

# CAHSS funds nine innovative COVID-19 knowledge-exchange projects

*The College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (CAHSS) College Research Award has awarded nine COVID19-related projects with grants of up to £100,000. The projects were required to be deliverable in a 2.5 month timeframe. All projects are listed below, with comprehensive summaries of six projects.*

## **Lothian Lockdown: The Lothian Video Diary Project**

*Lauren Hall-Lew, Catherine Lai and Claire Cowie (PPLS); Sarah Liu and Clare Llewellyn (SPS); Beatrice Alex (LLC); Nini Fang (HiSS)*

The founder of *The Lothian Video Diary Project*, Dr Lauren Hall-Lew, is a sociolinguist and member of *Edinburgh Speaks*, a project interested in sociolinguistic variation across the Edinburgh and the Lothians. Her research interest is focused on how pronunciation, speech and language choices change correlating with the ways of living life in the city: whether this is by the typical sociological demographic categories or by more nuanced practices, identities, or other aspects of performativity. *Edinburgh Speaks* has to date operated by gathering focused pockets of data, with student projects collecting data within one neighborhood at a time. A larger sampling of the community has not yet been done.

In the COVID-19 lockdown Dr Hall-Lew recognised the opportunity to promote oral history and explore the methodology of linguistics. "Collecting oral histories is exactly what we should be doing now," she says. Joining forces with Dr Claire Cowie, they grew the team and received both the CAHSS CRO college funding and a knowledge-exchange funding.

This has enabled research and project assistants to come on board to create data processing tools, process data, and engage in dissemination and community outreach. Ironically, funding for the project was confirmed in the last week of lockdown: "The very first day that we started recruiting in earnest was the very first day of Phase 1 of opening up," Dr Hall-Lew smiles at the irony. However, participant recruitment has been improving over the months and it is the team's hope to receive funding for another month and half, to maximise their research outputs.

Thanks to the Knowledge Exchange fund, Dr Hall-Lew has two outputs already in place: 1) a sample of the recordings, which the participants have given permission to be distributed publicly, will be sent to the oral history collections of Museums and Galleries Edinburgh, for a long-term repository and possibly future exhibitions; 2) the COVID-19 committee of the Scottish Parliament will receive a report of the findings in spring/summer 2021.

In this time of employment and financial insecurity, Dr Hall-Lew's team aims to give back to the communities they are sampling from: money from the college research funds and from individual researchers' own funds is currently going towards participant payment. "Every participant who contributes gets paid in by direct bank transfer." Dr Hall-Lew explains, "They can also choose to make a contribution to a local charity or they can ask for a voucher for groceries."

*The Lothian Video Diary Project* is currently seeking video contributions until the end of July 2020 and welcomes all contributions inclusive of a diversity of language, gender, background, etc. The project's remit is to showcase that Edinburgh and the Lothians are not only multicultural but also multilingual, and to represent these voices the best they can. Videos in Gaelic can already be found on the website, and the team hopes to encourage recent immigrants and refugees to contribute in their native languages. All contributions can be

either audio-only, or video, and your anonymity is ensured (unless you'd rather it not be). Any contributor of any age is welcome.

*Find out more: <https://lothianlockdown.org/>*

*Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LothianLockdown>*

*Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lothiandiaryproject>*

## **Covid-19 and Young People: Perceptions around messaging and experiences of young people in Scotland aged 11-25 years old**

*Ruth Jepson (SCPHRP), Jillian Manner (SCPHRP), Divya Sivaramakrishnan (SCPHRP), Kathleen Morrison (SCPHRP) Audrey Buelo (HiSS), Tom Hughes (intern), Sorna Paramananthan (intern) & Marike Andreas (intern)*

### **Overview**

During the COVID-19 outbreak in the UK, there have been concerns that young people have shown greater reluctance towards following the government guidance associated with hand washing, social distancing and self-isolation.

This research project aimed to explore whether messaging related to the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced young peoples' beliefs and perceptions surrounding the transmission of the virus and prevention measures. The objectives explored:

1. How young people understand and respond to the coronavirus outbreak and restrictions such as social distancing and self-isolation
2. Whether and how messaging related to the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced young people's beliefs and perceptions surrounding the transmission of the virus and prevention measures.

## Why is this research important?

Public behaviour plays a huge role in virus transmission, and the current coronavirus outbreak has seen countries across the globe respond with key messaging to protect the safety and wellbeing of members of the public.

Much of the key messaging around COVID-19 in the UK has featured risk communication and perception of risk. Young people may perceive risk differently than others which can have implications for compliance with advice within these messages. It is therefore important to understand how young people perceive messaging in the context of a public health emergency and how this can be tailored and designed to best communicate important information to this group so that they are better informed, more able to protect themselves and others and more compliant with advised measures.

This study is part of a wider collaborative effort with the University of Southampton, which shows that young people may have different understandings and perceptions of the current coronavirus pandemic compared with other age groups meaning that they may need to have different messaging and communication designed and delivered to them. To better understand this issue in a Scottish context, five online focus groups were conducted with young people aged between 11-25 years old in March and April 2020.

Findings will provide insight into young people's perception of government measures and advice, messaging and communication related to the COVID-19 pandemic alongside information on their mental and physical health, perceptions of the situation, their communities and social connections. The pandemic, and the messaging and advice associated with it has had a profound impact on the day to day lives of this population, and in differing ways to that of the rest of the public. It is important for individuals and organisations to consider this when developing and disseminate messaging and

advice around this and other public health events.

*Follow the team on Twitter: @scphrp*

## **Going Viral: The changing role of digital performance during COVID-19**

*Performance Research Network (Edinburgh College of Arts)*

The Performance Research Network is a recently established cohort of staff from across CAHSS, including ECA, The School of Health and Social Science, Languages, Literature & Culture and the University Collections, as well as Science, Technology and Innovation Studies, with a shared broad collective interest and expertise in Performance. The group's interdisciplinary bridge building includes colleagues working on performance technologies and technical practitioners in performing arts within Science, Technology and Innovation Studies, covering an abundance of expertise in creative, social and political studies of information and communication technologies.

*Going viral – the changing role of digital performance during COVID-19* will be the first project initiative of the Performance Research Network and will enable the cohort to take their research synergies into actuality.

The Network proposes to conduct a scoping study to collate qualitative and quantitative data about the role of performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study will attempt to capture a snapshot of who is getting to see digital performance, what are they watching and what are they making at this extraordinary time. How will the ways that we are making and watching performance now, affect our access to culture in the longer term, unknown future ahead? What new precedents are being set?

The study will involve hiring an RA to gather data on digital

platforms being used for performance, analytics, performance genres (user generated content, comedy, dance, theatre, performance art, music) and funding sources. For example the 'One World: Together at Home' eight hour concert organised by the World Health Organisation, was funded by large-scale corporations including pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline. The significant investment the National Theatre had already put into its NT Live programme is enabling the company to replicate their programme online. Some performances are being broadcast as 'events', scheduled for specific times, in an attempt to create a collective audience experience, in some way bringing aspects of the shared, collective nature of live events. On the more grassroots level, social media platforms such as TikTok enable everyone to be a performer. From quickly captured, spontaneous moments, to the much rehearsed versions of the Blinding Lights and Stair Shuffle dance, social media is proving to be perhaps the most egalitarian of performance platforms. This scoping study will attempt to capture information about which audiences are accessing content, how democratic the digitisation of these materials is, and whether the same hierarchical structures are merely transferred, with the same dominances i.e. do the same people who go to the theatre watch digital theatre?

## **Grandparenting, Consumption Practices and the Circulation of Care within Socially Distancing Families**

*Stephanie O'Donohoe (Business School)*

This pilot study aims to identify ways of mitigating the social impact of the Covid-19 crisis on family life, particularly for grandparents whose face-to-face contact with grandchildren has been disrupted for an extended but uncertain period of time. It seeks to explore Scottish consumption-related grandparenting practices and relationships in an era of social distancing, in order to identify practices that may

foster intergenerational resilience and wellbeing, Specifically, this qualitative study aims to explore:

- How grandparenting practices, especially those involving consumption, have changed in response to the Coronavirus crisis
- To what extent these changes are understood as helping or hindering intergenerational wellbeing and family relationships
- How their experiences during the Coronavirus crisis are shaping their hopes and plans for intergenerational family life after the crisis

The study will involve 12 in-depth semi-structured online interviews with grandparents, exploring the circulation of care across three generations of families when established patterns of face-to-face contact and usual consumption practices are disrupted. Interviews will explore their pre-crisis patterns and experiences of interaction, especially in relation to grandchildren, and consumption practices associated with these, such as personal communication technology; sharing, preparing and providing food; leisure time spent together; and gift-giving. Grandparents will be asked about the big and little ways that care typically circulates between the generations, and how social distancing has affected these. In particular we seek to explore what has surprised them; what they miss most and least; what practices if any have been invented or reinvented; and their hopes and plan for family life post-crisis.

## **Analysis of the Responses of Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) in the Global South to the COVID-19 Crisis**

*Kathryn Nash (Edinburgh Law School)*

Dr Nash's ongoing work investigates the role of Global South

intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) in peace and security. She has found that regional and sub-regional organisations in particular are often playing increasingly robust roles in responding to crises that have global ramifications. In the face of a pandemic, regional and sub-regional organisations have the capacity to play vital roles in coordinating and supporting responses in their regions through pooling resources and using their convening power. It is therefore vital to understand how organisations are responding and how responses to the current crisis may impact coordination going forward and responses to future challenges. An analysis of these findings will be targeted at policymakers initially and will be applicable to navigating ongoing responses to COVID-19 and shifting global governance trends as we move beyond this crisis.

Dr Nash's project will focus on IGOs below the international level in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. This project will collect electronic copies of responses by IGOs, including press releases, joint statements, declarations, resolutions, and other similar documents to track organisational responses and produce original research. Dr Nash's team for this project includes Hannah den Boer and Monalisa Adhikari.

## **Outcomes**

The primary outcome will be knowledge of how Global South IGOs have responded to COVID-19 that can be applied to ongoing response efforts and future challenges. The pandemic will have profound impacts on global governance. For example, in Asia, responses by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) have fostered possibilities for future coordination but have also underscored existing tensions between states in these regions that could be further exacerbated. Whereas in Africa, the

African Union (AU) and Africa Centres for Disease Control and

Prevention (Africa CDC) have been praised for robust responses to address not only the health crisis but COVID-19's broader ramifications in the wake of criticism of international response efforts. This may impact how African organisations are able to respond to other crises that transcend borders on both regional and international stages.

## **Outputs**

The project will produce research on the responses of organisations in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Initially, this will include blogs targeted at policy audiences that set out IGO responses and provide analysis on the wider ramifications of these response efforts. A second output will be two academic articles and a policy briefing on responses by IGOs in Africa and Asia. Furthermore, Dr. Nash is engaging policymakers through multiple forums including podcasts, webinars, and virtual roundtables to disseminate findings and feed into policy discussions on global governance in the post-pandemic world.

## **Impact of the UK's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ("CJRS") on UK employment law**

*David Cabrelli (Edinburgh Law School)*

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK government introduced a job retention scheme, i.e., the 'furlough' scheme for workers across the UK. This idea was introduced by the government as an incentive for businesses to put their staff on furlough rather than make them redundant. The remit of Professor David Cabrelli's project is to examine how the legal system will analyse furlough in regards to common law employment rights. These common law rights can be contrasted with statutory employment rights. Statutory rights are passed by Parliament and written into legislation, and concern e.g., maternity/paternity leave, sick leave, annual leave, holidays

and holiday pay, etc. Common law rights, on the other hand, exist because the judiciary has recognised these rights in the courts, many over long periods of time. While the current government legislation on the job retention scheme explains how the concept of furlough interacts with statutory rights, it does not specify what the impact of furlough is on common law employment rights.

Professor Cabrelli's project is thus examining the common law rights that protect employees and workers during furlough from 'bad behaviour' by the employer, e.g., if the employee is harassed to do more work than they normally do; if the employer fails to tolerate childcare or other care obligations of the employee; or if employees are threatened into returning to work earlier than the lockdown is lifted, etc. To gather this data, Cabrelli conducted traditional legal research methods of analysing decisions by judges and identifying gaps in the legal cases, seeking to answer four questions:

1. If an individual is not an employee, i.e., if the individual is a gig-economy or a zero-hours contract worker, is he/she eligible for furlough? While the answer may be yes, this is likely to apply to only 10-20% of gig economy, zero-hours and other casual workers due to the rules in the job retention scheme.
2. What common law rights do employees have? This requires looking at common law contractual terms that give rights to workers and is where 'policing' bad behaviour on the part of employers comes in.
3. Are these rights available to workers as well as employees? Having undertaken doctrinal research of the existing case law, Professor Cabrelli noted that there is no clear answer to this question, but that the likelihood is that workers would be entitled to the benefit of these common law rights.
4. Is there any way in which these rights are modified by the fact that the furloughed worker is not actually

working? The answer is yes, and Professor Cabrelli's project discusses the ways in which these rights are diluted and what this may mean.

Professor Cabrelli is now expanding onto the next stages of the project: first, while workers are on furlough, they may not want to 'rock the boat' and create legal disputes based on the above questions. However, once workers are made redundant, which may come with the easing of lockdown, Professor Cabrelli predicts a tsunami of legal disputes. Secondly, some employers may discover, as the furlough scheme ends, that the workers they put on furlough were not in fact eligible for it under the rules of the CJRS, meaning the employer will therefore not be reimbursed by the government. In such circumstances, Professor Cabrelli identified two options available to the employer: 1) To make the employees redundant. The problem with this option is that they will not recover any wages they paid to the employees by mistake; 2) They may 'frustrate' the employment/worker contract, meaning that the contract would be seen as having terminated when the individual was first put on furlough. Employers still won't receive government reimbursement, but they may try to recover this money from the employee. Whether this would work legally or not is the upcoming research focus of Professor Cabrelli's project.

*To find out more about the project, see:*  
<https://uklabourlawblog.com/2020/06/08/furlough-and-common-law-rights-and-remedies-by-david-cabrelli-and-jessica-dalton/> and  
<https://www.law.ed.ac.uk/research/covid-19>

*Follow David: @CabrelliDavid*

**Exploring family members of Intensive Care and end of life patients experiences of using a family authored diary.**

Dr Sheila Rogers (School of Health in Social Science)

There is an urgent need to understand how best to support family members (FM) of people in hospital or care settings where visiting is not allowed, with only exceptional very limited visiting by one family member at the end of life, due to the high infection risk with COVID-19. Some patients communicate with their families using mobile devices however, those in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) or receiving End of Life care (EoL) are unable to do so. Apart from a phone call with staff, there are no other means of providing support for FM or for FM to record communications for the patient.

We propose a small qualitative study to: **Explore FM (of ICU and EoL patients) experiences of using a family authored diary** at home to support their communication and emotional needs. The diary will be co-ordinated by a nominated FM and could be paper copy or electronic according to family wishes. FM will be encouraged to record events to help them keep track of what has happened, 'day to day' information (may include updates from hospital staff), what has been happening at home, thoughts and feelings, messages from other friends and family such as letters, cards, and drawings.

An understanding of how families experience the diary can inform whether this is likely to be a useful intervention, identify who might benefit most, use of paper versus electronic diaries, understand any potential risks and form the basis for a larger evaluation study. There is a high level of commitment in NHS Lothian (NHSL) who are keen to find ways to support family members and implement both healthcare staff (HCS) authored and family authored diaries. This project is a collaboration between NHSL and University of Edinburgh which builds on the Clinical Academic Research Careers Scheme (CARC) that initiated a research partnership between Nursing in NHSL and Nursing Studies in the School of Health in Social Science.

The research team has wide and varied expertise in diary interventions, critical care, end of life care, family interventions, psychological trauma, mental health and

wellbeing and counselling support putting us in a unique position to conduct this study. This exploratory study would provide a foundation from which larger intervention development and testing studies will be developed across wider population groups. There is also the possibility of developing an application which could enable the family authored diary to be part of a secure diary system for both staff and family to contribute to.

**Further projects include:**

“Mapping Unhealthy Commodity Industries Responses to COVID-19: Examples of Industry Conduct”, Rob Ralston, Sarah Hill, Jeff Collin (HiSS)

“(Un)Employment Policies under the asymmetric COVID shock”, Sevi Rodriguez-Mora and Ludo Visschers (School of Economics)