

Research activity, support and opportunity here at the university

University Research Update

Welcome to the university's research newsletter which has been developed to inform you about research in the university, relevant information, news and support. For this inaugural edition we have some very positive things to report, including the graduation of the very first UHI PhD recipients, an excellent 2019 PRES result and a prestigious achievement by one of our new students. Enjoy reading, and we hope you will agree we have had a fantastic start to 2019-20. You have received this newsletter as you are on the university's mailing list as being research active / interested. If you would like to unsubscribe please [reply to this mailing](#).

First UHI PHD awards



A historic moment took place at the SAMS graduation ceremony on 6th September, when the university's first PhD awards were conferred upon Winnie Courtene-Jones and Andrea Garvetto. A moment of celebration, not just for Winne and Andrea but for the whole of the university. [Read more](#).

Feedback from our research students

AdvanceHE The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is the only UK higher education sector-wide survey to gain insight from research postgraduates about their learning and supervision experience. The university takes part in the survey every two years, from March to May and in 2019 ran PRES for the fourth time. We have had some excellent success and, as with the 2017 results, we once again secured a student satisfaction rating that placed us well into the top quartile of UK HEIs - **14th out of 103** - achieving a score of 85%. We were also **1st in the UK for student experience in STEM subject**, and highly placed in many other individual measures. There is no room for complacency, but what a great achievement - and it is time for the university to shout about such successes from the rooftops! [Read more](#).

Excellence in Research and Innovation

Congratulations to the university's Institute of Health Research and Innovation who won the 2019 Scottish Council for Development and Industry Highlands and Islands Enterprise Award for Excellence in Research and Innovation.



Together with the health and life science researchers, students, clinicians, and commercial partners the university are working to achieve their vision of becoming a centre of excellence for health and life sciences innovation that facilitates the creation of new companies and products, promotes economic growth, and transforms health and social care outcomes within the Highlands and Islands. [Read more.](#)

If you would like more information about the work of The Institute of Health Research and Innovation, or to discuss partnership opportunities with them, please email innovation@uhi.ac.uk

Scottish Government's innovation fund



The Division of Rural Health and Wellbeing have started two new projects funded from the [Scottish Government's Social Innovation Fund](#).

[The Bespoked Project](#) is running in partnership with Velocity (an Inverness-based social enterprise) and will look at the impacts of cycling for mental health. The project is led by Dr. Sara Bradley and has employed Dr. Nicole Baur as postdoctoral researcher.

[Home Technology for Health and Wellbeing](#) is running in partnership with Albyn Housing Society and will look at the impacts of retrofitting sensor technology into sheltered housing accommodation. This project is led by Dr. Sarah-Anne Munoz and has employed Dr. Katia Narzisi as postdoctoral

researcher.

Health and Social Care Alliance funding awarded to Dr Mark Grindle

Dr Mark Grindle, Digital Health Lead at the university's Institute for Health Research and Innovation has been awarded [Health and Social Care Alliance](#) funding to work with [Highland Children's Forum](#). The funding will support the research and development of a digital media tool to support teenagers suffering from long term mental health problems. The project will draw on Grindle's innovative approach to mental and physical health which is based on his professional experience in digital storytelling. The approach has been used to engage parents of children with cystic fibrosis to motivate chest physiotherapy, obese adult males to lose weight, pregnant women to stop smoking, patients with cardiovascular disease to respond to symptoms rapidly and teenagers who are suffering from isolation. The Health and Social Care Alliance aims for transformational change and supports projects that help people to stay well, self-manage their conditions and live independently. Highland Children's Forum was set up to ensure that the voices of young people are heard in the design and provision of services in the Highlands and Islands.



Improving lives through knowledge, evidence and innovation



Dr. Sarah-Anne Munoz, Dr. Anna Terje and Helen Bailey have been commissioned by [IRISS](#) (a charity that promotes positive outcomes for the people using Scotland's social services) to produce a briefing paper on the evaluation of social prescribing initiatives in the UK. The briefing will be published next year and will give insight into how the impacts of social prescribing have been monitored and measured.

Increased outreach and engagement within the university

The SILK Research Cluster is putting together a plan for session 2019/20 which will be finalised after discussion with the Steering Group at their next meeting in November. It contains proposals to increase outreach and engagement within the university, as well as a variety of Knowledge Exchange events. Matt Sillars and Lindsay Blair have been developing the SILK Cluster's plan for 2019/20. Contact them [here](#) for further information.

The role of complex I derived free radicals in fertility

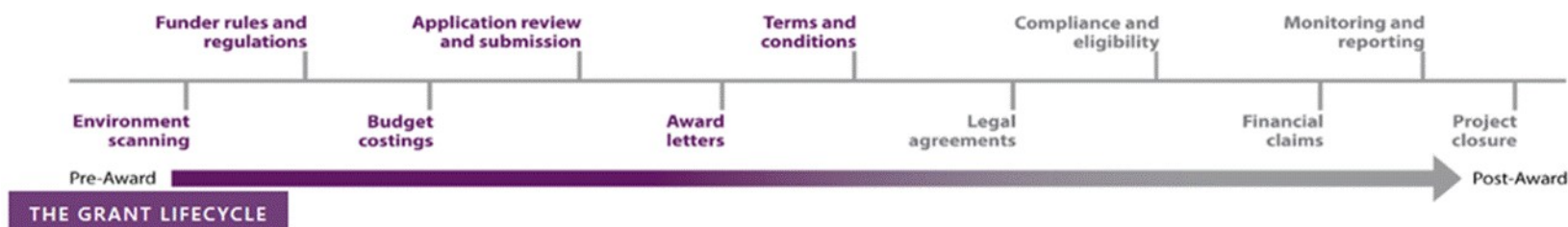


Congratulations to James Cobley who has received funding from [Tenovus Scotland](#) and the [RoseTrees Trust](#) to study the role of complex I derived free radicals in fertility with a view towards optimising in vitro fertilisation.



Introducing the Grants and Contracts office

The university's Grants & Contracts team supports research activity across all subjects, working with researchers and administrative staff throughout the partnership. They also interface with external agencies, other universities, funding bodies and private companies. Find out more [here](#).



REF circumstances



Staff are invited to apply for a reduction in the required number of outputs if there were special circumstances that perturbed their ability to produce research outputs at any point since 2014. [Read more.](#)

Preparations for the University's submission to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 exercise continue apace. The submission date is November 30th 2020 and the University will submit in six Units of Assessment:

- Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
- Earth Systems and Environmental Science
- Archaeology
- Area Studies
- Education
- Modern Languages and Linguistics - (which includes Gaelic)

There are three elements to the assessment: research outputs (60% of the assessment), impact case studies (25% of the assessment) and research environment statements (15% of the assessment). Each unit has to submit outputs, case studies and an environment statement.

Preparation activity planned for 2019/20 builds on the mock REF conducted in June 2019 and includes further scrutiny of the impact case studies, identification of the eligible staff cohort for inclusion in REF 2021, a scrutiny event for the environment statements, preparation of a return to the national REF team to clarify our intentions for the submission. In addition, further work will progress on the technical side of the submission including the identification of research income data for each submitting Unit.

All of this work is being progressed by the REF Managers' Group, consisting of unit leads and academic partner leads for research, together with the core team – Neil Simco, Michael Rayner, Margaret Little and Stuart Knight.

REF 2021 is a very significant activity for the university, both in terms of reputation and standing and in terms of the financial return. Much has already been achieved in the university's preparations, but there is significant work ahead which will require an ongoing commitment from all involved.

European and international research



Since the very early days, research and innovation has played a crucial role in the development of the university – and within that, the range and depth of our European and international partnerships have helped to shape our new institution. [Read more.](#)

'Outstanding candidate' honour

We are proud to announce that Neil Ackerman, one of our in-coming PhD students in Archaeology, has won the highly prestigious Robertson Medal from the Carnegie Trust, as the 'most outstanding candidate of this year's competition for a Carnegie PhD Scholarship'. The Robertson Medal has been awarded for the last fifteen years and this is the first time a nominee from the university



has been selected. The field of applicants was extremely high and it is a very significant achievement that this award has been made. Well done Neil and his Director of Studies, Professor Colin Richards.

Ruination and Decay

Further information, featuring monthly seminars, blog articles, photographs, podcasts and a themed conference on the Ruination & Decay research event can be accessed [here](#).



Online training resource



For 2019-20, the Graduate School has subscribed to an online series of training sessions, developed and delivered by the University of East Anglia and available to postgraduate research students. This training series offers research and professional skills training for PGRs in a 'live-taught' online format, delivered via a virtual classroom on Tuesday evenings. Last year over 4,000 students attended the series, drawn from more than 35 UK universities and a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds. Our own tailored sessions will continue to be delivered at EO, and we hope this new provision proves to be a useful additional training resource.

Research publications

There were 48 new research outputs made publicly available in the last 3 months from across the university, a random selection of which are below. You can browse all research outputs published during 2019 on the [university's research database](#). Congratulations to all university researchers who have had their work published:

- [Does the mode of exercise influence the benefits obtained by green exercise?](#)
- [SPICED-ACS: Study of the potential impact of a computer-generated ECG diagnostic algorithmic certainty index in STEMI diagnosis: Towards transparent AI.](#)
- [Catalyst-free Click PEGylation reveals substantial mitochondrial ATP synthase sub-unit alpha oxidation before and after fertilisation.](#)
- [Introducing UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.](#)
- [On thermal infrared remote sensing of plastic pollution in natural waters](#)
- [Underpinning the Development of Seaweed Biotechnology: Cryopreservation of Brown Algae \(*Saccharina latissima*\) Gametophytes](#)
- [Monitoring nest incorporation of anthropogenic debris by Northern Gannets across their range](#)
- [To Sow and to Reap: The An Ceathramh Language Learning Unit, Rogart Sutherland, Scotland](#)

- [Storyways: Visualising Saintly Impact in a North Atlantic Maritime Landscape](#)
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Online application for ethical approval



A reminder that all staff and students who are undertaking research must read the UHI Research Ethics Framework 2019 and submit an online application for ethical approval. Please refer to the [UHI research ethics website](#) for further information. If you have any queries please contact the [Research Ethics Officer](#).

The university's research web pages

Access the university's support pages for research staff [here](#) to access a host of researcher resources, policy information and news.

Funding opportunities

Congratulations to Dr Georgina Robinson of the Scottish Association for Marine Science UHI who has been awarded a UK Research and Innovation Future Leaders Fellowship worth £1.2m to fund her research which will address global food shortage by recycling waste from food production industries - with the help of the humble sea cucumber. [Read more](#).

Applications for round four of the Future Leaders Fellowships are now open. [Read more](#).

Other funding opportunities which you may wish to look at can be accessed [here](#).

Collaboration

Openness

Respect

Excellence

If you want to your research colleagues across the university to learn about your project, a recent publication, your work in general or have information about research news, a funding collaboration you are building, events or training opportunities then please click the button below!

[Submit an article](#)