The Humanities and Social Sciences Tackling the UK's International Challenges 2018

Reference: IC3\100293
PI: Dr Sahla Aroussi, Coventry University
Co-Applicant: Dr Michaelina Jakala, Coventry University
Value: £49,911
Title: Gender and resistance to violent extremism: untold stories of everyday resistance to violent extremism in Kenya
Abstract: Within the literature, narratives about violent extremism tend to focus on victimisation, radicalisation and violence. Although, stories of resistance to violent extremism are rarely heard, within communities, living with the threat of violent extremism, men and women alike are engaged in a process of everyday resistance. This project explores how men and women at grassroots and community levels in Kenya resist violent extremism in their everyday lives. The project uses a gender and intersectionality lens and co-creative and arts-based methods to explore how violent extremism is resisted at a local community level. The project is a collaboration between academics, NGOs and artists. Using a gender perspective, this project aims to give voice to silenced narratives on how communities resist in their everyday struggle against violent extremism and what they do.

Reference: IC3\100156
PI: Dr Desiree Fields, University of Sheffield
Co-Applicant: Dr Thomas Wainwright, Royal Holloway, University of London; Dr Dallas Rogers, University of Sydney
Value: £49,100
Title: Digital platforms for the rental market: disrupting or exacerbating power asymmetries?
Abstract: Digital platforms are re-shaping multiple domains of urban life, including the provision, consumption, and management of rental housing. Such digital technologies are inseparable from everyday life, which incorporates how we use and interact with urban space, and the power relations therein. In the UK private rented market, landlords and letting agents hold a distinct power advantage over tenants' housing costs, quality, and security. Digital platforms could disrupt these power relations by enhancing market transparency and affording democratic participation--or exacerbate them by facilitating surveillance, exclusion, and information asymmetries. Collaborating with tenant advocates in London, San Francisco, and Berlin, this project will explore how digital platforms may re-shape power relations in the rental market. Aiming to foster more socially just urban futures, the research will improve understanding of, and help generate responses to, the linked challenges of how to harness digital platforms toward public good and improve experiences of renting.

Reference: IC3\100093
PI: Dr Simon Gosling, University of Nottingham
Co-Applicant: Dr Faith Chan, University of Nottingham Ningbo China; Mr Nanco Dolman, Royal Haskoning DHV; Professor Noelwah R. Netusil, Reed College
Value: £49,927.25
Title: Developing new blue-Green futures: multifunctional infrastructure to address water challenges
Abstract: There is a recognised need for a fundamental change in how cities tackle urban water challenges and develop visions for 'Blue-Green' urban futures; where multifunctional Blue-Green infrastructure (BGI, including green roofs, swales, rain gardens and ponds) creates environmental and societal co-benefits and is delivered by cross-organisational collaborations. The aim of this interdisciplinary proposal is to explore how Blue-Green futures may be developed as new forms of environmentally sustainable urban governance. This project will investigate how socio-political barriers to implementation of BGI may be overcome and how mechanisms for co-creating Blue-Green visions (e.g. social learning frameworks) may increase the adaptive capacity of decision-makers and lead to concerted action. An international 'best-practice' model based on an evaluation of Blue-Green visions in four case study cities (Newcastle, UK; Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Ningbo, China; and Portland, Oregon, USA) will be devised. Cross-country learning will inform new Blue-Green visions for the UK and other global cities.

Reference: IC3\100212
PI: Dr Erin Jessee, University of Glasgow
Co-Applicant: Dr Timothy Williams, University of Marburg
Value: £49,839.29
Title: Perpetrators' reflections on Kwibuka25: accountability, justice, and commemoration on the 25th anniversary of the '1994 genocide of the Tutsi' in Rwanda

Abstract: This project analyses convicted génocidaires' perspectives on 25 years of annual commemorations (Kwibuka—to remember) of 'the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi', as it is officially termed. Researchers have criticised Kwibuka for disseminating an oversimplified understanding of the genocide that divides its citizenry into innocent Tutsi victims and guilty Hutu perpetrators. Such criticisms are largely based upon qualitative research among survivors and bystanders: perpetrators are comparatively understudied. Yet, the state's pursuit of 'universal accountability' has required all accused génocidaires to account for their crimes through a comprehensive transitional justice programme that aligns with Kwibuka, granting them valuable insights into the programmes' effectiveness for promoting social repair and political stability. By interviewing génocidaires during Kwibuka25 in April 2019, this project will investigate the extent to which they find value in the official commemoration and transitional justice programmes that have taken shape since the genocide, to inform academic and policy debates.

Reference: IC3\100226
PI: Dr Adrian Lahoud, Royal College of Art
Co-Applicant: Dr Godofredo Pereira, Royal College of Art; Dr Alonso Barros, Atacama Desert Heritage Foundation; Dr Samantha Spurr, University of Newcastle
Value: £48,515.24
Title: The scale of justice: energy transition, rights and indigenous title

Abstract: In the context of global transitions to renewable energy and the crucial role that lithium extraction plays, this project examines two interacting claims for 'rights of future generations': global scale rights expressed in carbon mitigation pathways that promote the exploitation of lithium resources, and conversely, local scale rights expressed by indigenous peoples that argue for limiting lithium extraction. Lithium batteries are at the centre of global decarbonisation efforts based on 'green' technologies while many of the world's most significant lithium deposits exist in ecologically fragile, ancestral indigenous land. The urgent demand for lithium has outpaced research on its impact requiring new interdisciplinary approaches and alternatives to western-centric theories and practices. A comparative analysis of environmental claims along the lithium supply chain and a programme of knowledge-exchange aims to identify new socio-environmental practices and conceptual frameworks for assessing and co-measuring local and global ecological rights claims.

Reference: IC3\100208
PI: Dr Kieran Mitton, King's College London
Co-Applicant: Professor Ibrahim Abdullah, University of Sierra Leone
Value: £33,880.00
Title: Life in between: youth street gangs and marginality in contemporary Sierra Leone

Abstract: This research project explores Sierra Leone's nascent gang-scene and associated street-violence, an under-researched topic presenting important policy challenges to UK and Sierra Leonean stakeholders. Sierra Leone's gangs are increasingly visible in urban life and are viewed as a growing threat to post-conflict civil order and peace, yet to date no academic studies have been conducted to understand their origins, motives, organisation, or what responses would be most effective in reducing gang-violence. Accordingly, this project aims to conduct in-depth fieldwork and multidisciplinary analysis of Sierra Leone's marginal youth and street-gangs. The project team will carry out extensive interviews with security sector actors, gang-members and their communities, and draw upon knowledge from criminology and fields concerned with gang-studies to provide innovative policy recommendations to Sierra Leone and its partners on how best to tackle rising gang-violence and youth marginalisation.

Reference: IC3\100121
PI: Professor Deryn Rees-Jones, University of Liverpool
Co-Applicant: Professor Janet Watson, University of Leeds; Dr Mohammed Shormani, Ibb University, Nigeria
Value: £49,830.00
Title: Yemen in conflict: popular literary heritage as expression of conflict and tool for conflict resolution
Abstract: This is a new, multidisciplinary initiative that builds on several projects of longer standing. The project aims to provide long-term protection to traditional and new popular literature, and investigate popular literary responses to conflict in the different regions of Yemen, comparing responses to, and expressions of, traditional conflict with those to the new externally fuelled conflict.The novelty lies in the focus on literary expressions of conflict and conflict resolution, and the bringing together of projects dealing with the diverse regions of Yemen and relating to all languages spoken in Yemen. The project will also ask, in its engagement with diasporic Yemeni communities in the UK, how storytelling might heighten and enhance both political and public awareness of the situation in Yemen, leading to wider cultural understanding of diaspora and refugee communities in the UK.

Reference: IC3\100055
PI: Dr Kay Ritchie, University of Lincoln
Co-Applicant: Dr Robin S. S. Kramer, University of Lincoln; Professor Kun Guo, University of Lincoln; Dr David White, University of New South Wales, Australia; Professor Gary Edmond, University of New South Wales, Australia; Ms Mehera San Roque, University of New South Wales, Australia; Dr Kristy A. Martire, University of New South Wales, Australia
Value: £33,153.92
Title: Facial recognition in the criminal justice system
Abstract: This project will assess people's attitudes to facial recognition technology around the world and assess the impact of face recognition software on racial equality. Facial recognition technology is increasingly used in the criminal justice system. China and Australia are bringing in national facial recognition schemes, and some UK police forces currently use this technology. Research to date has focussed on optimising algorithm performance, but has not addressed the central question of the public's attitudes towards its use. In light of reports that algorithms are biased toward accuracy with white faces, people of different ethnicities may be disproportionately identified, and have different attitudes towards the technology. This project will link public attitudes with algorithm performance by building and testing a simple face recognition system trained with faces of limited and diverse ethnicity. This project addresses the pressing question of the impact of facial recognition systems on equality in the justice system.

Reference: IC3\100170
PI: Dr Lizzie Seal, University of Sussex
Co-Applicant: Dr Bharat Malkani, Cardiff University; Dr Lynsey Black, Maynooth University, Ireland; Dr Florence Seemungal, University of the West Indies, Jamaica
Value: £49,877.00
Title: Reforming British law and policy on the global death penalty
Abstract: Despite the UK's stated opposition to the death penalty worldwide in terms of law and policy, there are significant ways in which it is arguably complicit with the death penalty in some retentionist countries. This highlights a substantial international challenge: in order to uphold international human rights, UK law and policy on the global death penalty must be reformed. This project draws on law, history and criminology to examine how the UK exported the death penalty to other countries in the colonial era and how it fails to enact full opposition in the present. It also examines historical and contemporary UK-based campaigns for the abolition of the death penalty worldwide. The project aims to identify how law and policy should be reformed to end complicity with the death penalty and the most effective campaigning strategies for global abolition.

Reference: IC3\100276
PI: Dr Anna Sergi, University of Essex
Co-Applicant: Dr Luca Storti, University of Torino, Italy
Value: £49,911.00
Title: SECURPORTS: opportunities for organised crime in seaports between vulnerabilities and informality
Abstract: The main aim of this comparative research project is to enhance policy understanding of how the complex relationships within seaports act as conduits or facilitators in how criminal networks operate in the territory of ports and their hinterland. This project involves qualitative primary research into criminality within ports, by observing how ports, as microcosmic realities run through formal and informal relationships and with specific security vulnerabilities, facilitate different types of illegal or deviant behaviours. Research will be carried out in two European ports (Liverpool and Genoa) and three extra-European ones (Montreal, New York and Melbourne), which are either targets of, or transit zones for, criminal activities and networks. With specific attention to the changing geopolitical conditions surrounding the port of Liverpool during and after Brexit, the study will look at what could be learned from international experiences both in terms of security and in terms of transnational risk assessments.

Reference: IC3\100107
PI: Dr Yasmine Shamma, University of Reading
Co-Applicant: Professor Suzan Ilcan, University of Waterloo, Canada; Dr Vicki Squire, Warwick University
Value: £49,234.59
Title: Lost and found?: a digital archive of testimonies of migration, displacement, and resettlement
Abstract: This project centres on the homes that have been lost and found by refugees of the recent Syrian crisis. Experiences of urban life are negotiated in particularly complex ways by refugees moving across regions and nations in pursuit of home. In these movements, they expand the dimensions of home. How do these mobile dimensions constitute programs of making and re-making home, while also underscoring testimonies of migration, displacement and resettlement? Incorporating a digital archive, an international conference, and a resulting edited collection of essays, this research will situate the contemporary refugee's pursuit as part of a larger 20th century project of post-camp migration and re-settlement. The digital archive will represent different disciplinary approaches, revisiting archived materials while hosting new materials. As this project's main focus, the archive will enhance international understanding of the contemporary Syrian refugee crisis while encouraging policy makers to rethink policy reform, within the UK and beyond.

Reference: IC3\100196
PI: Dr Ian Shaw, University of Glasgow
Co-Applicant: Professor Emma Cardwell, University of Glasgow; Dr Sallie Marston, University of Arizona, USA; Professor Alison Phipps, University of Glasgow
Value: £37,604.00
Title: The international green academy: school gardens and progressive urban ecologies
Abstract: A major challenge UK cities face is providing fresh food, green space, and ecological diversity to deprived urban areas. How can new generations of city dwellers thrive in these increasingly stressed urban futures? School gardens embody potential to nurture socially progressive urban ecologies: spaces for experiential education, food production, wildlife, health, well-being, and ecological sustainability. Yet, there is little geographic research on the contribution of school gardens to social and ecological remediation: can these spaces transform students, and connect to other urban communities, human and non-human? This project will build a garden in a Glasgow secondary school and "twin" it with an established school garden network in Arizona. The Glasgow garden will be designed and evaluated by a team of interdisciplinary researchers. The goal is to empower educators, connect students to their environment, produce innovative curricula, and create transformative ecologies that bridge distinct "urban biomes" in the UK and US.

Reference: IC3\100155
PI: Professor Hyun Bang Shin, London School of Economics and Political Science
Co-Applicant: Dr Yimin Zhao, Renmin University of China; Dr Sin Yee Koh, Monash University Malaysia
Value: £49,998.00
Title: The urban spectre of Global China: mechanisms, consequences, and alternatives for urban futures
Abstract: The overseas expansion of China's economic influences has been foregrounded in media reports and policy debates in recent years. The term "Global China" has been widely adopted to depict the geopolitical dimension of this immense flow of capital. However, there is a lack of attention to the urban dimension of Global China, especially regarding its impacts on the (re-)imaginings and manifestations of urban futures – within and beyond China. In this project, four large-scale Chinese capital-led property development projects will be examined to question the ways in which the urban has been reconfigured by China's global expansion. Drawing on methods of comparative urbanism and multi-sited ethnography, the project team will conduct interviews and observations in London, Beijing, Foshan and Iskandar Malaysia, aiming to uncover the differentiated modes of speculative and spectacular urban production in the Global China era and generate new insights for inclusive approaches to urban space, nature and modernity.

Reference: IC3\100158
PI: Dr Edmond Smith, University of Manchester
Co-Applicant: Dr Lisa Hellman, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
Value: £49,312.00
Title: Living on the edge: experiences and responses to Europe's changing borderlands
Abstract: This project connects new research on the experience of living in border communities in the early modern period with contemporary policy about the reformulation of Britain's and Europe's borders post-Brexit. The research team questions how individuals and communities living on the edges of Europe - especially in port cities and transport hubs - experienced trade, migration and sovereignty in their day-to-day lives. Drawing on interdisciplinary methodologies it will be demonstrated how borders and borderlands represent complex ecosystems, acting both as barriers and crossing-points, points of contact and conflict, and places of exchange and enforcement. This research will examine the implications of Brexit for the UK's borders with Europe. It will also shed new light on Europe's past and use it to shape a response to the challenges the world faces today.

Reference: IC3\100205
PI: Dr Afua Twum-Danso Imoh, University of Sheffield
Co-Applicant: Dr Yaw Ofosu-Kusi, University of Energy and Natural Resources, Ghana; Professor Karl Hanson, University of Geneva, Switzerland; Dr Sarada Balagopalan, Rutgers University, USA; Professor Bengt Sandin, Linkoping University, Sweden; Dr Didier Reynaert, University College Ghent, Belgium; Dr Jonathan Joseffsson, Linkoping University, Sweden
Value: £49,996.00
Title: Children's rights and perceptions of justice, rights and equality: the challenge of children's representation
Abstract: The inclusion of participation rights in the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child signified an important shift in the global children's rights discourse. However, the notion of children's participation remains controversial, especially in relation to the issue of children's representation.This is problematic because failure to address this contested area has implications for children's lived experiences viz-a-vis viz rights, equality and justice. Therefore, utilising Nancy Fraser's framework of social justice, this project seeks to explore the politics of children' s representation through the analysis of existing data collected in 5 countries: Ghana, India, the UK, Sweden and Belgium, as well as within transnational organisations.This analysis will be conducted by a network of seven scholars from different disciplines who specialise in children's rights in either the Global North or South.