



## Research Strategy 2018-21

### Introduction

Research is part of what defines a University and is a key aspect of University life for our students and staff. This new research strategy articulates the distinctiveness of our research focus at Leeds Trinity University, foregrounding our students and staff, who define our University's community, mission, vision and values, as well as producing the positive impacts our research has in society. Important to the value and contribution of Universities to society is the generation and application of new knowledge or improved insights that are derived by conducting research. This value and contribution of research, in terms of teaching, learning, production and application, is also important for our students and staff. This is true both inside the University in our work with our students, but also outside in a wide range of collaborations, partnerships, settings and contexts for both our students and staff, and those organisations, groups and individuals that we work with in providing ethical, impactful research of benefit to society.

### Background

The success of the previous Research and Impact Strategy 2013-2016, extended for the 2016-17 academic year, is evident from the progress made against most key performance indicators. For example, the number of peer reviewed research outputs, particularly journal articles, increased significantly. The number and size of external funding bids and their success rate also increased. As well as more staff undertaking PhDs, we have continued to appoint academic staff who are research active. In combination, this has increased the proportion of academic staff with a doctorate to almost 50%.

A Research Office, with dedicated staff, and a related research infrastructure have been established. This includes the launch of the PURE research information management system, repository and the development and implementation of a number of important policies and processes related to research. These include the revised Research Ethics Policy and Procedures and work to ensure compliance with the nationally agreed Concordats on Researcher Career Development, Research Integrity and Public Engagement. The Schools<sup>1</sup> of the University now have Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) strategies written with the expectation that this will facilitate a wider and deeper engagement with RKE across our University, as well as supporting the strongest possible return in the next Research Excellence Framework (REF) audit in 2021.

Over the period covered by the last strategy there has been a step change in the number of Postgraduate Researchers (PhD and Masters by Research) such that we now have a very active, thriving Postgraduate Research (PGR) community, which was commended in the January 2017 Periodic Review by the University of Leeds. This means that in the next 3-4

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<sup>1</sup> In this document the term "School" includes the Institute of Childhood Education (ICE)

years we will have sufficient PhD completions to form the basis of a strong submission for Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP), one of the objectives carried forward for completion under this new strategy. To this end, we have developed our own portfolio of on-site PGR training and, in collaboration with the University of Leeds, staff have undertaken Supervisor and Internal Examiner training workshops at Leeds Trinity to expand our capacity in these areas of work. We will also continue to develop our own distinctive policies and processes for PGR, as well as increasing the capacity and capability of our staff to support research student activities.

The focus of our research going forward for the next three years is to consolidate on the progress we have made in the last five years. However, there is also a need to align our new research strategy to the distinctive strengths of our University and to the strategic themes outlined in the latest strategic plan. For example, the role of research education and training for all our students needs to feature much more strongly, as does the importance research has for attracting, developing and retaining talented staff.

### **The Strategy**

The four key objectives of this Research Strategy 2018-21 are focussed on our students, staff, University and Contributions to Society, being consistent with the themes of our strategic plan and the distinctiveness of our University. They also align with our closely related Knowledge Exchange enabling strategy.

### **Our Students:**

Provide our students with training and education in research that is not only relevant to their areas of study but also equips them with lifelong learning skills and provides them with research-led educational and vocational opportunities and experiences that help them achieve their potential and flourish in graduate employment or postgraduate research.

### **Our Staff:**

Recruit, develop and retain talented academic staff who generate original research of high impact in their fields of study through external funding and/or apply it through research-informed teaching and in a range of real world contexts, including professional practice, to the benefit of society.

### **Our University:**

Ensure a vibrant and sustainable research community for our students and staff, focussed on the delivery of our strategic plan, thereby enhancing the reputation of the University for excellent, ethical and impactful research across the institution, including research to evaluate and improve the student experience and pedagogical practices.

### **Our contributions to Society:**

We will engage in research that is true to our mission, vision and values in collaboration and partnership with other Universities, organisations, professional communities and individuals that seek to make a positive impact in society locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.