



Research and
Innovation

Annual Report 2023/24



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Libre ensemble

R&I activities at a glance 2023/24



R&I activities at a glance 2023/24

New internal structures:
 ■ Innovation and Impact team
 ○ Launch of LSE Generate’s annual Accelerator

April 2024

New LSE President, Larry Kramer, starts



■ New internal structures: addition of Due Diligence to Research Governance and Culture (RG&C) team
 ○ Summer of Research Culture projects initiative launch

June 2024

New R&I Division Mission, Vision and Delivery Plans established

Research England visit to LSE



Internal seed corn initiatives launch
 ○ New internal structures: addition of Research Culture to RG&C team

July 2024

■ External review of Consulting as part of iterative development commitment across R&ID



REF preparation: first LSE outputs grading exercise



September 2024

○ Updated RISE programme launched for 2024/25



Message from the Directors



Professor Susana Mourato

Vice President and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research)

Following on from the publication of the inaugural annual report, we have witnessed further escalations in conflict, political tensions and climate change worldwide, needing agile and nuanced research responses. The social sciences play a crucial role in interpreting and addressing these issues, which require a high level of preparedness and expertise.

The LSE Research and Innovation Division (R&ID) has been able to retain its excellent support throughout this period, while also navigating internal leadership changes. I would like to extend my warmest thanks to David Coombe, former Director of R&I, who integrated School-wide services to form the Division as it known today, and Professor Julia Black, former Strategic Director of Innovation, whose dedication in creating trailblazing social science commercialisation models and a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem is unmatched.

I am delighted that our new R&I Director, Dr Jen Fensome, joined in 2023 to ensure the Division is ready to respond to emerging research needs, the ambitious Research for the World Strategy and higher education developments, such as the 2029 Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission. Under her leadership, the Division has refreshed its remit and expanded its services, enhancing overall support for our academic units.

This has supported LSE researchers to produce world-leading scholarship on key topics, such as electoral behaviour, taxation analysis, humanitarian aid, economics, and crime and policing. Building on the successes of sustainability research across LSE, we will also launch a new Global School of Sustainability in 2025, driving research into environmental and climate change policy innovation. These could not be possible without the sustained efforts of R&I colleagues and their impactful work, which I am pleased to see showcased in their latest annual report.

“

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Message from the Directors



Dr Jen Fensome

Director of LSE Research and Innovation

It has been an interesting period of change both internal and external to LSE since I have joined the School. We, of course, have our new Research Strategy and a new President at LSE, setting out and developing our strategic ambitions for R&I across the organisation, and externally, the UK has now associated with the EU Horizon initiative and there is a new government in place with priorities still to be determined.

In order to meet the requirements and demands of such a changing landscape, it is imperative that the R&I Division has a clear sense of what it is doing, why, how and when – not just so that service expectations can be met, but that our role in enabling LSE to position itself accordingly through early intelligence, strategic planning, and provision of timely and high quality support is also successfully delivered. As such, the working mantra of the Division has been to ‘review and refresh’ our structure, processes and policies, services and working practices.

This has resulted in new teams being formed, such as Evidence and Analysis, and additional resources made available to fill functional gaps, our remit clearly defined with other Professional Services, a new Contracts assessment process and a “whole division” culture starting to be embedded that spans the R&I lifecycle, to name but a few. In addition, work has been undertaken to plan and progress services where demands are not being met, external reviews undertaken, and individual team plans are in place for 2024/25 to ensure performance meets our own high standard. Finally, a significant start has been to explore the requirements of a whole-School, end-to-end research management system along with Library Services, to underpin the information and reporting needs of our researchers, professional services staff and senior leaders.

As a Division, we are proud to stand by our new Mission and Vision with a clear understanding of our roles, functions, principles and KPIs, and how delivery of these will continue enabling LSE to be successful, impactful and maintain its leading global reputation for Social Sciences.

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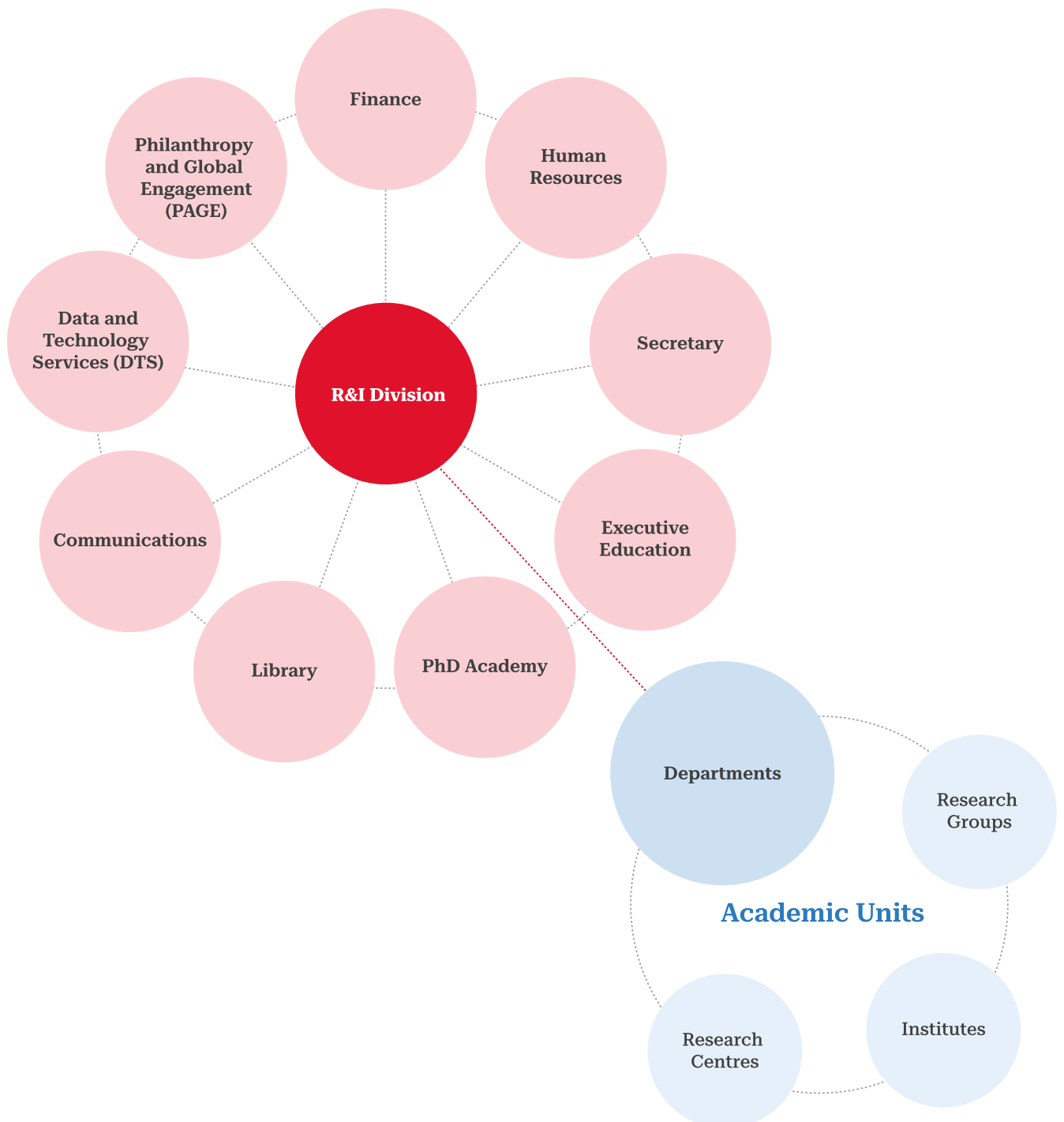
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Research and Innovation Ecosystem

The Research and Innovation Division (R&ID) facilitates the development of world-leading social sciences research, comprising of teams and services that support academics across the R&I lifecycle. The Division is part of a wider LSE network of professional services, working collaboratively to ensure that the School's academic units receive excellent support to achieve their R&I ambitions.

Following the appointment of a new R&I Director and the launch of LSE's Research for the World strategy in 2023, the Division restructured its offering to better align with School and strategy requirements. The R&ID comprises of nine individual teams, who work cohesively and collaboratively to add value to beneficiaries across LSE, as well as to external partners.

Professional Services



About LSE Research and Innovation: a new vision

In order to effectively meet existing and emerging demands, retain excellent support across the School and ensure LSE's global competitiveness as a leading social sciences institution, the R&I Division revisited its Mission and Vision.

Mission

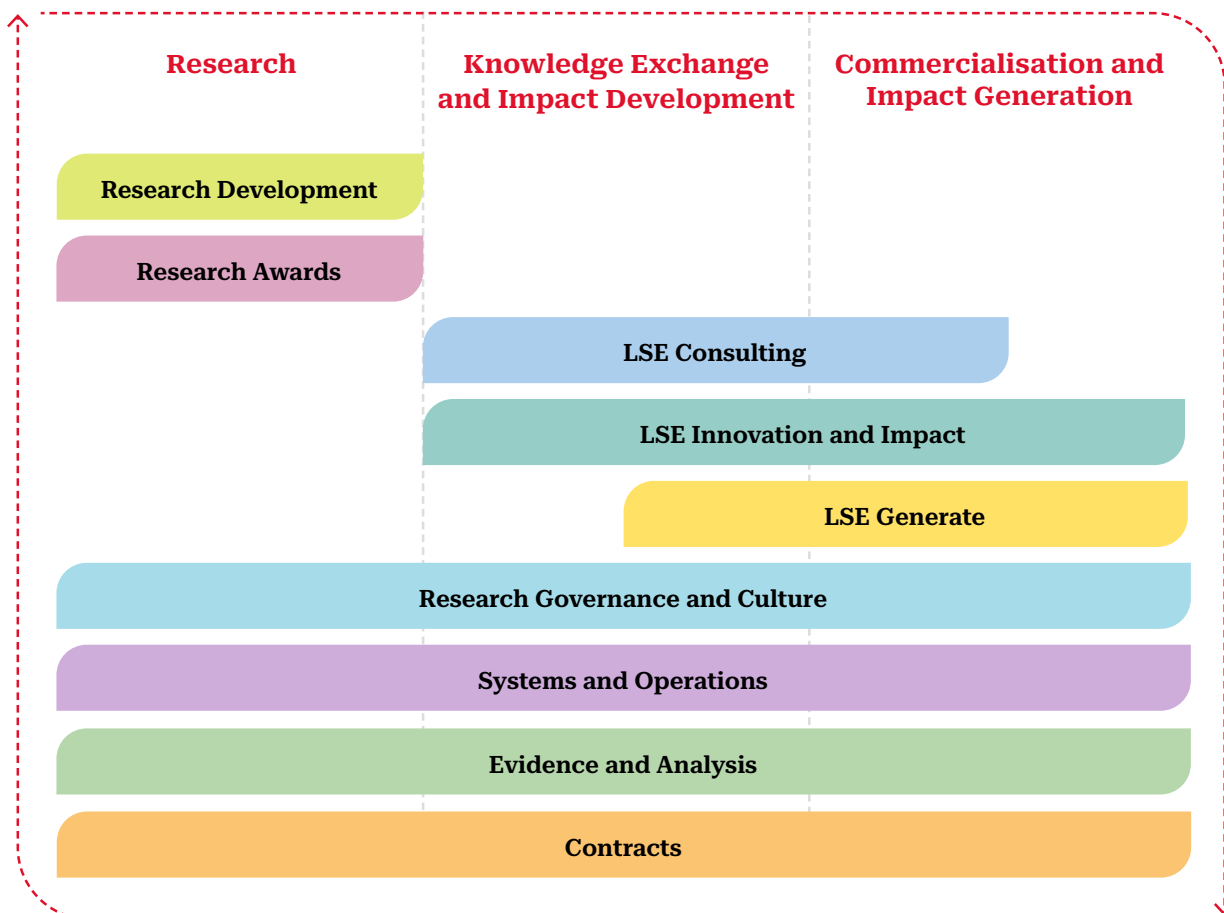
To provide a focused, fit for purpose, integrated and value-added R&I Service.

Vision

To enable delivery of LSE's Research for the World strategic ambitions in producing world-class research that has real-world impact, supporting LSE to lead the championing of social sciences on a global scale.

R&I Lifecycle

Each of the nine teams in the Division plays an important part in the R&I lifecycle, providing instrumental support across three key areas of development: from guiding academic units in creating fundamental research, to facilitating knowledge exchange and fostering impact, to finally, generating real-world impactful outcomes and the commercialisation of research. As shown below, some teams have specialised functions, while others cut across lifecycle needs.



Our impact in numbers 2023/24

£47.7m

Total income generated by the Division

£41.1m

Total Research income externally generated within LSE Research Support

£6.3m

Total income generated by LSE Consulting

£129m

Total value of Research funding applications submitted by LSE Research Support

178

Commercials deals between LSE R&I and external parties

330

Academic consultants engaged in projects

430+

Experts leading research projects

180

Start-ups formed with LSE R&I's assistance

LSE Research Support is formed of the Research Development, Research Awards, Research Governance and Culture, Evidence and Analysis, and Contracts teams.



Research Development



The Research Development (RD) team works in partnership with the R&I Division and academic units to help LSE staff in identifying opportunities and preparing competitive and high-quality grant applications.

The team also offers an annually refreshed programme of Research and Innovation Sessions (RISe), featuring a range of workshops, seminars and panels to support researcher knowledge, understanding and development across applying for funding, knowledge exchange, innovation, and ethics.

RISe events are complemented by a **RISe Knowledge Hub**, a repository of good practice guides specific to LSE's institutional context.

In the past year, for example, the RD team supported School academics in securing two European Research Council awards jointly worth £4m, one £1.9m Medical Research Council Applied Global Health grant, a £1m Economic and Social Research Council grant, and one UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship.

They have been integral in maintaining LSE's high application success rates, supporting increased interdisciplinary research, and in diversifying income post-EU Horizon association; these priorities will continue for the next year.

Impact Highlights

240+

RISe sessions' attendees

200+

Successful applications

160+

Funding opportunities disseminated

39

RISe sessions

37

Projects funded through internal schemes

Research Awards



The Research Awards (RA) team supports academics and professional services staff with the financial and post-award management of their research projects. RA colleagues ensure that the School's research complies with funding agencies' requirements, LSE policies and procedures and regulatory standards.

The Awards team is the largest in the Division, having received additional investment and restructuring to improve the client experience and future proof the service for income growth.

Work this year, aside from supporting a huge number of projects, has been to develop new tools for project handover and kick-off, and a shared space for grant management documents with Principal Investigators.

The team has also been co-developing a new sector-leading online timesheet system to replace current paper-based, manual timesheet process, to be launched in the coming term.

The RA team will continue to focus on strengthening compliance provisions and improving financial management for researchers.

Impact Highlights

£240m

Contract value of projects

560+

External projects supported

180+

New research projects set up

6

New posts

LSE Consulting



LSE Consulting helps academics leverage their specialised knowledge, unique insights and industry experience to provide qualitative outputs with a real world applicability. Activities comprise of:

- Topic-focused, consulting Hubs, specialising in key areas and drawing in experts from across LSE's academic Departments, Centres and Institutes
- Taster Talk events from the Academic Speakers Bureau (ASB), launched in 2024, which is the UK's first forum with an exclusive focus on public speakers with distinguished academic careers
- Provision of bespoke training courses aligned to client requests
- End-to-end support service in formal tendering applications, including bid writing, proposals preparation, budgets and contract negotiation
- Consultancy and research contract activities.

Demand for these services has heightened, with income increasing by 6.7% from 2022/23. The ASB already boasts over 70 academic experts in 20 different fields from LSE and beyond, with a strong roster of clients and repeat business being generated. ASB clients have included HSBC, Pepsi, Morgan Stanley and the University of New South Wales, and engagements have taken place throughout Europe, the Middle East and Australia. Major projects over a wide variety of research areas have included partnering with Meta, Ericsson, Ikea, Bosch, the Department for Business and Trade, and the British Council.

In the coming year, Consulting will be reflecting on priorities, ambitions and the range of services provided to ensure it is focused on value-added activities that support LSE's impact and influence strategic initiatives.

Impact Highlights

£6.3m

Turnover

820+

Projects sourced

200+

Live projects

70+

Academic Bureau speakers

LSE Innovation and Impact

LSE's Innovation and Impact (I&I) teams merged in April 2024, under the leadership of a new Associate Director. The aim is to optimise and provide a more integrated support experience for researchers interested in identifying, developing and generating impact from their research – whether it be policy-based, corporate-focused, public outreach or the development of commercial products and services.

The I&I team continues to lead important whole School statutory reporting exercises for innovation and knowledge exchange (KE), and offer expertise to academics for the impact-related elements of REF 2029.

Other immediate priorities have been to review and refresh the commercialisation pipeline, establish a revised IP Policy and guidance for researchers, and reflect on government evaluations of university-generated spin-outs. The team have also actively progressed funded collaboration projects with other universities around social venture support and investment funding, in addition to facilitating the status change and new direction of **ASPECT**, the social sciences Higher Education Institutions' (HEI) commercialisation network, as the lead organisation.

Finally, the team helped researchers at LSE to achieve a successful Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF4) **outcome**, in conjunction with other R&ID teams and professional service divisions.

In the year ahead, the I&I team will be supporting on the enhancement of impact-from-research culture at LSE in line with the School's strategic aims, facilitating a new focus on external partnership development to improve impact generation and income, increasing grant funding for KE and innovation activity, and working with ASPECT Network members on developing sector-leading, SHAPE-specific spin-out guidelines.



Impact Highlights

£1.5m

Awarded by the Research England to the collaborative ImpactU programme driving social ventures

£1.25m

Awarded by the ESRC* Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) in 2023

6

Awards issued in the 2024/24 Innovation Challenge

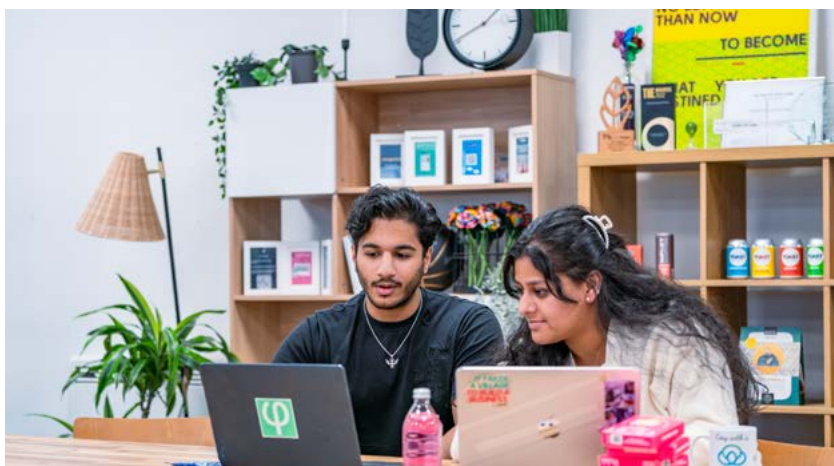
1

Successful ESRC IAA bid supported

1

Winner in the ESRC Celebrating Impact Prize Outstanding Early-Career Impact category

LSE Generate



LSE Generate is the School's home for entrepreneurship, supporting students and alumni to build socially responsible businesses in the UK and beyond. The GenDen, a physical campus space, has supported over 2,000 entrepreneurs with over 1,000 days of desk space and 385 business clinics delivered over its first three years.

Over the past year, Generate has improved its reach and activity significantly, growing all initiatives from scratch. For example, the "Mentorpreneurship" schools outreach programme now has over 10,000 student participants across 45 schools. The first cohort of Turing Scheme students graduated in 2024, in which enterprising participants benefitted from coaching, mentorship, bootcamps and trips at the co-working space in Lisbon. Accumulatively, this type of impact earned Generate country-wide recognition, namely the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Team of the Year at the Triple E awards (2023) and runner up for the schools programme initiative, three nominations at the Great British Businesswoman Awards (2023), sixth place in the Financial Times list of Europe's leading start-up hubs (2024) and a finalist in the Knowledge Exchange UK awards (formerly known as PraxisAuril).

Generate's global presence has also expanded since the launch of its 12 overseas hubs in 2022, with the addition of nine new International Chapters. Recent projects include supporting female founders from Mumbai to Rio, designing and running a health-tech summit in Mexico City, organising an impact innovation education programme in Kenya, and a version of the team's schools programme in India and Angola.

This coming year, building on the success of the GenDen, Generate is opening another space in Glengall Road, Southwark, which will host alumni start-ups, drive community projects and run innovation-related events, open to local residents as well.

Impact Highlights

£950k+

Contract value of projects

3k+

Students engaged in Generate Entrepreneurship schools programmes

20

Global alumni hubs

1

New approved space in Glengall Road, Southwark

Research Governance and Culture



Previously known as Research Policy and with a remit covering governance and impact, the newly established Research Governance and Culture (RG&C) team came into being in June 2024, with impact colleagues moving to the newly formed Innovation and Impact team.

The team was established in response to policy developments, increasing their focus on the facilitation of a positive and inclusive research culture at the School. This is further aided by the appointment of a dedicated Senior Research Culture Manager.

RG&C colleagues undertook a number of initiatives to understand, improve and monitor research culture across LSE. They launched and supported enhanced Research Centre and Institute reviews, invited applications to a pilot programme of mid-career researcher coaching and facilitated the award of eight internally funded projects promoting research culture.

The team also kickstarted Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 preparations and took part in Research England consultations. RG&C carried out the first REF outputs grading exercise, with nominations from nearly 800 research-active members of staff across all academic units in the School.

Looking ahead, the team is developing and piloting the delivery of funder, partner and subcontractor due diligence processes and procedures. This will ensure a consistent, transparent and proportionate approach to partner due diligence across R&I activities.

RG&C colleagues will also publish revised and improved Informed Consent Guidance, review and revise the School's Research Ethics Policy, and improve communications, training and tools relating to due diligence and research security at LSE.

Impact Highlights

528

New research ethics applications for review

35+

Research Ethics and Data Management drop-in Sessions

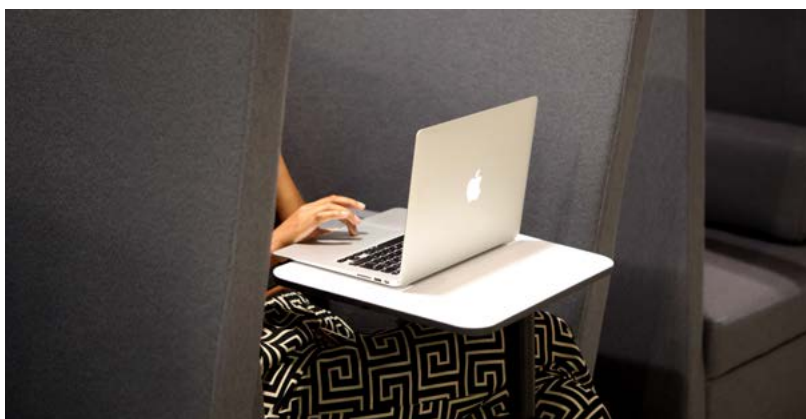
4

Early Career Researchers Network projects funded

1

Research Integrity Annual Statement delivered

Systems and Operations



The Systems and Operations (S&O) team delivers comprehensive services across the R&I lifecycle. S&O colleagues monitor the R&I infrastructure to ensure business systems remain current and responsive to internal and external needs. The team are also the focal point for the Division, providing necessary induction and ongoing support, centralised admin resources, and coordinated events and initiatives across R&I.

The team's resources have grown to ensure the successful delivery of the in-year launch of the Research Management and Infrastructure multi-million pound Programme (RMIP). This is a key underpinning workstream of the Research for the World strategy that aims to deliver world-class systems and facilities to the School over the next three years and transform the way in which research, outputs and outcomes are managed across the whole R&I lifecycle at LSE.

During 2023, S&O developed the first-ever LSE-wide dashboard for research, innovation and impact income, representing the totality of the R&I ecosystem at the School. This dashboard, spanning multiple divisions, serves as a benchmarking tool for the Research Committee to assess the success of the Research for the World Strategy and to support strategic decision-making for senior leaders. It will continue to evolve over the coming year to offer additional layers of data and analysis, deepening insights.

The team also play an important role in R&I communications, including developing and delivering a successful cross-LSE newsletter, the R&I Briefing. Published six-weekly, the newsletter features R&I news, recent projects undertaken by the R&I teams, updates from the Knowledge Exchange and Impact Integrated Service colleagues, innovation training and events, funding opportunities and research support available from the LSE Library.

Over the coming year, S&O will continue to progress the RMIP project, review R&I systems and contribute to community-building within the Division, through centralised support, events and activities.

Impact Highlights

700+

Enquiries solved via R&I mailbox and IT Service Desk

40+

Reports generated

20+

FOI requests addressed

8

R&I Briefing issues

7+

Systems managed

Evidence and Analysis



In September 2023, the Evidence and Analysis (E&A) team was established in response to the Research for the World strategy launch. The aim is for E&A to deliver continual monitoring and evaluation across the research lifecycle, providing high-quality internal and external evidence to ensure that LSE positions itself at the cutting-edge of R&I activity.

E&A colleagues work closely with the Deputy Director and Director of R&I, and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) to gather intelligence and insights which will support strategic decision-making, as well as designing engagement plans with key R&I stakeholders nationally and internationally.

Over the past year, the E&A team has provided a number of reports and evaluations, including collating LSE input into sector-wide consultations, identifying funding landscape policy signals, generating peer comparisons to inform best practice and investment decisions, and providing evidence to support LSE positioning on emerging trends.

The most significant piece of work to date that the team has delivered has been an extensive review of LSE's internal R&I funding schemes. As a consequence, centrally provided funding has been reorganised and redefined into much simplified and more accessible themes, to ensure better alignment with LSE's strategic R&I plans, clear governance and assessment criteria, and defined outcomes for projects. The revamped schemes were launched at the beginning of September 2024 and will be jointly monitored closely by E&A and R&I colleagues.

The team is sector leader in embedding practice-focused meta-research within an R&I function and hosted the inaugural meeting of a **Community of Practice** (CoP) in R&I Evidence and Analysis in August 2024. Comprising of representatives from UK universities, government and mission groups, the CoP will be further developed by E&A colleagues in 2024/25.

In the coming year, the team will seek to create an evidence bank consisting of a repository of reports, documentation and sector developments available to researchers and research-related colleagues across LSE, so that School leaders can benefit from the latest R&I insights and analysis.

Impact Highlights

19

Projects completed which have informed strategic R&I decision-making

5

Revamped internal funding schemes

1

National Community of Practice in R&I Evidence and Analysis launch

Contracts



The R&I Contracts team was newly established in March 2024 as a separate focal point for all R&I activity within the Division.

The aim was to establish a user-focused, specialist contracting support service for all LSE R&I agreements, so as to provide an improved, consistent and more efficient service, whilst allowing R&ID colleagues to focus their efforts on their own remits, such as financial management and compliance.

Since the launch, the Contracts team has developed and implemented a new risk-based pragmatic approach to R&I contracts approval and execution, exemplified within a toolkit and template mechanism, providing a more efficient and effective process. The team have also developed a suite of precedent completion tools, enhanced agreement tracking capabilities and a shared mailbox.

Over the next year, the team will be further developing their added-value service approach, building on their divisional relationships, tailoring and consolidating a suite of guidance and learning materials for different stakeholders, and enhancing their visibility within LSE's research community. Contracts colleagues will embed the work of research legal professional into the wider R&I ecosystem by working with Principal Investigators, R&I teams and academic managers.

Impact Highlights

400+

Contract requests received

250+

Contracts executed

5+

Precedent completion tools

2

New team members

Impact beyond LSE

The Division recognises the importance of engaging and collaborating with networks, groups and communities outside of LSE – not just to ensure our professional service performance and expectations are at least meeting sector-leading standards, but also that the social sciences are fairly represented where practice and policy need to reflect a diversity beyond standard STEM perspectives.

As such, R&ID members are actively involved in a whole range of initiatives. One example is the **ASPECT Network**, a collective of 35 institutions committed to maximising the value of commercial and business opportunities from social sciences research. Established in 2018 with Research England funding, ASPECT brings those supporting SHAPE commercialisation across member institutions together to share best practice, guidance, case studies and information. It also supports cross-institutional training development.

Between 2018 and 2024, ASPECT was awarded £8.6m in funding. In 2024, it moved from being a grant-supported entity to a self-sustaining membership body, in line with its long held strategic aim. LSE remains the lead institution for ASPECT, ensuring its successful delivery of impact, influence and progress against agreed strategic aims, as well as value for money for members. This year, LSE has also supported the Aspect Research Commercialisation (ARC) Accelerator – the UK’s first dedicated SHAPE innovation accelerator, the refreshed SHAPE Research Exchange (SHARE) network monthly meetings, and the returning reSHAPE conference in partnership with the British Academy, held in November 2024.



ASPECT Network Impact Highlights

£6m

Additional funds leveraged

577

Academics supported to develop commercial skills

500+

Innovations in progress

35%

Growth in commercialisation pipelines across the network

Separately, R&I staff are intimately involved in the two professional bodies that support service functions in the sector, namely the Association of Research and Administrators (ARMA) and Knowledge Exchange UK (representing knowledge exchange practitioners). Whether it be on annual awards panels or as a panel expert on applying for research grants, a Board member representing member interests, part of special interest groups (e.g. REF, contracts, ethics) or indeed, mentoring professionals from other research organisations. Additionally, we are actively part of the Russell Group and London Higher Networks comprising of associated universities and participate in the newly formed London Regional Defence and Security Cluster of businesses, corporates and government funding bodies.

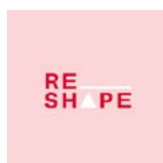
Colleagues are also involved in a number of external activities, sitting on Advisory Boards, co-chairing groups and holding fellowships across a number of platforms, advocating for societal change that is underpinned by the social sciences.

All of these activities allow the Division and LSE to maintain oversight of shared and best practices, approaches, intelligence and collaborations to further enhance our work and ambition, as well as advocate for R&I professionals and equitably represent social sciences to funders and government.

External R&I Division representation

SHAPE commercialisation

Aspect
NETWORK



Mission groups' network

RUSSELL
GROUP

LONDON
HIGHER 

Advisory boards, learned societies and government departments



Higher Education professional bodies



Emerging regional clusters



LSE Research and Innovation Staff

LSE Research and Innovation

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Director of LSE Research and Innovation

Grace McConnell
Deputy Director of LSE Research and Innovation

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Research Awards

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Benjamin Nevius
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Kieran Booluck
Senior Research Impact Manager

Dr Catherine Ulmer
Research Impact Manager

Nick Ansell
Impact Monitoring Manager

Ross Jones
Impact Acceleration Manager

Blue O'Connor
Social Venture Hub Manager

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LJ Silverman
Associate Director of Generate

Kinga Kaczkowska
Executive Officer

Livia Denis
Finance Assistant

Joanna Hamer
Senior Entrepreneurship Programme Manager

Emma Higson
Programme Officer

Alice Edie
Schools and Community Manager

Sian Kincaide
Communications and Events Manager

Laura Ross
Senior International Strategy Manager

Taylor Wong
Senior International Strategy Manager

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Senior Programme Manager

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Nathalie Van Der Elst
Senior Research Culture Manager

Dr Peter Argust
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Dr Lyn Grove
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Myriam Fellous-Sigrist
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Wendy Leung
REF Support Manager

Casimira Headley-Walker
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Dr Chris Daley
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R&I Funds Manager

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