

2018 Laidlaw Scholars



Megan Houston

Arts, Humanities and Cultures

The Role of Women in the Early Islamic Conquests

This self-proposed research project focuses on the role of women in both the public and private spheres during the Early Islamic Conquests (from 622 to 750). The research aims to combat previous scholarly emphasis on both exceptionalism and on upper-class women.



Philippa Humphreys

Arts, Humanities and Cultures

Identifying North Africans in the French Resistance

This research project involves identifying North African (Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian) colonial subjects of the French Empire who fought in the French Internal Resistance (1940-1945). It forms part of a larger, existing effort to document colonial members of the French Resistance and therefore diversify the history of this movement.



Megan Lund

Arts, Humanities and Cultures

Jewish Music and Theatre: Educational Resources for the UK and South Africa

In collaboration with two established partners—the UK Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation —this project involves developing educational packs based upon the latest research by University of Leeds researchers and help design and creating a mini-exhibition to be used in conjunction with the educational packs.



Anna McAuley

Arts, Humanities and Cultures

Life, Death and Music: Mogwai and *Les Revenants*

This research project seeks to understand better the interaction between music and image in the French drama *Les Revenants*, whose score was composed and performed by Scottish post-rock band Mogwai. This project examines in greater depth the ways in which music functions in the programme, both in its combination with visuals and as a narrative agent in its own right.



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Sophie Tew

Arts, Humanities and Cultures

Employability Non-Engagement Project

This project aims to investigate the reasons why students do not engage in employability initiatives. The research involves finding students from a wide range of disciplines to take part in online surveys, interviews and focus groups to explore their perceptions of employability opportunities, and then examining ways to tackle the barriers to engagement.



Francis Dent

Engineering

Smart Materials for Biomedical Soft Robots

Part of a wider interdisciplinary project, the aim of this research is to synthesis customisable elastomers as an alternative material to silicone in soft robotics. This would provide a platform to design biocompatible soft robots with tunable mechanical properties (and comparable to their biological counterparts) for healthcare applications.



Oran Deutsch

Engineering

Tactile Presentation of Sensory Information

This project will investigate methods for providing spatial information in tactile form, to support visually impaired users in navigating the environment, and to carrying out actions in Virtual Reality (VR), where a direct sense of touch is missing. The project links to an ongoing EU-funded project which is exploring haptic communication.



Cheah Jit Hong

Engineering

Human-Robot Interaction for Autonomous Service Robots

This project will look into Machine Learning for Human-Robot Interaction with the aim of developing autonomous lifelong learning robots, able to acquire knowledge about the environment by interacting with humans. It will consider multi-modal interactions: through speech, vision (for instance, gestures) and tactile sensing.



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Erik Millar

Engineering

Building, Testing and Evaluating Robotic Rehabilitation Devices

The first step of this project involves engaging with existing highly innovative robotic systems and evaluating their function, in terms of robustness, safety and interaction with patients and therapists. Following from this evaluation will be a project involving prototyping and testing, leading to better rehabilitation devices.



James Clemoes

Environment

Public Preferences for Wild Land in the UK

The purpose of this project is to understand what members of the public would like to see within wild landscapes, and what kinds of human and non-human landforms are valued and why. For example, do the public want to see wolves reintroduced, traditional sheep farming retained, or greater tree cover, and how do cultural and demographic factors explain these preferences?



Megan Crossley

Environment

Low Carbon Strategies of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the Humber Estuary

This project is part of an ongoing case study of the development of the Offshore Wind industry in the Humber estuary, studying how a regional low carbon industrial strategy may enable SMEs to benefit from integration with this rapidly growing industry's supply chain.

Megan will interview key stakeholders from both the public sector and industry, and formulate policy recommendations.



Kirsty Faure

Environment

Compositional Characterization of Gold Form Oxidizing Chloride Hydrothermal Systems using LA-ICP-MS

This project focusses on gold formed in oxidizing chloride hydrothermal systems. This mineralizing system is relatively under-researched, and hence it has the opportunity to make a substantial contribution to the wider understanding of gold mineralization.



Susan Preston

Environment

PROductive Time Use In Transit (PROTUIT)

This research project will contribute to understanding the influence on travel mode choice of (potential or actual) productive uses of time in transit. The parent project ADAPT seeks to improve travel behaviour change messaging so that it is more individualised and context-relevant, and this research will contribute to informing this message development.



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Edward Barnes

Education, Social Sciences and Law

Framing De-Radicalisation and Reintegration of Returning Fighters

This project involves analysing both mainstream media reporting of de-radicalisation programmes and official government documents and speeches related to the topic. The research is primarily archival, and involves compiling two separate corpuses of news media and political elite representations concerning the de-radicalisation and reintegration of returning ISIS combatants.



Reuben Johnson

Education, Social Sciences and Law

Employability and Confidence: Strategies for Students

This project is designed to develop a greater understanding of the barriers that students face in engaging in employability activities and the challenges they face in gaining the confidence needed to successfully enter the graduate marketplace. It will involve both a literature review and the design and analysis of a questionnaire and focus group to secure student feedback on proposed curriculum interventions.



Justin Robinson

Education, Social Sciences and Law

Seeing not Seeing – The Lived Experiences of Militarisation of/on Social Media

This research is part of an international project on the militarisation of social media: exploring how social media users experience and engage with pro- and anti-military social media content. It involves helping to conduct focus groups, which explore social media and videogame users' experiences of military content, and analysing the findings.



Joyce Tsopo

Education, Social Sciences and Law

Migration and Belonging: How First- and Second-Generation Siblings of Migrant Zimbabwean Families Negotiate Belonging

This self-proposed project examines how young siblings from migrant families develop narratives of identity and belonging in contemporary Britain. Building on decolonial and race theories on identity development, this project focuses on the case of Zimbabwean community migrants develop identity, in the multicultural city of Birmingham.

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Nicola Andrzejowska
Biological Sciences
HDAC Inhibitors and Microglia Activation

Inhibitors of HDACs have shown much potential promise as therapeutic agents for many neuronal disorders including motor neurone disease and Alzheimer's, through their ability to inhibit microglia activation, reducing inflammation in the brain. The aim of this project will be to investigate the mechanisms by which HDAC inhibitors reduce microglia activation and the identity of the target HDAC enzymes.



Eleanor Dean
Biological Sciences
The Benefits of a Community Dance Programme to the Physical and Psychological Well-Being of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Older Adults.

This research is as part of the large Sport England funded Dance Activator Programme. It involves attending dance sessions to complete data collection and engage with the older adults, as well as literature searching for previous research tracking the effectiveness of physical activity interventions to older adults.



Emily Dingley
Biological Sciences
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Joseph McWilliam
Biological Sciences
The Role of TRPM2 Channel in Amyloid Beta Peptide-Induced Microglial Cell Activation and Generation of Neurotoxic Proinflammatory Mediators

In disease states such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's there is increased activity of microglia where they begin aberrantly degrading healthy brain tissue. The aim of this project is to clarify the role of TRPM2 in A β -induced microglial activation and the role of other cytokines, namely TNF- α and IL-6, in the pathology.



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Ersel Awan

Leeds University Business School
Modern Slavery in International Business

This research project is part of the “Pulling a thread: Unravelling the trail of modern slavery in the fashion and textile industry” project. The aim of the research is to understand how fashion companies understand and adopt the Modern Slavery Act, the challenges companies face when they adopt it in their supply chain, and what solutions they have developed to overcome barriers.



Diego Civitelli

Leeds University Business School
Investigating the Impact of Targeted Sessions on Student Engagement

This is part of a larger project investigating student perception of feedback in higher education by evaluating several innovations that aim to improve feedback, engagement and academic performance and positively impact on student experience of higher education. The research will involve the design and evaluation of targeted workshops aimed at improving student engagement and academic performance.



Alfie Milnes-Dobbs

Leeds University Business School
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Roberto Farrington

Maths and Physical Sciences
Limit Shapes of Big Discrete Structures

The ongoing larger project's objective is to tackle open asymptotic problems at the interface of random matrices (RMs) and random permutations & integer partitions, aiming to better understand deep interplays between these structures. Roberto's work will involve developing awareness and learning techniques in cutting-edge research in RM theory and probabilistic combinatorics, and then applying them to explore new simple models, as part of the wider project.



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Oscar Hidalgo

Maths and Physical Sciences

Inverse Problems and International Competition As opposed to direct problems in which a given cause determines an effect, in inverse problems the situation is reversed, i.e. given an observable effect can we find uniquely the cause that generated that effect? The research work for this project involves learning and performing research in this new subject of Inverse Problems for integral and differential equations.



Aisha Jamil

Maths and Physical Sciences

The Health Effects of Beetroot

Although beetroot intake has been associated with health benefits, there is a gap in the literature demonstrating the beneficial effects of beetroot and its individual compounds. In particular betalains, the main pigment fraction, is lacking mechanistic description which will be addressed in the current research project through a combination of in vitro and in vivo experiments. This is part of a larger initiative to explore the bioactive properties of betalain compounds.

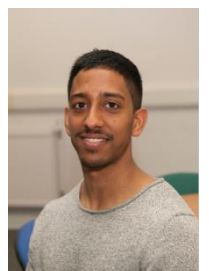


Layla Kouara

Medicine and Health

The Neural Integration of Emotional Expression from Faces and Bodies

Despite, the importance of emotional expression, very little is known about how the brain integrates different emotion signals. Through a series of behavioural experiments this research project will investigate how the brain integrates information about emotional expression from different modalities. The work includes recruiting participants, running the experiments, and then analysing and writing up the results.



Gaj Sabesan

Medicine and Health

Clinician and Patient Graph Literacy and Implications for Dashboard Design

This research project aims to contribute to the development of QualDash, an interactive dashboard that allows clinicians to easily explore audit information, by undertaking surveys to explore how nurses and doctors understand information presented in visual formats. Subsequently, it will also to explore how members of the public understand information presented in visual formats.