organisations to help Chinatown survive the crisis. Chinatown still has a part to play in the diasporic community and I really hope that continues. Ultimately, we expect the research to identify ways of building trust with communities as well as consumers, combating fear and racism, and building intercultural solidarity."

Find out more about our world-changing research at campaign.bbk.ac.uk



BIRKBECK LANDED ME MY DREAM JOB

Chloe Stead, Senior Global Director of Colnaghi, studied MA History of Art from 2010-2012 and here she reveals her plans to tackle the lack of diversity in the art history world.

Chloe is taking the art history world by storm. 2020 marked an important career move for her, from an 11-year stint at Sotheby's, to Colnaghi's London gallery, the world's oldest commercial art gallery. She comments: "The last few months have been incredibly busy; we're having to adapt quickly in the changing professional landscape. I'm thrilled to have joined Colnaghi, a forward-thinking business which is trying hard to make the world of Old Master Paintings more accessible."

Chloe's career began when she joined Sotheby's, after undertaking a BA History of Art degree at the University of Birmingham. After spending two years at the world-famous auction house, Chloe landed a more business-focused role. After a short time, she felt she needed more intellectual stimulation which is when she considered a Master's degree.

Months after completing her Master's at Birkbeck, a rare vacancy at Sotheby's came up – a specialist in Old Master Paintings. Chloe believes Birkbeck played a significant part in her securing the role: "By undertaking my Master's whilst at Sotheby's, I demonstrated to my colleagues my capacity for academic work and the knowledge I'd gained from my degree meant I was well positioned for the job."

Chloe is deeply passionate about her work and the impact of art on society:



Image: (Carla van de Puttelaar)

"When approaching a work of art, it's not just the provenance of the object that's of interest... it's the creative element – the marrying of history and craftsmanship. It's extraordinary, you can use a single item as a way of learning about so many aspects of life: literature, religion, politics, anthropology and psychology."

Chloe is eager to be an advocate for the subject of art history and dispel long-held beliefs it's only for the few. Chloe comments: "I'm passionate about getting people from different social backgrounds into the industry. We need to go to the root of the problem, A-level Art History needs to be offered by more schools and young people need to have opportunities to learn about the industry. I plan to continue my work on this in the future – the industry needs to change. I believe Birkbeck is truly inspiring in how it enables access to education to anyone regardless of their background or circumstance."

**We want to hear from you. Share your story with us, by
visiting campaign.bbk.ac.uk**

SUPPORTING OUR ALUMNI COMMUNITY THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

In April, Birkbeck responded to COVID-19 by doubling the discount from 10% to 20% for alumni wishing to undertake Master's courses during the 2020/2021 academic year. This saw an increase in alumni taking up the discount of 63% for 2020/2021. The pandemic and the unprecedented uncertainty from it has meant that many people are looking to upskill or reskill to enhance their career prospects. Birkbeck wanted to make further study as accessible as possible to enable members of the Birkbeck community to enhance their skills or change the direction of their career. We are delighted to announce that this 20% discount will remain in place for the 2021/2022 academic year.



Image: (Paul Cochrane)

Nic Katona, Director of Development and Alumni, commented: "I am so pleased we were able to offer this opportunity of further study to our alumni, especially during this difficult time. The additional financial support has been greatly received by the community and we have seen a huge uptake in the number of former students enrolling on Master's degrees."

If you'd like to take advantage of the alumni discount for the 2021/2022 academic year, visit www.bbk.ac.uk/alumni.

BIRKBECK RANKS 11TH IN THE UK FOR GRADUATE EARNINGS

The Department for Education (DfE) found that Birkbeck graduates are the 11th highest earners among UK graduates and seventh highest in London. The data compares graduate earnings for those studying full-time and part-time undergraduate degrees.

Birkbeck's Biosciences and Economics graduates were the highest earners, with former students studying Computing and Communications and Media degrees the second highest earners and Languages, Linguistics, Classics and Mathematical Sciences graduates coming in third.

Mosh Aboobaker, Careers and Enterprise Manager, said: "Birkbeck students stand out in an increasingly competitive job market. They are recognised and highly valued by employers for their collaboration, focus and determination."



Image: (Paul Cochrane)



WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Image: (Paul Cochrane)

Birkbeck has a thriving volunteer community that brings together students past and present. Here we speak to two alumni who are taking part in our volunteering programmes.

GET TALKING

The Get Talking programme seeks to demystify what it's like to study at Birkbeck by matching prospective students with Birkbeck alumni.

Whether it is practicalities, like how to access the Library, where's the best place to get a coffee before a lecture or questions such as how to get the best work-life-study balance - this advice is key to helping applicants make the decision to take that step into higher education.

Since its inception in 2012, the programme has made a significant impact, with 75% of participants choosing to enrol at the College after taking part.



Birkbeck really has changed my life. It has put me on a trajectory with my career that I never could have imagined



Alumnus and mentor, Jeremy Galea, said: "Birkbeck really has changed my life. It has put me on a trajectory with my career that I never could have imagined before coming to the College, so that's why I want to give something back to Birkbeck. The experience of volunteering on the Get Talking programme has been fantastic."

To find out more about these opportunities and to get involved, visit campaign.bbk.ac.uk.



“ I volunteer with Birkbeck because I truly believe the College has something unique to offer. ”

Image: (Paul Cochrane)

MENTORING PATHWAYS

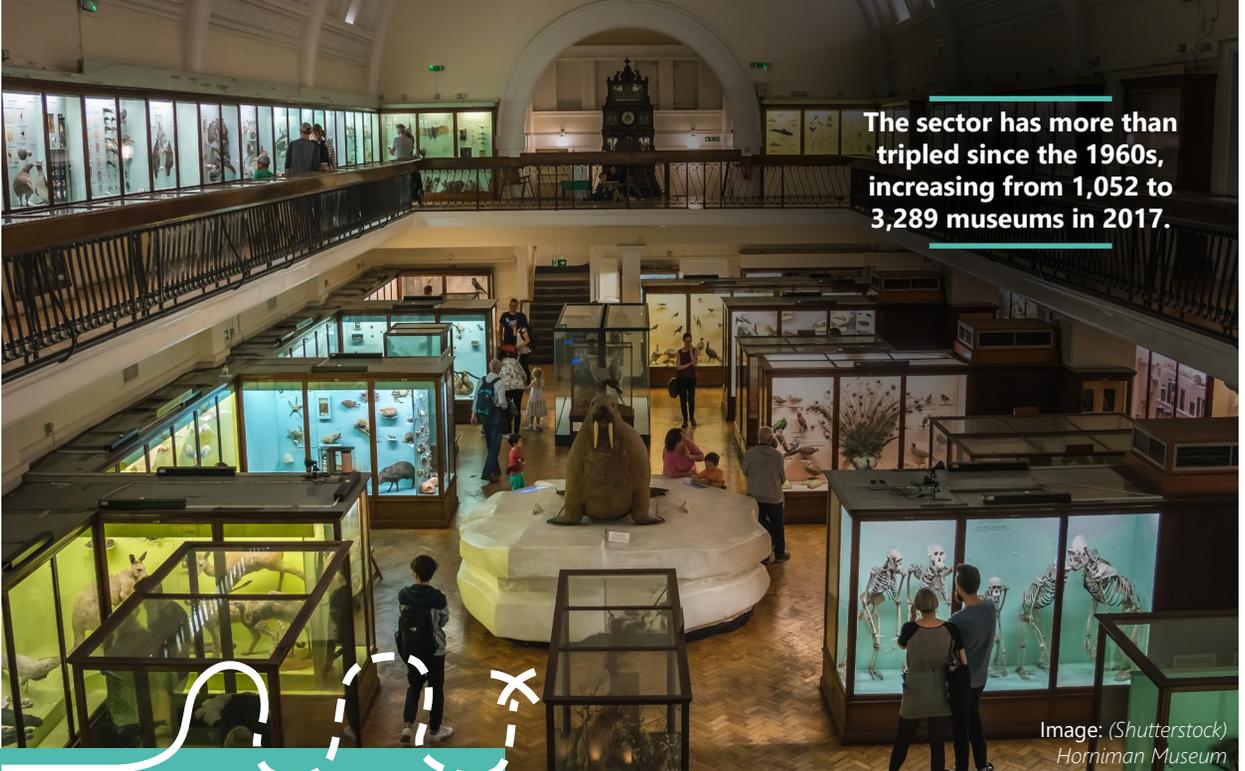
Birkbeck’s talented and successful alumni and corporate partners have been mentoring final year students for a decade, helping them to bridge the gap between study and realising their career aspirations.

The CPD accredited 8-month programme is an enriching experience for both mentors and mentees. All final year undergraduate and postgraduate students are eligible to apply for the scheme, and mentees range from those just starting out in their career, to individuals further along in their journey who are looking to pivot or go for a promotion. With mentors coming from our diverse alumni and supporter

community and with experience in the arts, finance, law, hospitality, science and government, our students have a breadth of knowledge and expertise to tap into.

Like many things in 2020, the programme had to shift and adapt to the virtual landscape during the pandemic. Some mentees were staying at home, while others had to return to their native country, nevertheless the meetings continued online. This past year was record-breaking with 210 matches and 420 participants in total.

Despite the challenges presented during the pandemic, 95% of mentees said that they would recommend the programme to a friend. Mentor Suman Gami, a Government Economist in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office who graduated with an MSc in Economics in 2017, said: “I volunteer with Birkbeck because I truly believe the College has something unique to offer. The flexibility gives many of us a chance to study at different points in our lives, where we wouldn’t have had the opportunity in a ‘traditional’ university setting. The diversity of people is much more apparent, so you feel instantly more comfortable. I wanted to be a mentor because I have had a really great mentor in the past and would have appreciated one when I was at a crossroads in my life.”



The sector has more than tripled since the 1960s, increasing from 1,052 to 3,289 museums in 2017.

Image: (Shutterstock) Horniman Museum

MAPPING MUSEUMS

Professor Fiona Candlin's Twitter page reads: 'Travelling the UK finding out why so many people opened their own museums in the 1970s and 80s' which sums up the impetus for research she and Professor Alexandra Poulouvassilis are leading on Mapping Museums.

Museums are an important educational resource. By collecting, preserving, interpreting, and displaying objects of artistic, cultural, and scientific significance, they can help us understand the past, as well as support and inspire innovation.

During the late twentieth century, the number of museums in the UK more than tripled. It was generally accepted that the majority of the new museums were independent, but there was very little data on when the museums opened, where they are located, what subjects they covered, or whether or not they were still operating. The Mapping Museum research project was devised in response to the absence of coherent data on that expansion.

Numerous reports over recent decades have highlighted the lack of a single integrated dataset covering all of the UK's museums. Without comprehensive information about the UK museum sector, it has been impossible to research the history, evolution and impact of the sector. This lack of information has implications for funders

and policy makers seeking to make decisions relating to local, regional and national development of the sector. These problems motivated the work of the Mapping Museums project. The project has developed a comprehensive database encompassing information on over 4000 UK museums in existence since 1960 (this is double the number of museums covered in any previous survey). The database is freely accessible from the project website at mappingmuseums.org.

Mapping Museums is an interdisciplinary project, involving researchers from museology, computer science, geographic information science, historical geography and political history. Development of the database has required the identification, cleansing and integration of data from numerous data sources, the development of new conceptualisations of what constitutes a "museum", and the identification of key attributes of museums which should be captured in order to support research into the development of the sector.

The project faced a number of challenges including the lack of a single dataset on which to base the design of the database. The project's Co-Investigator, Professor Alexandra Poulouvassilis, says: "It has been a very challenging and hugely rewarding process to start from an initial state at which there was no data and an incomplete understanding of the research domain to our current state of having completed and released the database and seeing it in active use by the project's researchers and the wider UK museum sector."

INSPIRING MINDS, CREATING BRIGHT FUTURES



Speaking at a Birkbeck Graduation and inspiring future students is an opportunity David Andrade, Head of Software and Technology at the BBC, couldn't resist. He completed an MSc in Advanced Computer Technologies in 2012 and we caught up with him to find out about his ongoing commitment to Birkbeck.

David has forged a successful career in the tech industry since completing his degree, working to produce some of the UK's favourite podcasts on BBC Sounds. Data from the second quarter of the year found that the BBC Sounds platform had an average audience of 3.4 million weekly users with a record 136 million plays of on-demand radio programmes and podcasts, a remarkable 13 million increase on the previous quarter. David has shown his continued support to Birkbeck by returning to speak to students at their graduation ceremonies. He recalls: "I told them that they must enjoy the moment and that it's massively important to keep learning throughout their career."

The recent pandemic, and its effect on people looking to upskill and change careers, he believes has made Birkbeck's mission of creating opportunity for anybody, even more relevant. David is impressed by the number of courses on offer and believes Birkbeck will play a critical role in rebuilding the economy post-pandemic.

David's journey began when he left his native Portugal in 2011 to come to London. He wanted to pursue a Master's degree to accompany his undergraduate degree, and Birkbeck allowed him to have the freedom to work and get



accustomed to the capital. He manages a diverse portfolio of shows, with the mission to enrich and inform millions of people on a weekly basis. David explains: "I find my role very rewarding. Particularly now, informing people, making sure that our software works when people need it the most. With lockdown and all the Government briefings, imparting essential information and making sure that things are running smoothly is a key part of the job."

David stays connected with Birkbeck because of the importance it's had in his journey and the lives of others. He comments, "Birkbeck provides people with new opportunities and broadens their perspective, so they can explore their own options and potential." He hopes that by sharing his story, others will feel inspired to take steps towards the career and goals they want to pursue.

GET INVOLVED AS A BIRKBECK AMBASSADOR

As a global institution we encourage alumni to join us as Birkbeck ambassadors for their home countries. As an ambassador you'll be able to connect with local Birkbeck alumni and share your insights with prospective students.

If you would like to find out more about getting involved in any of our current opportunities, please visit: campaign.bbk.ac.uk.

ONE WORLD, ONE HEALTH



Birkbeck academics are world-leading in advancing knowledge in a wide range of disciplines. Birkbeck's Professor Sanjib Bhakta, Professor of Molecular Microbiology and Biochemistry, is leading the charge in the fight against tuberculosis.

As Head of the Mycobacteria Research Laboratory, Professor Bhakta has been leading a research team on the study of infectious diseases, the threat of antimicrobial resistance and ways to tackle this global challenge.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has published an annual global tuberculosis (TB) report since the 90s, around the time that your career in biological sciences started. What attracted you to this field?

I was studying for my undergraduate degree when the WHO declared TB a global health emergency in 1993, and years later I received a full scholarship to work with leading scientists on the challenges of treating diseases such as TB and leprosy in India. Also, my grandmother had suffered with leprosy and lived with us until her last day. Who would not want to study a subject which is affecting our day to day lives? So, as soon as I got that opportunity, there was no looking back.

Can you tell us a bit more about your research at Birkbeck and the contribution to addressing infectious diseases?

I joined Birkbeck in 2006 which was five years after my postdoctoral research. For the past 14 years I have built my research group to include extremely supportive collaborators - national and international peers. This has all been facilitated by Birkbeck's flexible working model with its inclusive and supportive research environment. One of the key reasons for me joining Birkbeck was the Institute of Structural and Molecular Biology, which encourages multidisciplinary research aligning with my own strategies for microbacterial research at Birkbeck. Currently, we have two research objectives: to tackle global infectious diseases caused by TB and leprosy and to discover and help design new antibiotics and repurpose existing medicines to treat lung infection. Overall, our plan is to reverse the alarming rate of antibiotic resistance.



TB has affected two billion people worldwide with 1.5 million deaths, every year. Do you think the current pandemic has highlighted or detracted from this alarming situation?

The coronavirus has had a significant impact on other research, including our own research into antibiotic resistance. I'm sure with the vaccine, reliable and widely available detection, and effective treatments, the situation will be very different. At Birkbeck, we have not lost our focus. We're determined to tackle antibiotic resistance in TB treatments with the knowledge that if we don't act and rise up to the challenge, there could be catastrophic implications for our world's health.

We've heard mention of antimicrobial and antibiotic resistance for some years now. How is that battle taking shape?

Alexander Fleming, one of the discoverers of penicillin, in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, warned the world of the inevitable development of antibiotic resistance. If we're not respectful and careful with the use of antibiotics then this is exactly what we face. To tackle the new resistant superbugs, we need to encourage new research ideas and take a 'one world, one health' approach and keep building international inter-institutional collaborations to fight against this major challenge. That is where I really envisage the urgent need of super-heroic action from all in society.

What are the greatest challenges to combating antimicrobial/antibiotic resistance (AMR)?

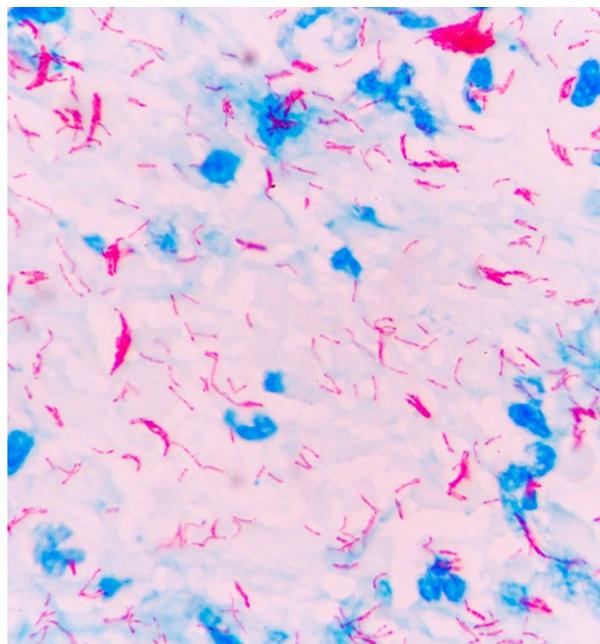
The development of antimicrobial resistance is a constant and dynamic process. This is like an arms race between microbes and antimicrobials. We can't leave any opportunity for germs to win. The greatest challenge is we're naively allowing this to happen by overusing and misusing one of the most precious discoveries of this century: antibiotics. We must not let this happen.

Public funding into AMR has been significantly less than for cancer. How has COVID-19 impacted the distribution of funding and research priorities?

Finding funding to support infectious diseases research has always been extremely competitive. Since there are greater risks and less incentives on antibiotic discovery and research, we have faced much higher competition in funding. When the funding pot is shared with other public health crises, there is no doubt the funding competition will be higher and fiercer. I'm sure the UK government is monitoring the situation and are aware they cannot risk neglecting the ongoing health crisis associated with antimicrobial drug resistance.

TB cases have fallen to about 5000 in the UK. Do you consider that a success story and are there others?

This is tremendous success and should offer confidence to us that the funding is being well utilised. It is great to see that there are three new drugs now available for TB patients and that itself is a huge success. There are a few more leads in the pipeline of new drug development but



this is not enough for this battle. In order to effectively reverse the existing tide of antimicrobial resistance, we need a better understanding of the superbugs and that is only achievable from fundamental biological research on infectious pathogens; and that is what we're doing at Birkbeck.

Seven years ago, research you led at Birkbeck showed that drugs used to treat cats and dogs can be used in the fight against drug-resistant TB. Can you tell us about the progress of this research, and how optimistic you are about it leading to an effective drug?

Originally, it was a serendipitous finding. I bought over the counter painkillers from a local pharmacy and we used in-house drug screening to check the antibiotic action and we found it was killing TB. We recently revealed how these molecules can target multiple mechanisms in the TB-causing bacteria to destroy them. We are really excited to pursue this investigation further to see how effectively this painkiller can be used. Having a good research environment creates the opportunity to think outside of the box and that is what we've been able to maintain in the lab. When you know that designing and discovering new antibiotics is challenging, time-consuming and resource-demanding, then you start thinking of new and different things and that's actually when we went out...we were fishing for new molecules and thought to look for existing new medicines to see if they could tackle infectious diseases like TB. I'm incredibly optimistic that these inspirations and our inquisitiveness to find solutions will lead us to an effective drug.

What makes Birkbeck unique and a good environment to lead on this important research?

Birkbeck taught me how to teach. It brings me back to something which is basic but also makes you think very differently. I teach both undergraduate and postgraduate students on the biomedicine and global infectious diseases programmes and I feel that teaching and learning creates an environment for further investigation. There are tremendous opportunities for students to challenge the superbugs with combined passion, dedication and perseverance. I would say, let us join hands, learn together and find solutions to beat the bugs and save our lives and our nations.

If you would like to support innovative early stage research such as this, please make a gift at campaign.bbk.ac.uk/supportus

BIRKBECK IS A PLACE FOR EVERYONE



True to our founding mission, alumni and supporters have helped Birkbeck forge ahead at the cutting edge of innovative education, opening our doors to students of all ages and backgrounds. Dr Harren Jhoti, President and CEO of Astex Pharmaceuticals, began his journey into the pharmaceutical industry in Birkbeck's world-leading Crystallography department, completing an MSc and a PhD. We spoke to him about his career and why he supports Birkbeck.

What are some of your fondest memories of your time at Birkbeck?

One of my fondest memories would have to be when I won the Birkbeck pool championship one year in the Birkbeck bar. The fact that I won the championship probably tells you how much time I spent in the bar!

On an academic level I met so many interesting people who I have kept in touch with for many years, some of whom work with me at Astex Pharmaceuticals. The Department of Crystallography was headed by Professor Tom Blundell who has become one of my main mentors.

How did you get to your current position and how did Birkbeck play a part?

After Birkbeck, I became really interested in drug discovery. To get more experience in this area, I studied for a post-doctorate, and then I went into the pharmaceutical industry, first to Glaxo (now GlaxoSmithKline) where I spent nearly 10 years learning about drug discovery and the industry. After that, I started Astex with Professor Tom Blundell and a third founder, Professor Chris Abell.

I think one of the things that I learnt at Birkbeck was the importance of diversity. I have tried to continue with that type of approach at Astex, looking at people in a different way.

Could you tell us more about Astex and its impact on the pharmaceutical sector?

We are currently focusing on developing cancer drugs, and we were very fortunate to be involved in the creation of not one, but two that are available for cancer patients. In 2017, in collaboration with another pharmaceutical company called Novartis we had our



first drug called Kisqali approved for patients with breast cancer. Last year, we had our second drug, Balversa for patients with bladder cancer, approved with a company called Janssen.

What role do you think Birkbeck should play in education, research and society in the future?

In a way, this pandemic, which has been such a jolt to the whole system, has shown what is achievable using technology. I think Birkbeck should continue with its mission and philosophy, and enhance that great work by using technology to gain an even wider audience virtually.

You have generously financially supported Birkbeck and our students over a number of years. What motivates you to give back to Birkbeck?

Higher education has the potential to be life-changing and no-one should be held back due to circumstance or background. Birkbeck embraces and encourages people regardless of where they are in their life journey and that's why I am really delighted to be involved. I'm honoured to be in a position to give something back and contribute to a thriving student community.

FOUR-DAY VIRTUAL AUTUMN GRADUATION HOLDS AN IMPRESSIVE 18 CEREMONIES

The 2020 celebrations were moved online to reflect the pandemic restrictions. However, this did not deter us from celebrating the fantastic achievements of our graduates from the College's five schools and welcoming them as the newest alumni to the Birkbeck community.

Over 3,000 students were invited to ceremonies and those attending, along with staff and guests, heard speeches from Birkbeck President Dame Joan Bakewell, and Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Latchman. The graduands were introduced by the Executive Deans of the College's Schools and applauded by their fellow students who attended virtually from around the globe. The ceremony was also broadcast live on YouTube.



The College also welcomed four new Fellows during the ceremonies: Elizabeth Whitehead, former Director of Facilities at Birkbeck; John Kelly, Professor of Industrial Relations at Birkbeck until July 2020; former Birkbeck Governor, Peter Zinkin; and former Birkbeck student and feminist campaigner, Marai Larasi.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF BIRKBECK'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

In 2020, we celebrated a historical landmark, the 100th anniversary of the College being part of the University of London, one of the world's best known and most highly regarded higher education institutions.

We marked the occasion with a visit by the Chancellor of the University of London, HRH The Princess Royal, and a series of public lectures. High profile speakers included: Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, broadcaster and Labour member of the House of Lords; Sir Ed Davey, Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Birkbeck alumnus; and Professor Jean Seaton, Professor of Media History at the University of Westminster and the official historian of the BBC.

Professor David Latchman, Vice-Chancellor, said of The Princess Royal's visit: "It was an honour to have the opportunity to talk to The Princess Royal about our history, to view objects from our archives, and to discuss some of our milestones over the past 100 years, such as being the first of the University of London's Colleges to admit women. Achieving entry to one of the world's most prestigious higher education institutions was not an easy task and we continue to recognise the accomplishments of those who made that possible by remaining true to our values and our commitment to education for all."



The year-long celebrations culminated with Professor David Latchman and Professor Wendy Thomson CBE, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, discussing Birkbeck's role within the University of London at Birkbeck's Foundation Day celebration in December.



Image: (RF Studios, Pexels)

SIX BAME STUDENTS RECEIVE PHD STUDENTSHIPS

For the 2020/21 academic year, Birkbeck offered six PhD studentships to individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. The studentships, funded by the College, aimed to help address the under-representation of BAME students at the highest level of research.

Julian Swann Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) said: "Compared with other institutions, Birkbeck has a relatively high proportion of students from ethnic minority groups but representation at doctoral level is significantly lower than across our whole student population. I hope that these studentships will help begin to address this."

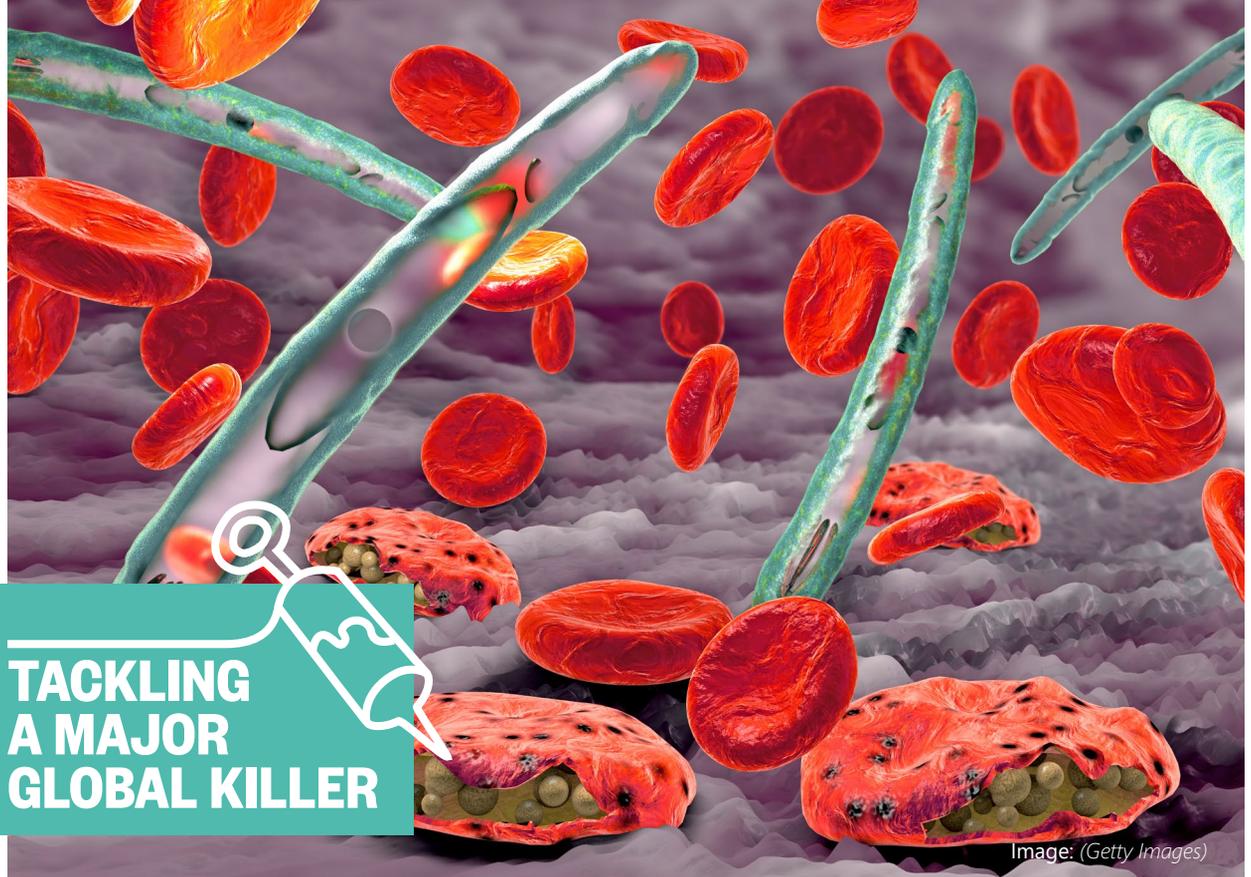
NOBEL PRIZE AWARDED TO FORMER BIRKBECK SCIENTIST

Professor Sir Roger Penrose OM FRS was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his work carried out at Birkbeck in the 1960s that demonstrated that black holes were an inevitable consequence of Einstein's General Theory of Relativity.

Penrose was appointed Reader of Applied Mathematics at Birkbeck in 1964 and was made Professor two years later. Penrose is the fourth Birkbeck scientist to receive the Nobel Prize and says that his inspiration for solving the gravitational collapse problem came to him when he was crossing the road walking into Birkbeck, talking to a colleague: "We got to this crossroad and he stopped talking as we were watching out for traffic. We got to the other side and then he started talking again. When he left I had this strange feeling of elation and I couldn't quite work out why I was feeling like that. I realised that I had a certain idea... so I went back to my office and I sketched out a proof of the collapse theorem."



Professor David Latchman, Vice-Chancellor of Birkbeck said: "I am delighted to congratulate Professor Penrose on his outstanding achievement. Following his employment at Birkbeck, Professor Penrose was made a Fellow in 1996, and it is superb to see him receive such recognition for his work. Birkbeck has a long tradition of contributing to the field of science, and I'm sure this will serve as a source of pride and inspiration for many in the science community."



TACKLING A MAJOR GLOBAL KILLER

Image: (Getty Images)

In 2018, nearly half of the world's population was at risk of catching malaria, a mosquito-borne illness that affects humans and other animals, with children under five years old accounting for the majority of deaths from the disease. Birkbeck's Professor Helen Saibil and a team of researchers have been developing research to identify new ways its progression can be halted.

Malaria continues to be a major global killer. Approximately 228 million people worldwide carry the parasite causing around 405,000 deaths in 2018 (ref: World Malaria Report, Dec 2019).

Of the five species of the malaria parasite that infect humans, *Plasmodium falciparum* is the most lethal. Although effective anti-malarial drugs are available, it is a matter of global concern that this particular parasite is developing resistance to the drug artemisinin, which is often used when other malaria drugs have failed due to resistant strains.

Once a human host has been infected, the parasite multiplies inside a group of red blood cells, and when mature, they escape via a process called egress and invade significantly more red blood cells. The parasite hijacks their host's cells and redirect cell activity for its own benefit, escaping capture and causing the most

dangerous form of malaria, often leading to death by obstructing capillaries in the brain.

Professor Saibil said, "Malaria is a major killer. Finding new ways to halt malaria's progression is vital if we are to reduce the hundreds of thousands of deaths that occur each year. Our research seeks to provide a better understanding of the blood-stage life cycle that would lead to novel approaches, different from those used by existing drugs to block parasite growth.

"Our research is yielding new insights into the molecular and cellular events leading to egress. We are discovering previously unknown steps in the triggering of egress that revise current understanding of how the parasites break out of their host cell to propagate the infection. A better understanding of this process should advance the development of therapeutic and vaccine strategies to treat the millions of malaria patients worldwide."

As the current pandemic continues to be a major global health concern, dominating infectious disease programmes internationally, Birkbeck's researchers remain committed to ensuring that its efforts to combat malaria are not neglected.



A NEW DIRECTION

Birkbeck's Careers Service has supported numerous students and recent graduates with enhancing their career and developing their skills. Monir El Haimar enrolled on the BA Film and Media Studies course last year when he realised that he was starting to stray from his ambition of being a film director. We spoke to him to find out how he is finding his Birkbeck experience and to learn more about how Birkbeck is helping his career progression.

At the age of 29, Monir's passion for film and dreams of becoming a film director led him to apply to Birkbeck, "I saw that Birkbeck was great for mature students like myself".

Monir is thrilled to "actually be sitting in a classroom and learning about film theory" and is finding that Birkbeck's diverse community is enriching his experience and has given him the opportunity to network with industry newbies and those who have been working in it for years.

Before joining the College, Monir was working mainly freelance, producing short promotional films for theatre companies. Since the onset of the pandemic, freelance work has been harder to come by. He was excited to come across Birkbeck's Careers Service who helped him secure a job at a social media marketing agency, which he can do at home alongside his studies: "Birkbeck have

been really, really helpful; it was one of the great things that I didn't know they would offer."

The support offered to Monir has been key to sustaining him during his studies but also adding to his CV and future career prospects. He was particularly impressed by the care and support of the Careers Service, who, in addition to showing him the position, offered advice on how he can improve his CV and followed up with him during and after the duration of the placement.

Monir reflects that before the pandemic, a highlight of his course included classes in Tottenham Court Road's British Film Institute: "We got to watch original film prints from the 1950s, that was really exciting. Also, one of the other courses I was doing was screenwriting so it was great to be in a classroom with everyone, seeing their scripts and then discussing them as a group."

Monir now feels much more positive about the future: "I want to stick with filmmaking, to be a director and make a feature film."

GET INVOLVED

To support students like Monir in building their CV and interview skills, visit campaign.bbk.ac.uk to find out more about ways you can make an impact.



SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

In response to the global pandemic, Birkbeck transitioned to online education and assessments in April, ensuring all students could complete their academic year virtually.

To maintain student and staff safety, the College developed a virtual learning platform that recreated the unique Birkbeck learning experience.

In October, Birkbeck launched its enhanced digital learning platform which provides access to live and interactive seminars delivered by academics, alongside pre-recorded learning materials; over 150,000 digital e-books, including many core textbooks; opportunities to meet, network and complete projects with fellow students online; and virtual student support services that are second to none.

During the height of the pandemic, we had to respond to the increasing demand for support from our students to mitigate the problems they were facing in the difficult and uncertain times. We were blown away by the unity of our alumni and supporter community coming together to help. We spoke to three of our supporters about how they continued to partner with Birkbeck during this unprecedented time:

“Since 2017 Allen & Overy has supported Birkbeck’s fantastic students. We understand the importance of addressing an immediate need for support, with so

many of Birkbeck’s students finding themselves in difficult positions and in need of funding now more than ever. Birkbeck have continued to support their students both financially and pastorally, adapting to an online environment, and demonstrating they are experts in widening educational access for those most in need.”
- Sue Wisbey, Allen & Overy

“From our long-term relationship with Birkbeck, we knew that they would be going above and beyond to support their students during this incredibly challenging time. That’s why we decided to offer support of unrestricted funding to allow Birkbeck the freedom to respond to those most urgently in need.” - Katy Beechey, Texel Foundation

“In the face of a challenging year, we appreciate how Birkbeck have continued to operate in a way consistent with their core values, and mindful of their 200-year legacy, to widen access for diverse groups to higher education. We understand many Birkbeck students have been under dire and unexpected financial constraints and that the University team were able to apply our funding to address areas of greatest student need. We are proud to continue our relationship as strategic partner in order to nurture these students for resilience and success in a disrupted landscape.” - Liam Colley, AlixPartners

**If you would like to support our students in succeeding, please make a gift at campaign.
bbk.ac.uk/supportus**



Nine out of ten nurses had to work through their breaks and 55% did not have enough staff on their last shift.

Image: (Getty Images)

SUPPORTING THE MENTAL WELLBEING OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES

With the World Health Organisation (WHO) designating 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, a report co-authored by Birkbeck academic Dr Kevin Teoh has identified the high risk of mental health problems and burnout in the professions.

The project has sought to establish the scale of the problem and the existing interventions available, with its findings published by the Royal College of Nursing Foundation (RCNF). It found that as many as 50% of nurses and midwives experience poor mental wellbeing.

Crucially, these figures are higher than that of nurses and midwives in other countries. The prevalence of burnout among nurses in the UK (40%) was higher than that of nurses from 10 other European countries (28%).

Nurses and midwives also report poorer working conditions and mental health than the UK general working population. While the report provides support that interventions that target the individual (e.g., mindfulness, coping skills, reflective practices) can be useful, changes to the working environment and system

are needed to address underlying issues and to create sustainable benefits.

Dr Kevin Teoh, Department of Organizational Psychology explains, "Our research is contributing to the knowledge of how to better support the mental wellbeing of our healthcare workers, and to create a system that is more supportive and conducive to their mental wellbeing.

"Our report highlights the excessive demands experienced by nurses and midwives in the UK and how this affects their mental health. It also identifies areas where our knowledge is very limited, such as the experiences of ethnic minority nurses and midwives and how their needs can be best addressed."

With nurses and midwives making up the largest number of the NHS workforce and with increasing demands on the profession, it's an issue that has been brought to the fore throughout the current COVID-19 crisis.

The authors of the report say that there is now evidence that the pandemic has highlighted further mental health concerns for nurses and midwives, related to shortages of safety equipment, health risks posed to themselves and their families, and the death of colleagues. The Society of Occupational Medicine is calling for a summit to understand the impact of the pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of nurses and midwives, which groups are at greater risk, and what can be done to alleviate the problems and support individuals.



BALANCING LAWYERING WITH STUDYING

Many current Birkbeck students are also having an impact on the world around them. District Crown Prosecutor Hauwa Shehu reflects on her first year of study at Birkbeck on the LLM International Economic Law, Justice and Development.

Life for Hauwa Shehu is busy. As a Criminal Barrister, currently working as a District Crown Prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), she also balances chairing the CPS Muslim Network with classes at Birkbeck. In her day job at the CPS she manages a team of prosecutors and looks after stakeholder engagement. She deals with particularly sensitive cases as well as victim complaints.

Hauwa is passionate about diversity and inclusion, teaching at her local Madrasa (Islamic school) at the weekends and helping to manage a women's centre in East London called 'The Hive'. As part of her commitment to international justice and the fight against racial inequality, Hauwa recently spent a year working in the USA with an anti-death penalty charity, supporting capital defence lawyers.

Hauwa explains that she's always wanted to do a Master's, but the stars had never previously aligned. However, when she discovered Birkbeck, she felt she'd found something that allowed her to continue her dedication to her career, alongside furthering her education. Hauwa was also elated when she received financial support that enabled her to study at Birkbeck. She describes how working and studying fit seamlessly together, as the



subjects she learns at Birkbeck contextualise the issues she sees at work and in her community.

Hauwa warns laughingly that, although she's very biased as she was raised in London and has a deep connection to the city, she feels that there's nowhere better to study than the capital because "you're literally at the heart of it". She feels that the subjects she learns about at Birkbeck are reflected all around her, specifically referring to the Black Lives Matter protests last year.

She states that this knowledge comes not only from lectures, but also her peers and their insights and perspectives. When asked about the transition from lawyering to studying, Hauwa admits to finding coming back to university more challenging than she expected. "In my job I do a lot of writing, drafting and reports, but there's something almost artistic about academic writing." She describes her writing in her career as "almost clinical" but has enjoyed tapping back into her creative side that she pursued more in her youth. To help with this, she's using Birkbeck's 'Get Started' sessions in her second year in order to develop her academic writing style, which she's found really helpful.

Hauwa is contemplating continuing her studies with a PhD, which she confirms "would only be at Birkbeck".

**If you would like to support our students and their success,
please make a gift at campaign.bbk.ac.uk/supportus**

BIRKBECK DEBUTS THREE-DAY CAREERS SUMMER BOOTCAMP

Over 300 students took part in Birkbeck's first ever Careers Summer Bootcamp, designed to help support students develop their skills and build their network with employers.

Birkbeck students, recent graduates and prospective students enjoyed three days of virtual workshops, talks and guest lectures themed around 'ability', 'enterprise' and 'employability'. Workshops ranged from how to speak to an employer, getting started as an entrepreneur and developing a personal brand.

Students enjoyed hearing directly from employers, particularly at a time of increased competition in the jobs market, with guest speakers from companies such as Reed Smith, The Inventum Group and Motability Operations.

Image: (Estee Janssens)



CAMPUS ESTATE UPDATE - BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Birkbeck's forward-looking estates strategy will enable our academics to advance their big ideas in science, creativity and innovation, and create new ways and spaces for students to come together, learn, study and connect. We are excited to share updates on these two projects:

373 Euston Road

This state-of-the-art teaching centre, housing the College's largest lecture theatre, is reaching the final stages of construction and will be ready to welcome students in the summer of 2021. 373 Euston Road will also have new classrooms and a dedicated co-learning space for students to interact and collaborate with one another.

The Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab

Construction is now complete on the Wohl Wolfson ToddlerLab. Located on Torrington Square, the building will be the UK's first purpose-built centre dedicated to studying brain development in toddlers as they interact with their natural environment. Birkbeck scientists will build upon the work already conducted in Birkbeck's BabyLab, researching the development of typical toddlers and those with neurodevelopment conditions.



RACE, THE LAW AND THE WAR ON DRUGS



Dr Kojo Koram, Lecturer in the School of Law, has long understood the intersection between race and the law. Having worked for two years providing frontline legal advice for Release, the UK's centre of expertise on drugs, the law and human rights. He's observed the connection between drug laws and the disproportionate number of people from some ethnic minority communities who receive criminal records as a result of them, at both a domestic and international level.

It's an issue that his research has highlighted as part of the British legal landscape and the social injustice that exists for Black people and other marginalised groups. It is also something that he is fervently seeking to address.

Dr Koram's current research includes looking at how Britain's imperial history informs its current moment of political and economic crisis and establishing a community-focused educational project that will bring together drug policy experts, racial justice activists and leading community organisers from across the UK to discuss and respond to the issues surrounding the impact of the War on Drugs on Black people.

The project ties directly into Birkbeck's mission of supporting people to enhance their lives through education and opportunity. The project workshops are designed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, share experiences, and educate community leaders to feel empowered to engage and participate in influencing UK drug policy.

Dr Koram teaches multiple degree modules within the School of Law, and his work draws upon a wide array of scholarly traditions including decolonial theory, critical legal theory and historical materialism, and largely revolves around the relationship between drug policy and race. Dr Koram has published widely in the area of race and law, imperial history and drug policy, in both academic and general media publications.

Dr Kojo Koram comments: "The tradition of a critical approach to the study of law that has been developed at Birkbeck has provided the ideal environment for me to develop my research in how histories of race and empire continue to inform our contemporary drug laws."



Image: (Getty Images)

WHAT IS THE WAR ON DRUGS?

The War on Drugs is a global campaign, rooted in US government policy, which seeks to reduce the illegal drug trade in its respective country. The term was first coined by President Richard Nixon in his message to Congress, 'Drug Abuse, Prevention and Control', some years before the media picked it up.

In the UK, the debate around drugs has been a contentious issue for some time, from the creation of the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act right up to the current Home Office focus on the 'County Lines' crisis. The result has not been a decrease in drug use, drug addiction or even drug deaths, which have now reached the highest levels in Europe. Instead, the main result has been increased prison numbers with nearly 1 in 8 prisoners in England and Wales having been sentenced for drug offences.

KEY UK STATS:

- Black people are convicted of cannabis possession at almost 12 times the rate of White people.
- Black men are 26 times more likely to be remanded in custody than White men.
- Drug policy is a huge driver of Black people's over-representation in prison.
- The experiences of and representation from Black people is severely lacking within drug policy-making.

For many 2020 has been a year of adversity and uncertainty but for others, it has been one of change and opportunity. No matter your view on the past year, what we can all agree upon is the importance of community and the strength and support it can provide.

I joined Birkbeck in November 2019 as the Director of Development and Alumni. I never thought that during my first year I would spend nine months working from home, getting to know my colleagues via video calls and learning about our alumni and students while sitting behind a laptop screen. We have had to adapt, becoming more agile than ever to meet the needs of our community and continue providing a robust educational experience. It has been an interesting and inspiring time to be a part of this fantastic institution.

Birkbeck alumni and students are diverse, passionate, thoughtful and committed to their work, families, communities and our society. In times of adversity and uncertainty communities strengthen and support one another and that could not be truer about our Birkbeck community.

I know that many of you have been affected by the challenges of this year. We've worked to be alongside you, keeping you connected to Birkbeck and hopefully bringing a little joy to you and your families, whether by stirring fond memories of your time studying or by sharing stories with you of the pioneering work and research still taking place. We look forward to continuing to share these updates and providing you with ways in which you can make an impact here at Birkbeck.

This past year you came alongside us and provided crucial philanthropic support to ensure education is available to all those who want it, regardless of background or circumstances. You gave thousands of hours of guidance, advice and mentorship through our volunteer programmes and you continued to show your pride by championing Birkbeck to your family, friends and communities.

Amazing things are happening everyday within our Birkbeck community. Our alumni live all around the world and are making an impact in almost every industry you can think of. Whether it be working to



Image: (Paul Cochrane)



Our Birkbeck community is making a positive impact around the world



understand complex diseases like malaria to develop new treatments, promoting the importance of language and its impacts, fighting for social justice or making waves in the film industry, our Birkbeck community is making a positive impact around the world.

Yet I will admit, we don't know all the positive things that are happening in our community. That is why we launched #OurBirkbeck on our 197th Foundation Day celebration. #OurBirkbeck is our commitment to you, our community, to learn more about you and the things you are doing to make an impact. We want to hear from you! **Please support #OurBirkbeck by sharing your story with us at campaign.bbk.ac.uk and getting involved in our volunteer opportunities and events.**

I look forward to hearing from you! Here's to a safe and fulfilling 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nicholas Katona".

Nicholas Katona
Director of Development and Alumni

BBK

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