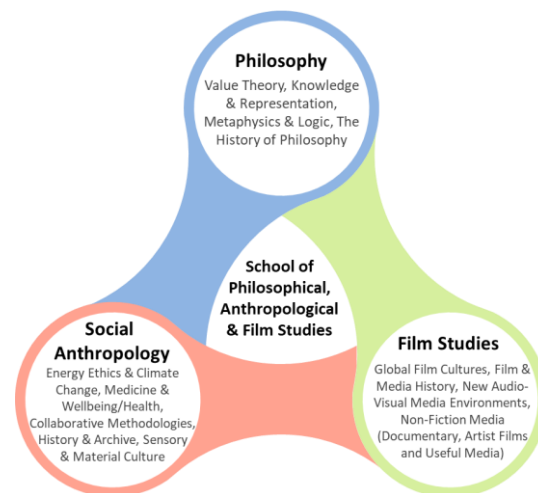


School of Philosophical, Anthropological & Film Studies Strategic Plan 2020/21 – 2025/26

The School and our Departments

Located at the heart of St Andrews, our School is home to the internationally recognised departments of Philosophy, Social Anthropology and Film Studies. Each department has their own history and identity, and since the School came together as an academic unit in 1992, it has prospered through promoting interdisciplinary collaboration across its research and teaching while encouraging individuality. We are a fully integrated School with a professional services team providing administrative leadership across the departments which have co-responsibility for equality and diversity, wellbeing and the development of School-wide policy. This is overseen by the Head of School, School Management Committee and School Council. We energise and empower our departments by working together, alongside the University to secure investment for our aims and aspirations. Each of our departments is individually world-leading and distinctive, reflected in national league tables where we are consistently ranked in the top five across the board including the National Student Survey.



Our Aspiration

As we move through the next five years, we will build on the unique and excellent character of the School and progress our interdisciplinary, flexible and collegial environment to be one of the most diverse, welcoming and successful at St Andrews. We will search for the most creative and talented students, researchers and staff from all backgrounds to **enrich** our community: **enhance** our international reputation for research and research-led teaching, **strengthen** our commitments to building an inclusive community of equals and **improve** diversity while being innovative, responsible and the best in all that we do.

World-Leading Research Environment: Celebrating Individuality, Interdisciplinarity and Inclusivity

Our collective research strengths are in connecting to the world as it is represented and experienced by humanity. We advance understanding of philosophical concepts both universally and in anthropological contexts and as they relate to real-world problems that cut across continents, times, and ethnic groups, especially in the Global South where we work in Latin America, the Caribbean, West Africa, the Pacific and Central and Southeast and East Asia. This is supported by our approach to screen cultures which will deepen our understanding of how media shapes the world around us and could change in the future. Some of our current research highlights include:

- The [Centre for Energy Ethics](#), which examines how to balance global energy demands with concerns for anthropogenic climate change.
- [Logic of Conceivability](#), an ERC project that is leading to a paradigm shift in our understanding of the logic of human imagination.
- [The Global War Against the Rat](#), a Wellcome Trust project that explores synergies between knowledge acquired through medical studies of the rat with knowledge of public health measures of vector-control.

We are differentiated from our peers by integrating our departments, and our research centres, to build on scholarly areas of excellence and expertise. We house core interests in ethics, logic, climate change, human rights, histories of thought, gender studies, media and digital practice and are leaders of interdisciplinary research and teaching in 21st century life. These intellectual connections fortify our research culture by identifying opportunities for diversifying and increasing funding. The [St Andrews Institute for Gender Studies \(StAIGS\)](#), for example, originated in Philosophy, and is now an interdisciplinary School venture connected to a Masters in Gender Studies. These efforts bring the School together, and connect us to the university, students, town, and our global partners. The recently launched Centre for Energy Ethics leads large interdisciplinary grant applications across the arts and sciences, attracts significant donations, and provides expertise to support the University achieve a carbon-zero future and develop energy related initiatives at Eden Campus. This supports us in exploring opportunities for innovation across the University's strategic priorities of world-leading, digital, entrepreneurial, and diverse St Andrews, as well as environmental sustainability, leveraging our scholarly partnerships and our global position.

Philosophy in 2021

[Philosophy](#) has been taught at St Andrews for centuries and is internationally recognised for cutting-edge research in value theory, knowledge and representation, metaphysics and logic, and the history of philosophy. World-leading research centres cultivate and bring together proactive global communities of researchers ([Centre for Ethics, Philosophy and Public Affairs \(CEPPA\)](#) / [Arché Philosophical Research Centre for the Philosophy of Logic, Language, Metaphysics and Epistemology](#)). We also house the [Philosophical Quarterly](#), (an international philosophical journal) and one of the UKs leading PG programmes, the [St Andrews and Stirling Graduate Programme in Philosophy](#). Our

excellence in research and teaching is reflected in international and national rankings (8th in QS University rankings; 3rd UK PG programme by The Philosophical Gourmet Report; 1st in Scotland/5th in the UK for REF2014).

Our research centres attract significant grant funding (e.g. ERC, Leverhulme Trust, British Academy, Mind, and Centre for Effective Altruism), host internationally renowned philosophers who partake in vibrant seminar series, workshops and conferences and offer an unparalleled training programme for our PGR students. We have a thriving and popular Masters programme and a Conversion Diploma, allowing students with an undergraduate degree in wider subjects to become intellectually equipped for philosophy graduate studies. We work alongside 70 PGR and 40 PGT students, housing one of the largest philosophy graduate courses in the world, priding ourselves in supporting student career aspirations through a placement programme which supports our students in securing academic, governmental and leadership positions on graduation.

Social Anthropology in 2021

[Social Anthropology](#) at St Andrews is celebrated for its innovation in new and emerging research fields such as energy ethics, medicine and wellbeing, ethnographic methodology and sensory cultures alongside a diverse research-led teaching programme. We are regularly ranked first in NSS and top five in key national surveys (e.g. The Times). In the REF 2021 cycle we won close to £5.0M in research funding (e.g. ERC, Wellcome, British Academy and Leverhulme), quintupling the figure for the previous REF cycle.

We lead internationally recognised research projects [Energy Ethics](#) (ERC €1.5M); [Global War Against the Rat](#) (Wellcome £991K); [Rodent Control](#) (MRC/UKRI £363K of £1.8M alongside Aberdeen); and [Ethnographic Horizons](#) (Balzan Foundation £300K). Hosting these and related projects (e.g. European Consortium for Pacific Studies, EU FP7 €350K; and 'Past Lessons for Future Challenges in the Brazilian Amazon', Leverhulme £170K) has brought focus and shape to shared thematic priorities across the department's research interests in anthropology and science studies in medical anthropology and the environment, and studies of ethnographic innovation and collaborative methodologies. The department also fosters exciting and significant research streams in history and archive and sensory and material culture. Cutting across all these interests are special attention to histories and cultures of social inequality and migration and knowing and skills. We take pride in nurturing our vibrant research community with its multiple strands of lively collaboration between individuals, research clusters and centres and their international partners, many of which are in the Global South.

Film Studies in 2021

[Film Studies](#) is a leader in global screen cultures with a highly rated reputation in global film. In recent years the department has focused on refining its identity, developing the Institute for Global and Creative Cultures and re-branding its core research centre as the [Centre for Screen Cultures](#). The 2021 REF submission highlights our identity and separates us from our peers through our developing research clusters in global film cultures, film and media history and historiography, new audio-visual media environments and nonfiction media: documentary, artist films and useful media. Research strengths elevate and guide our teaching to engage our students. Our research into cinematic histories, documentary film and sensory cinema also fosters global recognition in the field and forms of impact in film festival cultures, that beyond the REF, are among the values of social responsibility shared by the department, our students and the University.

[Achieving our Ambitions Across the School: moving to 2025/26](#)

[Research & Impact](#)

Through our coordinated and directed approach we will prioritise the strategic significance of large grant applications, which will nurture working in teams and the careers of early career scholars while strengthening international networks. We will devote special attention to making our work relevant and impactful to our collaborators and policy makers beyond the academy while positively informing the education, artistic and welfare arenas of public life, thereby promoting our values of building a sustainable and fair future for all. We will progress our world-leading research excellence across our departments through maintaining and improving our UK and international rankings, attracting world-class researchers, targeting operational funding, demonstrating real-life impact and developing new income generating streams to support research activities. These efforts will be underpinned by ongoing assessment of research priorities, refocusing where necessary. To support this, we will

- Enhance departmental and School support for research leave opportunities, maintain access to impact funds, recognise impact activity and large grant applications in workload models.
- Invest strategically in research centre collaborations to enhance the work of interdisciplinarity in the three departments, alongside hosting an annual programme of focused events on research and impact to further grow interdisciplinary connections.
- Build on best practice to develop measures to support career progression from PGR to ECR status and beyond.

Philosophy through to 2025/26

We are committed to maximise the visibility and impact of our research, building on past activities such as the diverse role of philosophy in education and trust, and branching out into new areas following recent academic appointments. We will exploit and demonstrate varied links between philosophy and other disciplines, such as our work on trust and expertise with Philosophy/Management, on animal/infant minds with Philosophy/Psychology, and on intellectual history with Philosophy/History. Our researchers in Arché and CEPPA will connect with internationally important issues in the post-COVID world including group responsibility, human rights, equality, gender, and environmental ethics. To support this, we will:

- Develop our focus on our key subject areas for which we are celebrated, and use new academic appointments to strengthen our areas of excellence while investing in research centres to fund invited talks, global online events, and workshops/conferences to publicise and connect our research internationally while seeking opportunities for collaborative research activities.
- Increase and diversify grant applications and impact activity through targeted and dedicated support by senior staff. This will involve special attention to research team enhancement, the care of early career scholars and regular grant writing workshops.
- Re-energise our research in logic. Recent recruitment to the Shelby Cullom Davis Professor of Philosophy presents the opportunity to apply for large-scale international grants to consolidate networks of global partners, and to draw in interdisciplinary colleagues in the sciences and arts subjects on reasoning, language and cognitive models, hypothetical thinking, building on existing links with our professorial fellows, the University of Amsterdam's Institute for Logic, Language and Computation (ILLC) and the University of Notre Dame.
- Formalise and develop a collective platform of research in the history of philosophy. Recent recruitment allows for the strengthening of historical approaches in philosophy from ancient to modern times, and will lead to interdisciplinary connections in history, literature, classics and divinity.

Social Anthropology through to 2025/6

We will continue to build new knowledge terrains bridging academia and the communities we work with around the world. We will develop our foci on energy and climate change, science and knowledge, disease, and recyclable materials. In expanding our vision, we will establish new ethnographic methodologies and theories for a world in rapid change. We will host projects funded by The Wellcome Trust and MRC/UKRI, focusing on zoonosis from historical and ethnographic perspectives with zoologists and biologists (alongside the Pasteur Institute, Madagascar). Through the Balzan project we will connect senior and early career scholars in Brazil, Papua New Guinea and the UK. These steps will allow us to continue to focus our growth through timely and effective working with interdisciplinary teams across the arts and sciences, in situations where sensitivity to complex local social and cultural knowledge is vital and critical to the future of anthropology.

As a department, we will nurture equally small and large projects in the knowledge that scales of endeavour change and that we need a fluid teaching and research environment to allow for this. Acting as stable platforms that encourage researcher innovation, our Centres will continue to build and exchange resources, increasingly in the virtual realm. For example, the Centre for Amerindian, Latin American and Caribbean Studies held a well-attended year long series of seminars on race and racism in Latin America in 2020/21. Researchers, working alongside Schools such as Modern Languages, History, Art History, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Chemistry and Medicine will further enhance the department's interdisciplinary reach, developing and implementing new collaborative projects. By enhancing their virtual dimension, centres will ensure that specialist resources become readily available, including archives, working papers or other offerings; new initiatives will be foregrounded and discussed in supportively programmed and curated virtual environments. To support this, we will:

- Focus future appointments on new regional and theoretical perspectives while re-enforcing our current research capacity and supporting academic priorities for teaching, field research and impact.
- Enhance our strategy for supporting research centres, ensuring these are stable, focused platforms with international reach through targeted funding for workshops, conferences and global speaker events, allowing the fluid and creative work of research clusters to be effectively showcased and new relationships created.
- Support the interdisciplinary nature of our centres, bringing together the humanities and sciences (as modelled by the Centre for Energy Ethics) to offer internationally unique resources and CPD courses while developing potential for capturing funds to support the growth of outreach activities, research and impact.
- Pioneer and be world leaders in zoonotic studies with large grant applications bringing together international teams of researchers to understand the social, cultural, political and medical dimensions of zoonosis.
- Foster partnerships with research institutions in the Global South, e.g. University of West Indies, and Fiocruz in Brazil, leading to new research agendas and teaching collaborations and staff exchanges.

Film Studies through to 2025/6

Collegiality will remain at the core of our research, teaching and impact and we will focus on developing partnerships, alliances, and strategic collaboration. Building on our reputation as a leader in global film, the department will develop its profile as a world leader in global screen cultures, opening explorations into the many screens that shape our world: cinema, television, internet, video games and virtual reality. This will place us in the vanguard of the field where 'film' or 'film and television' remain the operative ways of defining work and units. This pivot emphasises the interest not only in onscreen aesthetics and meaning making, but also the offscreen practices (social, political, industrial) that inform and shape both the worlds on screen and the world we share. This relates to a strategic goal of cultural understanding, broadening and complicating the definitions of culture as it centres the role of media in producing and being a part of our world. To support this, we will:

- Through recent senior appointments re-prioritise research and impact foci, capitalising on new vigour to ensure successful grant applications in new media histories, realising the potential of our strengths in screen cultures.
- Build research clusters, amplifying interests that complement or bridge areas of focus with scholars across the School with expertise in the Global South, offering expertise in useful media and media archaeology.
- Contribute to StAIGS with work on gender, the Centre for Energy Ethics with research on environmental activism and ecocultures and the Centre for Minorities Research with class and power.
- Strengthen partnerships with film institutions, including participation in the Edinburgh International Film Festival and with local enterprises, such as the St Andrews Photography Festival.
- In collaboration with Development, Public Engagement, Social Responsibility and the Byre Theatre launch the St Andrews Film Festival in 2022 that will celebrate the transformative power of film and media culture in Fife. It will bring cinema back to St Andrews through creating a platform for self-expression and education through international film, contributing significantly to teaching, research and impact.
- Develop a Media Lab in partnership with Schools across St Andrews, using technologies to support and develop research, teaching, interdisciplinary projects and outreach activities in the local community and with industry.

Building upon our Excellence in Teaching

As a School we will develop and enhance our global reputation in teaching through attracting and supporting the very best students and staff, celebrating critical thinking, developing interdisciplinary postgraduate programmes and encouraging our students to be innovative and creative in all that they do. To achieve this, we will:

- Focus on small group teaching supported by the University through the expansion in staffing resource to maintain and improve our student-staff ratios.
- Develop and share innovative and creative pedagogies, leading the integration of the most valued aspects of technology enhanced learning across our curricula.
- Expand module offerings in contemporary, in-demand areas such as social philosophy, non-Western philosophy, continental philosophy, and other underrepresented topics in philosophy and its history.
- Further develop our co-tutelle PhD arrangements that include the Universities of Amsterdam, Bonn, Oslo and Macquarie through utilising the University's Handsel PG funding scheme and dedicated scholarship funding.
- Develop our connections across the University through Vertically Integrated Projects and unique ancient philosophy links with the School of Classics.
- Further solidify our unique Conversion Diploma in Philosophy, working alongside the University's digital communications team and global office to enhance its visibility and attracting a diverse student cohort.
- Prioritise investment in virtual formats to retain and enhance the important discipline-specific qualities of our teaching and knowledge-generation, building effectively on successful interdisciplinary collaborations and our sustainability aspirations.
- Offer interdisciplinary programmes of unrivalled flexibility in emerging areas, including online collaboratively taught modules and entire new pathways (e.g. the new MLitt in Energy Ethics with the Graduate School, an MLitt module in Caribbean Cultures and Heritage jointly taught with the University of West Indies and a Continuing Professional Development course run by the Centre for Minorities Research).
- Obtain funding opportunities to maintain and enhance healthy cohorts of PGR students across our departments, working in areas that dovetail with our research expertise.
- Through the development of the Film Festival, offer Film Studies PGR students a site for research and public engagement and the cultivation of transferable skills, aiding in future job placement.
- Develop vibrant PGT and PGR communities which offer pathways into industry, supporting income generation and providing a foundation to our impact and research aspirations. Growing our MLitt and IMACS programmes through targeted scholarships, international advertising and the integration of teaching into developing areas such as the St Andrews Film Festival.

People, Social Responsibility and Sustainability

The School will focus on providing a supportive and innovative community for enhancing already excellent teaching and research across our departments. We will galvanise individuals, centres, and collaborators to engage in and lead globally recognised teaching and research priorities, further enhancing our international profile through contributing to Scottish, UK and global problem solving that address major problems of our time such as climate change and social justice.

Entrepreneurial and Internationalisation Aspirations

We will stimulate interdisciplinarity across departments and research centres by enhancing our focus on active collaborations in research, teaching and industry into worldwide issues such as gender studies, pandemic response, epidemiology, energy and climate change, effective altruism, work and income, global justice, ethical dilemmas such as consent, and media practice. We will embrace our online international research networks, ensuring an expanding global audience for our research and teaching with hybrid seminars and conferences, strengthening relationships in the Global South. We will collaborate with our partners outside the academy, for example developing links with the film industry through delivering professional workshops and via Eden Campus by working with companies such as Scottish Power and Transport Scotland on new energy initiatives and transitions.

Wellbeing and Careers

We will nurture and support the growth of all careers, developing future leaders in each of our disciplines and professional services through a supportive and proactive environment and focused mentoring by senior colleagues. We will promote fair workloads for all which allow staff to utilise regular research leave and designated time for professional development, ensuring we are working alongside the University in reducing casualisation and improving terms and conditions for our flexible workforce. We will develop student and staff indicators of wellbeing and health, embedding and contributing to University indicators and policies on increased accessibility and reasonable adjustments to ensure our community is brought together through events and focused support.

Professional Services and Academic Role Holders

We will clearly define our administrative structures and governance at the School and departmental levels, encouraging an open and transparent culture where we transfer administrative tasks to our professional services staff, empowering them and academic role holders to take leadership across our teaching and research activities.

Social Responsibility and Widening Access

In addition to our international activities, we will engage with our local community in a responsible manner in St Andrews and beyond, having impact through, for example, developing international film festivals, philosophical teaching in schools and debating the ethics of energy usage. We will support education streams that meet the needs of the modern workforce and lifelong education, widening student access through contributing to the University's Combined Studies MA, Gateway programmes, First Chances Fife, Access for Rural Communities programme and First Steps programme (Fife).

EDI

We will provide designated staffing and financial support for our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee in the implementation of activities and processes identified within the Athena Swan Action Plan, building on priorities to apply for an Athena Swan Silver award in 2025. We will proactively develop a unified, diverse, equal and inclusive environment with special emphasis on ensuring we attract and support students, and recruit and retain staff, of all underrepresented groups across our departments through targeted advertising and PhD scholarships.

Sustainability

We will work alongside Estates, student environment reps, and the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) to gather data about energy use and carbon emissions produced by School activities, to be used as a baseline to work toward net zero emissions.

Our Collective Future

Our community continues to evolve with our research networks that intensify the internal connections in the School and its fulfilment of the University's strategic priorities. Moving forward, we will amplify key strengths, refine and refocus our direction and support our staff to realise their collective and individual potential through collaboration and collegiality. As we enter a post-pandemic world, many of our world-leading research projects will remain at our core. However, a key route for strengthening the School's identity and re-shaping our respective disciplines will also be cooperative ventures between research centres which, with investment and directed attention, will take advantage of new funding opportunities made available by interdisciplinary teamwork in the School. Such undertakings will develop and bring together academics across our departments and St Andrews to have impact. Our expertise across the spectrum of our activities from the theoretical to the applied will inform, advance and be fully integrated within our teaching, outreach and societal impact at all levels, as we aspire to influence the academy, tomorrow's leaders and the world around us to being fairer, more equal and more inclusive.