



# VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARDS

**PROGRAMME 2024**

3 October 2024  
St Mary's Stadium, Southampton

# WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARDS



**I would like to warmly welcome you all to our annual University of Southampton Vice-Chancellor's Awards, here at St Mary's Stadium in Southampton.**

This awards ceremony is one of the highlights of the year for me, as it is a chance to celebrate the determination, innovation and successes of people across the University. Nominated by your colleagues, you represent what is great about Southampton. Our people are our University; without you, Southampton would not be the globally recognised institution it is today.

Looking back on the contributions everyone has made reminds me that, in so many ways, it has been a very successful year for our University. And this evening, in this amazing venue, we have so much to reflect on and be thankful for. I have been delighted with the developing pace of key initiatives in support of our Strategy and our Council-approved plans for growth by 2031/32. Despite a challenging landscape for the UK higher education sector, we have continued to achieve remarkable successes here at Southampton, while maintaining financial stability.

We are one of the world's leading universities, consistently placed in the top 100 universities by the QS World University Rankings, this year at 80th. We are also ranked among the top 20 universities nationally (17th in the latest *Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide*, and 20th in the *Complete University Guide*).

As you join me here this evening to celebrate your achievements, please know that I am immensely proud and grateful to be standing alongside you and your colleagues, as a part of our wonderful, talented and collegial community.

Though recent times have been challenging, your resilience, courage, and determination to push boundaries, aim higher and give that bit more, humbles me. All the nominees here today are already winners, so whatever the outcome, please do enjoy this celebration.

I wholeheartedly thank you for all your support and contributions this year. Enjoy the evening!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark E. Smith". The signature is stylized and fluid.

**Professor Mark E. Smith CBE**  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Southampton

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# YOUR CELEBRATION

The annual Vice-Chancellor’s Awards are an opportunity to celebrate your successes over the past year. They are your chance to be recognised for your amazing achievements in the company of your University colleagues.

We hope you enjoy reading all the nominations in this brochure, provided by your peers in their own words.



## Celebration venue: St Mary’s Stadium

To reflect the importance of the Vice-Chancellor’s Awards, where members of staff can come together in recognition of their fantastic achievements, our prestigious venue is St Mary’s Stadium.

St Mary’s Stadium is an all-seater football stadium, which has been the home of Southampton Football Club since 2001. The stadium is currently the largest football stadium in South East England.



# CELEBRATION SCHEDULE

Time	Item
18:00	Guest arrival
18:00-18:45	Pre-dinner drinks reception
18:45	Guests invited to take seats
19:00	Starters served
19:40–19:45	Welcome by Professor Mark E. Smith, President and Vice-Chancellor
19:45–20:45	Award presentations
Awards presented by Dr Giles Carden, Chief of Staff and Chief Strategy Officer, in the categories of:	
– Making it Happen	
– Public Good and Social Mobility	
– Rising Star	
Awards presented by Professor Deborah Gill, Vice-President (Education and Student Experience), in the categories of:	
– Student Experience	
– Teaching	
– Triple Helix	
Awards presented by Professor Mark Spearing, Vice-President (Research and Enterprise), in the categories of:	
– Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise	
– Research Impact	
– Supporting Sustainability	
Awards presented by Wendy Appleby, Vice-President (Operations), in the categories of:	
– Community and Wellbeing	
– Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	
– Inspiring Leadership	
20:45	Dinner and dessert served
21:40	All winners group photograph
21:45	Celebration entertainment to begin
22:30	Guests depart



# MAKING IT HAPPEN

Delivering exceptional administrative, operational, professional, or technical support that enables the University’s vision to achieve the remarkable.

## THE NOMINEES ARE:



### Jessica Ballentine

Jess has recently joined the Business Applications Support team as a Software Engineer, where she has made an outstanding contribution to the development of ServiceNow for Human Resources (HR).

Jess works with HR to develop solutions that are practical, smart and easy to use. Learning on the job, quickly and accurately, she has played an instrumental role in delivering changes to the visitor requests. These requests play a vital role in ensuring visa compliance for visitors to the University, which is a highly complex area.

Jess offers insightful solutions to HR business and process needs and makes it her business to always deliver high quality work. She has a fantastic eye for detail and her ‘can do’ approach is a breath of fresh air. Her approach is methodical, concise and pragmatic, and she is an absolute pleasure to work with.

In all instances where Jess has been assigned changes, she has been prompt with responses, clear with updates and actions required, and managed expectations. Additionally, Jess was quick to respond to and resolve any issues we later identified due to unforeseen technical anomalies.

Jess is a credit to iSolutions and we are very grateful for all her hard work in implementing complex changes to our visitor requests, and as a result, helping to ensure compliance.



### High Performance Computing Project team

**Alister Boags, Cara Mansbridge, Dr Christopher Yorke, Emma Moore**

The High Performance Computing (HPC) project is a University Strategic Project that harnesses the power of supercomputers, or computer clusters, to solve complex problems requiring massive computation. At the University, this tool is essential for our academic research, enabling new discoveries, bringing insights to existing scientific challenges and driving innovation. The University is one of the leading supercomputing sites in the UK.

Our HPC computing cluster is called Iridis and we were using Iridis 4 and 5 until 2024. The project team has worked tirelessly to successfully procure and replace this with Iridis 6, with a technical launch in May 2024 with academic use from September. The team has organised a launch event, bringing academic colleagues, professional services and students together to celebrate this remarkable new tool. This brand new facility will provide double the computing power and 3.5 times more storage, allowing our research community to process their computing requirements much more efficiently.

The work of this project team does not stop there; they are already progressing with Iridis 7, creating a cloud-based HPC capability due to go live later this year.

The team has remained positive through every hurdle it has faced, working together to keep things moving with overseas suppliers and deliver in a timely way.



### Responsible AI team

**Angela Westley, Ariba Fatima, Dr Ayodeji Abioye, Danielle Higgins, Jayati Deshmukh, Dr Jennifer Williams, Kavita Mittal, Khalid Parkar, Lokesh Singh, Dr Mohammad Soorati, Richard Barnes, Dr Sarah Kiden, Professor Gopal Ramchurn, Dr Shoaib Ehsan, Dr Tayyaba Azim, Regius Professor Dame Wendy Hall, Dr Yi Dong**

The Responsible AI team’s exceptional research, administrative, operational, and professional support has been instrumental in demonstrating University values of agility and innovation, and building strong communities.

The team swiftly set up the £31m Responsible AI programme, within a month starting from May 2023, showcasing its efficiency. They seamlessly engaged experts, and fostered collaboration and knowledge exchange across departments, universities, multi-sectoral industry, government, international collaborators and the general public. Their operational excellence enabled impactful initiatives, including conducting research, challenges development, gathering information, reporting and administering competitions.

In terms of strategic partnerships, the team has mobilised international partnerships and multi-million-pound Keystone Projects, demonstrating a proactive approach. From defining challenges to setting up grant portals, commercial contracting and mobilisation, all of these were achieved within six months and are still ongoing with new activities.

There has been a quantifiable impact, with over 5,900 participants engaged in dissemination events, amplifying the programme’s reach. The team has successfully enabled and managed follow-on funding – private, public, and overseas – validating its success.

# PUBLIC GOOD AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

Making exceptional connections, partnerships and collaborations that transform the environment and lives of people, and embody the University as a civic partner.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



### Dr Mary Grasmeder

Mary, a senior clinical scientist (Audiology), received several nominations for this award. Here are just a few:

“Dr Mary Grasmeder leads our ‘Adverse Events Group’ within the Auditory Implant Service. She leads our team in managing a group of patients with a batch of failing electrode arrays. She has developed a test to identify and diagnose these failures, has done the testing, advising other audiologists in our team and supporting individuals and their families. This has made all the difference. She has significant professional expertise but at the same time is the most humble person you will ever meet. She is so deserving of this award!”

“She has the courage to challenge the manufacturers when problems arise, which they do not necessarily want to face. She does this with such depth of understanding of how implants work and in such a way that she commands their full respect.”

“She has to deliver difficult results to our patients, which she does with compassion, empathy and kindness. She works tirelessly shares her knowledge and experience in her teaching role.”

“She has helped many cochlear implant patients have a significantly better life than they would have without her care and attention.”



### All\_Ears@UoS team

**Barney Jones, Heather Parsons, Dr Kate Hough, Dr Mary Grasmeder, Professor Tracey Newman**

The team at ALL\_EARS@UoS has spearheaded a community engagement initiative, encouraging older people across Southampton to think about their hearing health, and also increasing diversity within their Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) group.

By going out to community groups across the local area, at which they share information about hearing loss and the links with brain function, they are not only providing much needed advice and support within the local community, but they are increasing the civic profile of the University within our own locality.

Their work has not only increased understanding about hearing health in the local community, but it has increased the membership of their PPIE group, which is directly diversifying research into hearing loss at the University.



### School Governor Network

**Adrian Dolby, Josie Love-Murelli**

Josie (from the Office of Development and Alumni Relations) and Adrian (from Widening Participation and Social Mobility) have engaged in an excellent cross-departmental collaboration to set up the School Governor Network, a supportive community for new and experienced school governors. Composed of University staff and alumni, the network is vital in providing support to new school governors.

Josie and Adrian have also driven the recruitment of members of our University community into school governor roles through collaboration with Governors for Schools. They ran two webinars, which were attended by more than 100 staff and alumni, resulting in over 25 applications for school governor positions.

This proactive civic engagement helps the University meet a real need for governors who shape school strategies and ensure excellent education and care for children in our community. School governors play a key role in social mobility, as they hold schools accountable for disparities in educational performance.

The initiative also benefits University staff and alumni, as they expand their skillset through being a school governor in a supportive environment. This in turn benefits the University and local employees, as they enjoy staff with augmented skillsets.

This piece of work is exemplary of public good, collaboration, fostering community and civic engagement.



# RISING STAR

Celebrating the next generation of highly skilled staff whose ideas and innovations position us for future success.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



## Chido Chipato

Since joining the University in 2021, Chido has had a transformational impact on students' sense of belonging, staff understanding of race equity, and the sector's knowledge base on ethnicity degree awarding gaps.

In her work coordinating the University's Awarding Gap Project (AGP), Chido has become an important voice in both the University and sector in innovating and championing student-led, staff-supported approaches. This is evidenced in her contributions to key research projects delivered by the 'what works' hub TASO (Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education), and recognition of the AGP as best practice in the University's Race Equality Charter submission.

Through coordinating the AGP, Chido has worked with students to deliver transformative projects including the Black Fresher's Guide, an annual Cultural Gala focusing on the celebration of Black students at Southampton, and panel discussion evenings with leading figures in the sector such as Professor Jason Arday.

In 2022/23, the University's awarding gap between Black and white students almost halved from 18.1 percentage points to 8.9, strongly indicating improvements in the student experience. Beyond numerical achievements, Chido has made an outstanding contribution to improving race equity at Southampton, exemplifying what it means to deliver student partnership work in this space.



## Dr Lexi Webster

Since joining Southampton in September 2022, Lexi has exceeded all expectations for an early career academic.

Her significant achievements since May 2023 include the following.

- Designing, developing, and steering through approvals a new MSc programme in Digital Humanities (Data Science), that promises to deliver new forms of income generation and diversify the distinctiveness of our educational offer.
- Producing remarkable research at the intersection of linguistics, digital methods, and queer theory, including three articles, two book chapters, a Cambridge University Press monograph under contract, and four ambitious funding applications as principal investigator.
- Taking on substantive School leadership responsibilities in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and research ethics, including a leading role in developing the Faculty's first policy on social media ethics.
- Providing enterprise leadership as co-chair of Indigo Gender Service, an innovative model of trans healthcare, which is NHS-commissioned to provide care that is local, timely, and easier to access.

Lexi is a trustworthy, effective, and collegial leader without whom Digital Humanities, the School of Humanities, and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities would not have achieved some major successes in the last year. She deserves to be celebrated.



## Dr Trang Gardner

Trang has been nominated for her exceptional contribution to research and collaboration on an international scale.

Since coming to Southampton Business School, and while on a demanding teaching contract, Trang has thrown herself into all aspects of academic life. She is consistently named by students in their module reviews as an inspiring teacher, and has been demonstrating her talents right across the triple helix.

Trang has been awarded £241,400 from the British Academy in their highly competitive Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme. Her project will explore the working practices of female entrepreneurs in Vietnam, Malaysia and Bangladesh, and how these are shaped by culture, traditions, spirituality and geography. She will be leading a team of three co-investigators in the Business School and Geography at Southampton, as well as two international co-investigators, at the University of Da Nang in Vietnam and the University of Southampton Malaysia.

This is an unprecedented achievement for someone at this early stage in their career, but it has surprised none of the team due to her unmatched drive, generosity and creativity. We are all certain Trang will achieve great things for Southampton. She has developed the reputation to be an exceptionally collegial and supportive colleague, always willing to go the extra mile for the benefit of the department and the wider institution.

# STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**Delivering a transformative student experience and support programmes that enable our students to thrive.**

**THE NOMINEES ARE:**



## Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise (CESE) team

**Bethan Moore, Jake Ellis, Katy Gordon, Kelly Cruse, Leanne Barnes, Nina Fairbrother, Sarah Rogers, Thomas Simmonds**

The Careers, Employability and Student Enterprise (CESE) team has exemplified a commitment to innovation, adaptability, and student-centricity, embodying the very essence of a transformative student experience.

In the face of multiple challenges such as limited visibility, spatial constraints, and barriers to student engagement, the team embarked on a journey of strategic innovation, pioneering four transformative initiatives: a comprehensive rebranding effort; the introduction of a Mobile Careers Centre (MCC); the deployment of branded state-of-the-art meeting pods; and establishing the Student Enterprise Junction in the city centre, providing a vibrant hub for entrepreneurial endeavours.

CESE's collaborative and innovative spirit has addressed existing challenges and catalysed new avenues for service delivery and engagement. The positive impacts have resulted in:

- increased student engagement: a substantial surge in service usage and attendance, indicative of heightened accessibility and engagement among students
- enhanced visibility and collaboration: the team's regular and recognisable presence across all campuses has bolstered student engagement and fostered closer ties with the academic community, amplifying the impact of its initiatives
- institutional recognition: the team's initiatives have garnered recognition and acclaim from senior leadership, elevating awareness, influence, and demand for services institution-wide, as well as achieving recognition and interest at global conferences and forums, positioning Southampton as an innovator in the sector



## Chemistry Employability team

**Professor Andrea Russell, Andy Gardner and Joanna Murchie (not pictured)**

Andrea started the Chemistry employability programme in 2019 and has built it up with Andy since he joined the University in 2021, as Employability Partnership Manager.

Over this period, we moved from 38th to 18th for career prospects in *the Guardian* University League Tables. We expect the positive trajectory to continue since it takes time for the data to reflect activity.

Group and individual sessions prepare students for placement and job interviews, an alumni network formed for the purpose is leveraged to provide seminars on career options, and suitable opportunities are promoted. Each year the team ensures students who have not secured work or further study are offered individual assistance.

This year a School careers fair utilised the alumni network and other contacts to link students to a large variety of relevant careers through over 20 participating companies.

Students have commented on the generous time made available to them, excellence of support in searching for opportunities, and the amount of employer access they receive. Andrea and Andy have driven this activity to a level beyond what we could have expected, and deserve recognition.

Andrea and Andy would like to acknowledge the additional support of Joanna Murchie, who joined the team in 2023, enabling expansion of the support provided to individual students.



## Tech Hub team

**Andreea Arhilei, Brandon Cavie, Caidan Welch, Chris O'Connor, Dan Carozzi, Derick Villas, Harry Cobbold, Helen White, Ivan Martinson, Jack Becheley, Jake Dovey, James Lloyd, Jason Mansell, Kevin May, Lucas Trumpiel, Marius Alexandru, Patsy Appleton, Rob Stanley, Thi Thu Ha Nguyen**

Since its launch at the Hartley Library in early 2023, the Tech Hub has transformed the student and staff experience within the University. It has revolutionised the way students navigate the complexities of modern technology, offering comprehensive support for their laptops and other essential IT devices at no cost to them.

With the Tech Hub ready to help, students now have access to expert assistance right at the heart of our campus, ensuring seamless continuity in their studies. With no charge for their service, the Tech Hub embodies a commitment to affordability and accessibility unparalleled in the higher education sector.

The proficiency and dedication of the Tech Hub team have yielded remarkable results, boasting an impressive first-time fix rate exceeding 90 per cent. This success speaks volumes to the expertise and efficiency with which they address the challenges students and staff present them with, setting a new standard of excellence in technical support services. The team is passionate about developing its technical knowledge to support these students, and much of this is done out of hours, whether it is watching YouTube in the evening or taking their personal devices to bits, they love to learn!

As a catalyst for positive change, the Tech Hub embodies the ethos of our institution, enriching the lives of our students and affirming our commitment to excellence.



# TEACHING

Demonstrating personal or professional leadership that enables and empowers others to thrive, living our values and providing an example for others to follow.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



## Nouha Saber

Nouha has recently joined the Accounting department, where she has made a significant impact on the department's action plan for the National Student Survey (NSS). She has achieved this through delivering exceptionally high-quality and innovative teaching, particularly in challenging topics such as Accounting (Taxation). Nouha's approach includes offering multiple formative assessments, ensuring students receive comprehensive support in their learning journey.

One notable innovation introduced by Nouha is a feedback mechanism known as the 'traffic light system.' This system effectively links teaching materials, learning objectives, and students' queries, which are addressed personally through email. Students have responded positively to this approach, expressing their appreciation through valuable feedback.

This positive reception has been consistently reflected in their midterm evaluation surveys, consistently rating Nouha's teaching over 4.5 out of 5. Furthermore, Nouha's outstanding contributions have led to her nomination for the SUSU award, recognising her as the most engaging lecturer.

Nouha has also had a significant impact on the School's strategic plan through contributing to the proposal of a new UG programme: BSc Accounting and Taxation.



## Dr Panagiotis Giannarakis

Panagiotis (Panos) is a Senior Teaching Fellow in the Department of Economics, as well as the PGT Programme Lead, PGT Dissertation Coordinator, UG Dissertation Coordinator, and UG Senior Tutor. He has been teaching in the Department of Economics since September 2011. He teaches a combination of undergraduate mathematics and macroeconomics modules, and has become a student favourite for his friendly and captivating teaching style.

Panos builds strong links with students in their very first semester at the University in the Mathematics for Economics module. This allows him to build rapport with students early on and makes him an approachable member of staff that they can go to for advice when needed. His exceptional commitment to student wellbeing makes him a strong advocate for students who require support, whether this be liaising with the student office or other support services to ensure students have access to necessary resources and assistance.

Panos's dedication to student-focused education and personalised support significantly enriches the student experience within the department, fostering a more meaningful and rewarding educational journey for all.

Panos has also been instrumental in bringing about the restructure of the Economics MSc programmes, which was by no means an easy feat given the number of programmes and modules offered by the department.



## Dr Mohammad Shoaib Jameel

Driven by a passion for empowering aspiring programming prodigies at Southampton, Shoaib has established the Special Interest Group In Competitive Programming (SIGCompete) to train students to take part in the annual International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC). This highly prestigious international event, fiercely competed by the top universities in the world, consists of national (UK) and regional (EU) feeder competitions.

Shoaib's open-door, 'unique in the UK', initiative welcomes students from all years and disciplines. Starting with just three students in 2022, SIGCompete has grown to 63 members in 2023. Shoaib has designed a rigorous training schedule, conducting three one-hour sessions per week for a month in September and October of the first year (2022).

This intensive training programme meticulously prepared our students for the UK/EU-wide NWERC programming competition in Delft, The Netherlands, resulting in the successful dispatch of two teams to the event from Southampton led by Shoaib.

Shoaib now hosts regular training sessions, supported by a YouTube channel. Students have the advantage of knowing their team members and their strengths in advance, fostering a cohesive and confident team dynamic.

Shoaib has been selected as a member for the UK and Ireland Programming Contest (UKIEPC) jury, along with representatives from leading technology companies like Google, Meta, and Jane Street, as well as other leading universities.



# TRIPLE HELIX

Exemplifying the Triple Helix, forging connections between education, research and knowledge exchange and enterprise, which strengthen each and magnify their collective impact.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



## Dr Giulia Felappi

Giulia exemplifies the ideal of the Triple Helix, making outstanding and interlocking contributions across research, education, and knowledge exchange in Philosophy, and showing leadership that shows a deep commitment to both staff and students.

During the 2023/24 academic year, she was awarded an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Networking Grant of £35k to bring together international researchers to explore fundamental questions about the nature of thought and language. This research is intertwined with her leadership of the logic and language modules, for which she has developed bespoke materials that led to a SUSU Academic Support Award in May 2023.

This year she also took on the highly demanding role of Director of Programmes in Philosophy, including the immediate challenges of Philosophy's highest ever undergraduate intake. She has done a fantastic job, handling the challenges smoothly while always being ready to make time for colleagues and students.

Finally, she made important contributions in knowledge exchange, as a government advisor on the National Disability Strategy. This work led to a case study for the University's Disability Confident 2023 award, and draws on her work in accessibility in Philosophy education and research, for example, as co-author of the British Philosophical Association guidelines for accessible conferences.



## Autism Community Research Network @ Southampton (ACoRNS)

Professor Hanna Kovshoff, Professor Sarah Parsons

ACoRNS was co-founded with Aviary Nursery in Eastleigh and the New Forest School in 2016 and is co-directed by Hanna (Professor of Neurodiversity, Psychology) and Sarah (Professor of Autism and Inclusion, in Education). Working closely with practitioners in partner organisations, ACoRNS generates cutting-edge participatory research that directly improves the support provided to autistic children and young people in our local community.

The local impact of the expanded ACoRNS network has been recognised in 'Outstanding' Ofsted reports for New Forest School and Hill House School. The ACoRNS model has also been adopted by colleagues at the University of Sussex, and its work includes international collaborations with academic partners in Australia and Sweden.

ACoRNS members have continued to develop innovative and creative approaches to support autistic children and young people, recently using digital technologies to co-create virtual tours that support their transition to new schools or other education sites. Reaching beyond its local community, ACoRNS has also worked with practitioners in South Wales to enable them to incorporate this innovation into their approaches.

ACoRNS skilfully combines strands of the Triple Helix, always with people at the centre of its activities, and provides a major contribution to our civic endeavour.



## CORNERSTONE team

Aiman Hazim Shafizam, Dr Ali Kaplan, Professor Callum Littlejohns, Eleni Tsanidou, Emily Crawshaw, Georgia Mourkioti, Dr Hamza Rouabah, Hanuushah Vizabaskaran, James Le Besque, Dr Martin Ebert, Dr Mehdi Banakar, Monika Bakalarz, Dr Ramsey Selim, Sarah-Jane Bridger, Tania de los Santos, Dr Xingzhao Yan, Ying Tran, Yue Fan

The CORNERSTONE team inspires the remarkable across education, research and enterprise by delivering high-quality, customer-oriented expertise within the University's cleanroom and its wider community. Their unwavering dedication to manufacturing photonics chips for the global community exemplifies the Triple Helix.

In enterprise, they delivered 94 contracts for 36 clients in 15 countries worth over £1.05m, generating surplus exceeding £440k, notably fabricating a prototyping batch within three weeks, which typically takes competitors 10 weeks, and inspiring more than 250 delegates via online webinars and hands-on training.

In research, they secured six grants totalling over £11.1m, including a flagship Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Innovation and Knowledge Centre, presenting opportunities to play a fundamental role in delivering the UK's Semiconductor Strategy. Some chips manufactured by the team are enabling researchers in Nepal to test for contamination in water, and others resulted in two Nature journal publications focused on data centre environmental sustainability.

In education, they provided 76 students from seven universities the opportunity to design and test their own chips, using the latest advancements in fabrication techniques via passionate lectures. The team champions diversity, with 18 colleagues from 11 countries and a gender ratio of 50:50.

# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND ENTERPRISE

Delivering knowledge exchange and enterprise activities that result in positive societal, economic, and environmental impact.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



## Professor Nicola Symonds

Under Nicola's leadership, the enterprise unit nC<sup>2</sup> Engineering Consultancy has experienced remarkable and significant advancement and growth (from a turnover of £140k to £710k last year) and has become a benchmark for many other enterprise units.

Nicola ensures that every voice is heard and respected as the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS) Enterprise EDI representative. She has developed a consulting team who reflect neurological, cultural, and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Through her dedicated mentoring efforts to cultivate future leaders, five team members, as well as individuals outside her team, have advanced in pay grade. Nicola also spearheads exceptional outreach activities on campus and in local schools.

Nicola manages internationally significant projects and has had a direct impact on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention governed by the United Nations. Nicola presented this work to the signatory flag nations as an invited speaker at the International Marine Pilots Association (IMPA) Congress held at the Rotterdam World Trade Centre. Nicola has also taken the lead on Enterprise community building activities, supporting the Associate Dean (Enterprise).

Nicola was recognised by the Women in Engineering Society (WES) Top 50 Award 2023 and Fellow 2024. These honours celebrate her technical engineering prowess and her advocacy for women and girls in STEM fields.



## Dr Wonyong Park

Over the past year Wonyong has demonstrated exceptional contributions to knowledge exchange and impact, primarily through his work on disaster education. He has actively engaged with various local and international bodies, policymakers, national and local authorities, and community organisations, to shape educational practices and policies in this area.

Notable collaborations include Wonyong's work with Grenfell Tower Fire organisations, such as the Grenfell Foundation and Grenfell United, where he co-developed knowledge and policy priorities around disaster education. This collaboration resulted in the inclusion of a case study in the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission's final policy report, contributing to future disaster memorialisation and education efforts. Additionally, he organised a webinar bringing together key stakeholders from different disaster-affected communities, including Hillsborough survivors, to share experiences and build solidarity.

Wonyong also collaborated with Sewol Ferry families and organisations, facilitating a UK-South Korea exchange of experiences and expertise in memorialisation and education for disaster justice. This included inviting Sewol Ferry families to the UK and advising Korean organisations on educational programmes and materials. Wonyong's work also extends to the Remembering Titanic project, collaborating with Southampton City Council's SeaCity Museum and local teachers to develop a curriculum unit aligning with secondary school curricula, benefiting both educators and students.



## The International Blast Injury Research Network (IBRN)

**Dr Jack Denny, Professor James Batchelor, Dr Ken Brackstone, Dr Rebecca Glenny-Brown**

The International Blast Injury Research Network (IBRN) was launched by the University in 2019 in collaboration with the University of Cape Town. They identified that leading blast research was primarily focused on military, not civilian, situations and perspectives. Addressing this gap, they brought together a multidisciplinary team to improve research within the civilian context and at a holistic level. The team conducts multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral research to improve the understanding of the consequences of explosive violence on civilians. They aim to improve the protection and treatment of those injured by explosive violence, inform risk reduction strategies, and minimise harm and suffering of affected populations.

The IBRN conducted a first-of-kind forensic study of the 2020 Beirut port explosion that aims to investigate the relationship between victims' blast injury patterns and predicted blast exposure based on their location. In July 2024, they hosted a workshop in Sri Lanka to gain understanding of the country's health system and emergency response strengths and challenges faced in relation to the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings.

The work the team is doing is simply incredible and demonstrates the University's commitment to excellence in all we do, applying our insights and inventiveness to solve the most complex societal and environmental challenges.



## NeuroKids team

**Professor Brigitte Vollmer, Dr Dennis Golm, Professor Jana Kreppner, Dr Nathan Huneke, Dr Rina Cianfagione**

NeuroKids has been running since 2020 and aims to educate pupils about neurodiversity, mental health and the brain. It is a collaborative cross-faculty outreach programme involving Psychology and Medicine that has delivered over 50 workshops in local schools.

The team goes above and beyond to increase knowledge about neuroscience and mental health in children from deprived areas in Southampton, while being mindful to include role models from diverse backgrounds. These efforts resulted in becoming part of the science curriculum at St Patrick's Primary School and being highlighted in the recent Ofsted report for Kanes Hill Primary School. NeuroKids was further highlighted as an example of good practice within the undergraduate Psychology programme in the accreditation report to the British Psychological Association.

As part of a Latitude Prize project in spring 2023, NeuroKids successfully trained students across the Faculty of Environmental and Life Sciences (FELS) in the planning and delivery of child-friendly knowledge exchange activities. The project had a focus on students from non-white backgrounds to increase diversity within workshop conveyors and increase employability of students from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The NeuroKids team champions a co-production approach and is currently co-producing a video with neurodiverse children about their school experiences for use in anti-bullying workshops.



# RESEARCH IMPACT

Delivering impactful research that tackles the world’s most complex problems, drives local opportunities, and grows our global reputation.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



### Professor Helen Carr

As Professor of Property Law and Social Justice in Southampton Law School, Helen’s research focuses on social injustices and widening inequalities within the housing sector. As Law’s inspirational Impact Champion, Helen instils a vibrant impact culture through peer-learning and awareness-raising workshops. She also introduced the Impact Teaching Remission Pilot and offers bespoke support to colleagues. Her research has had significant impact in the following areas.

- ➔ Rural homelessness: Helen’s research raised awareness on the national policy agenda, led to local authorities facilitating a Rural Homelessness Community of Practice, and provided evidence for an ongoing national campaign, #RuralHomelessnessCounts. Her research featured in mainstream and specialist media, won the National Affordable Housing Campaigning Award, and was shortlisted for the Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA) Impact Prize.
- ➔ Improving the private rented sector in Southampton: Helen was an expert witness to the Southampton City Council Scrutiny Panel. She shaped the evidence base and influenced the scope of the inquiry and debate, provided input to the final report, and has been invited to the forthcoming Cabinet Meeting.
- ➔ Protection from Eviction Act reforms: Helen proposed changes to the Prevention of Eviction legislation. Working with Wera Hobhouse MP, Helen drafted amendments to the Bill, which were raised in the Report Stage in April 2024.



### Redressing Gendered Health Inequalities of Displaced Women and Girls (ReGHID) project team

**Professor Amos Channon, Professor David Owen, Dr Natalia Cintra, Professor Pia Riggiozzi, Dr Sarah Neal**

Access to health and social services for migrant women and girls often depends on their legal status, with very limited access for undocumented migrants. There are also other barriers, including language, cultural identity, poverty, age, violence and discrimination.

The ReGHID project team at Southampton has achieved significant research impact by producing the ‘AGAPE Guide’ with partners from the University of Los Andes, Colombia. The AGAPE Guide aims to support migrant women by strengthening knowledge and actions regarding health rights of migrants. To create the guide, the team worked with displaced migrant women and staff from the ProCrear Foundation (a non-governmental organisation in Colombia) in a series of workshops and focus groups.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in El Salvador has adopted the AGAPE Guide. The ReGHID team has worked with the IOM on a survey to gather data on sexual and reproductive health needs at different stages of the migratory journey. Based on this work, the IOM signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Executive Secretariat of the Council of Ministries of Health of Central America (SE-COMISCA), a binding regional organisation for the member states in Central America. As a result, the AGAPE Guide is being implemented across Central America, and being used as a training plan for health personnel in border areas with a high presence of migrants in transit.



### The Antibody and Vaccine Group

**Dr Ali Roghanian, Professor Aymen Al-Shamkhani, Professor Juliet Gray, Professor Mark Cragg, Professor Sean Lim, Professor Stephen Beers, Dr Yury Bogdanov**

The Antibody and Vaccine Group (AVG) at the School of Cancer Sciences is Europe’s largest consortium of academic antibody scientists, comprising seven research leaders united in advancing anti-cancer antibody therapies. Their collective expertise spans immunology and genetic modification.

The AVG’s contributions have significantly influenced therapeutic immunology, guiding treatments from lab to clinical settings, ultimately benefiting cancer patients. They have pioneered immunocompetent models for tracking neuroblastoma progression and innovative therapies, leading to early-phase paediatric immunotherapy trials, including the pioneering transatlantic MINiVAN children’s cancer trial. With over 200 manuscripts in journals like Nature and Cancer Cell, they shape the future of immunotherapeutics as advisors to pharmaceutical companies. Moreover, they have mentored 86 PhD students, with 17 becoming research leaders or clinical lecturers.

The AVG currently comprises 56 members, including 17 PhD students, 20 postdocs, 12 technical staff, and two administrative staff, showcasing diversity across ethnicities and geographical regions. Thirty-five per cent of AVG’s research leaders are women. The team actively engages with the public through lab tours, county shows, and arts festivals. Their involvement in media such as Radio 4’s *Today Programme*, and organising events such as the Global Parent Symposium, demonstrates their commitment to public education and outreach. Additionally, they run programmes including LifeLab and INSPIRE, to inspire school children and medical students.

# SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY

Role modelling a cleaner, greener and healthier University, where environmental and social sustainability is part of everything we do.

## THE NOMINEES ARE:



### Peter Morgan

Peter is the Laboratory Manager for Geography and Environmental Science. Since May 2023, Peter's dedication and leadership have led to the implementation of three silver and five bronze lab LEAF awards across the University, a testament to his commitment to fostering sustainable practices. The attainment of silver awards, especially, highlights Peter's exceptional efforts and the substantial progress made under his guidance.

Beyond the LEAF programme, Peter has championed sustainability initiatives, including the establishment of a pipette tip recycling box in collaboration with Associated Polymers and promoting engagement with the Uni Green Scheme for the sale of unwanted equipment within the Technical and Experimental community.

Peter's proactive approach extends to raising awareness about sustainability, as evidenced by his informative LEAF introductions to various departments and his updates to LEAF members and the senior technicians' forum. His role on the Sustainability Implementation Group underscores his invaluable contributions to important decision-making bodies within the University. Peter's dedication, leadership, and passion for sustainability make him an exemplary candidate for the 'Supporting Sustainability' award. His tireless efforts have not only enhanced the University's environmental footprint but have also inspired positive change within the academic community.

Peter has excelled in raising the awareness and providing advice and mentorship to colleagues outside of the University, at the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust.



### Professor Simon Kemp

Simon lives and breathes sustainability education and is an internationally recognised expert on sustainability. The entire Sustainability and Resilience Institute (SRI) team relies on his insight, passion and tremendous work ethic.

He has served as University Lead in Education for Sustainable Development, Co-chair of the Sustainability Action programme and pioneered numerous successful and popular sustainability modules and activities.

Simon enthusiastically champions the student voice in sustainability, from engaging with SUSU, to his immense dedication to providing world-class sustainability education, to providing internships in Sustainability and hosting students as guests on the SRI Sustainability Podcast, Meliora. Simon established the transformative 'Blackout' initiative, bringing together the University community to audit our energy usage.

He led the Sustainable Development Goals mapping of education modules and leads on all Sustainability League Table submissions, collaborating across faculties, estates, and professional services to ensure our University is recognised nationally and internationally for our sustainability action. Simon works tirelessly to provide support on how we can continue to strive towards a more sustainable university to anyone who reaches out to him.

Simon is an inspirational academic leader and much respected by his students. His enthusiasm and inclusive approach make him a joy to work with.



### Sophia Malig

Since 2021, Sophia Malig – Senior Teaching Fellow for BA Fashion Design – has run an impactful partnership between the Salvation Army Trading Company Ltd (SATCoL) and second-year BA Fashion Design students through the 'Future You, Future Fashion' project. This project was devised to support the development towards a sustainable fashion design future and awareness of, and engagement with, supporting social issues.

Every year the project starts with a van load of donated Salvation Army items arriving at Winchester School of Art (WSA). Sophia diligently sorts the items into colours, garment types and fabric qualities. This enables students to see the full potential of second-hand garments. The students are then granted creative freedom to transform donated garments, curtains, blankets and sheets into wearable and desirable outfits.

Students gain real-world experience of effective ways to mitigate the environmental costs associated with producing new clothing by creating a new lease of life for second-hand garments and fabrics.

WSA students have processed over three tonnes of second-hand garments, and the garments have been sold to raise over £5,000 worth of funds for the Salvation Army charity. Outfits created for the 'Future You, Future Fashion' project have been highlighted in fashion films, featured in exhibitions at the WSA Gallery, and staged in catwalk shows at Winchester Green Week and Winchester Fashion Week.



# COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING

Enhancing the life of the University and its people, creating a community where we can succeed in achieving our shared vision.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



## Beverley Dodds

Bev has made outstanding contributions to creating a vibrant and supportive environment in her role as Asset and Planned Maintenance Manager in Estates and Facilities. She has enhanced the life of the department by organising activities that bring colleagues together and foster a sense of community. Her energy, enthusiasm and commitment to creating a unified and thriving department make her an excellent candidate for this award.

Her dedication goes beyond her regular duties. Over the past 20 years, Bev has been volunteering her time and creativity to coordinate events and activities that bring people together. From decorating the department for festive occasions to initiating team-building events, her efforts have made Estates and Facilities a more enjoyable and cohesive place to work.

Bev's commitment to community building is complemented by her caring nature. She is always willing to go the extra mile to ensure that her colleagues feel valued and included. Her initiatives not only boost morale but also contribute to a more positive work environment, where people feel connected and supported.



## Heidi Lipscomb

Heidi, an Operations Manager in the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, created the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS) Faculty Operating Service (FOS) Skills Network, designed to share knowledge and provide peer support.

Based on the principles of sharing best practice, Heidi created a network of voluntary skills advisors who respond to queries and provide workshop sessions on specific topics. She arranges presenters from other professional services and participants from other faculties, sharing our network with colleagues across the institution.

Eighteen events, with around 200 participants, have been delivered since 2022, with topics ranging from touring Engineering facilities to workshops on Pure, SharePoint and Project Management, as well as community workshops to connect with colleagues, share interests and promote health and wellbeing.

Heidi also organises and runs welcome events for our new FOS starters, matching each colleague with an experienced buddy to support them in their first few months in post. Heidi's work contributes to the development of a collegial and collaborative faculty-aligned FOS team, equipped with the knowledge to support the delivery of the Triple Helix Strategy, working in partnership with our academic community. This is all alongside her role supporting the Dean and wider faculty actions.



## Professor Maria Stokes

Maria, a Professor of Neuromusculoskeletal Rehabilitation, has been nominated for her commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing. She leads the Health Sciences EDI group, which has increased in member diversity and activeness in recent years.

Maria provides a safe space for many students and staff, and prioritises their wellbeing. Despite her busy schedule, she always supports projects with a potential for EDI and wellbeing impact. Just one example is the Co-DICE project, which helps researchers improve diversity in their patient and public involvement activities. This project started as an idea by an early-career researcher. Maria encouraged the grant application and still provides hands-on support for the project. She also supports the student-led project Confident to Talk, which works to develop recommendations to improve the University's Report + Support tool.

Maria works hard to make sure that everyone gets credit for the part they have played and thinks about what will be important for each individual's career development.

Maria is caring and supportive as a line manager. She not only pushes colleagues to achieve success; she supports them every step of the way. After speaking to others who have worked with Maria, it is a consensus that Maria is indeed true gold; a shining star.

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Helping create an inclusive University community where everyone feels they belong. Supporting the mission of inclusivity, leading, and influencing social change at a local or national level.

## THE NOMINEES ARE:



### Jo Fisher

Jo is a Corporate Writer and Editor in the Global Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing team. Over the last year, she has gone above and beyond to deliver the Inclusive Language Guide, which will support all colleagues across the University with their discussions around inclusivity, and help them to embed a more inclusive practice, especially in the way they communicate on behalf of, and write for, the University. The Inclusive Language Guide is an excellent resource for all staff to refer to every day.

As a university and an inclusive centre of learning and research, it is important that we make our diverse community feel included in all our communications. Jo has furthered our Strategy by creating a dependable resource that seeks to increase the understanding of EDI of every member of University staff, and increase their confidence to communicate in an inclusive way.

Jo has been working hard to actively share the Inclusive Language Guide, which she recently presented at the EDI Symposium.

Jo will continue to work with focus groups from our staff community to regularly update and finesse the Guide, so it remains fit for purpose for the University into the future. The guide she has created is an asset to the University, as is she.



### Maisha Islam

Maisha joined the Doctoral College last year to lead on equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) initiatives. She has been a fantastic advocate for EDI, leading projects on understanding how to support students from under-represented backgrounds to take up PhDs, and exploring the experiences of current UK-domiciled Black and Asian postgraduate research students.

Deeply passionate about EDI, she is completing a doctorate on belonging for Muslim students in UK universities, and has established herself nationally as a leading voice in EDI.

Maisha was an inspirational panel member at the School of Chemistry's Global Women's Breakfast event on 'Catalysing Diversity in Science', and also gave the opening speech at the first ever UK Council for Graduate Education EDI Conference.

Recently, Maisha has gone above and beyond her role to support the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences on an EDI bid to the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) as part of a consortium of eight universities.

Maisha role models the Southampton behaviours and inspires others to do the same. She is supportive, generous with her knowledge and committed to helping us create the inclusive university we aspire to be. A valuable champion of equality and inclusion, and a rising star.



### The Southampton Diversifying/Decolonising the Medical Curriculum Committee (DDtMC)

**Amneet Sandhar, Annie Walter, Asha Raja, Heather White, Ihuoma Osuji, Professor Kathleen Kendall, Dr Luca Di Gregorio, Maddy Wayland, Max Healey, Morgan Blake, Dr Peta Coulson-Smith, Roma Rajani, Dr Shmma Quraisha**

Minoritised groups have poorer health outcomes, partially because of clinician bias and inadequate training. UK medical schools and their governing bodies recognise that colonialism continues informing and infusing curricula with racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, classism and ageism.

The DDtMC is a collaborative student-staff partnership committed to addressing the impact of colonial history on curricula.

Its research found that staff and students agree it is very important to diversify and decolonise the curriculum and create a greater sense of belonging within the faculty and university. The DDtMC consulted people with lived experience, community activists, allies, health professionals and scholars. They co-created resources and held events to build community, and support students and staff, to develop cultural competency and cultural humility.

They mapped existing curricula, identified gaps, developed learning outcomes, designed course content, delivered teaching, and created staff resources. All learners reported increased understanding, with 90 per cent rating sessions excellent or very good; and 96 per cent rating them excellent, very good or good. The DDtMC has been invited to speak at the forthcoming Decolonising Medicine and Health conference in Exeter and is presenting at a national medical education conference with 600+ attendees.



# INSPIRING LEADERSHIP

Demonstrating personal or professional leadership that enables and empowers others to thrive, living our values and providing an example for others to follow.

THE NOMINEES ARE:



## Felice Foscheri

Felice could have been nominated for many different categories because his merits, achievements and qualities span practically all of them.

Felice, our Catering Services Manager, has singlehandedly transformed an ailing department, modernising its approach, culture and ethos into the exemplar of student (and staff) experience that it is today.

Under his stewardship, Catering has won numerous higher education institution and industry accolades, has been recognised nationally for its craft, and is becoming a leader in the higher education sector.

Most notable is the manner in which Felice has achieved this remarkable transformation, through the pastoral support and empowerment of those around him.

Felice is the blueprint against which we should look to model all our leaders, and I cannot think of a more deserving nominee.



## Florentina-Mirabela Badea

Florentina-Mirabela, the Domestic Supervisor in Estates and Facilities, has been nominated by several colleagues; here are a few of their comments:

“Mira has helped from day one with excellent training and keeping myself and all staff informed with what’s going on in the department. Mira sets a very high standard at work and certainly gets involved herself if we are understaffed through sickness, holidays etc. Mira has also helped me with my wellbeing too. A great leader who deserves an award!”

“From my point of view, Mira is the best supervisor in the University. She’s a friendly, orderly person; she has a strong character and can cope with any situation, she’s the most professional person I have met, thank you Mira!”

“Never in my life have I met a supervisor like Mira. I am so happy to have her as a supervisor, she is full of good energy and she is very optimistic. Mira is very professional and she is so involved in her job.”

“She’s the best leader that I’ve met. A real inspiration of kindness and professionalism, always smiling and carrying the team along. If more of us were like Mira, we would live in a better world. Thank you Mira.”



## Rachel Fitzearle

As Senior Technical Manager in the School of Biological Sciences, Rachel’s role is crucial to the smooth operational running of the labs and facilities within the department.

With excellent communication skills, she interacts well with all levels of the community. Rachel has successfully steered the ship, often through difficult waters, consistently delivering a high-quality service. She promotes sustainability, leading us to our first bronze LEAF Award.

Rachel is a hands-on driving force who leads by example and has earned the respect of her technical team and beyond. Always upbeat, kind, thoughtful, warm and welcoming, Rachel makes people feel valued. She listens to and cares for every member of her team.

Along with her trademark pragmatic, ‘can do’, problem-solving attitude, she is always approachable, making time for people, quick to praise and thank them. Rachel empowers colleagues and inspires all to want to do their personal best for her. Her success is amply indicated in two consecutive staff engagement surveys with the technicians having the highest engagement of any school group, an impressive 87 per cent for 2022 and 2023!

Rachel is a brilliant leader and a great role model; she inspires her team of technicians to develop and creates a positive working environment.



## Professor Gopal Ramchurn

Gopal has left an indelible mark on the University and the wider artificial intelligence (AI) community. His exceptional contributions deserve recognition.

He led the University to secure the £31m Responsible AI RAI UK programme in 2023, a remarkable feat. In parallel, he runs the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Trustworthy Autonomous Systems Hub, which sits at the centre of the £33m programme funded by the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund.

Responsible AI fosters ethical and sustainable AI practices globally, positioning Southampton as a leader in responsible AI research. Gopal’s leadership unites the research community within the University and the UK community within the Trustworthy Autonomous Systems/Responsible AI programme and beyond.

Through his inspiring leadership, Gopal empowers diverse researchers across sectors, enabling AI community growth within Southampton, across the UK and internationally. He led an International Trustworthy Autonomous Systems symposium in the UK in 2023 and the UKRI AI and Robotics Accelerator in 2024.

Gopal fosters collaboration, strengthening ties with industry, government, and institutions. He pioneers research in smart energy systems, smart cities, and disaster response, and is expanding Responsible AI’s impact into health, social care, judicial systems, and more. His influence extends nationally and internationally. In summary, his leadership, community service, and research impact make him a deserving candidate for the Vice-Chancellor’s Award.

# IN MEMORY

## IN MEMORY OF COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE DIED OVER THE PAST YEAR

- Professor Brian Clarkson**  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Engineering
- Chris Richardson**  
Software Engineer (Business), iSolutions
- Professor David Jackson**  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Southampton Law School
- Professor Sir Eric Thomas**  
Dean of Medicine, Health and Biological Sciences
- John Oxley**  
Foundation Year Teaching Fellow, Engineering
- Professor Paul Stoodley**  
Microbial Tribology, Engineering
- Professor Sir Peter Gregson**  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Engineering
- Emeritus Professor Peter Morice**  
Civil Engineering, Engineering
- Emeritus Professor Peter Smith**  
Associate Dean, Education, Economics
- Emeritus Professor Robert W Nesbitt**  
Dean of Science, Ocean and Earth Science
- Emeritus Professor Rodney Livingstone**  
German Studies, Humanities
- Professor Roy Butterfield**  
Head of Civil Engineering, Engineering
- Vic Fabian**  
Box office Assistant, Research and Innovation Services





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