

Report on the Manchester delegation to visit to Melbourne University (April 2018)

Introduction and Context:

Professor Ana Carden Coyne, Director of External Relations, SALC and Jared Ruff, Head of Research visited Melbourne University from 9 - 15 April. See Appendix 1 for visit schedule.

In 2015 the Manchester-Melbourne Humanities Consortium was forged with 3 schools (SOLL; SC; SHAPS) in the equivalent Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne. This initiative relied on a funding model independent of the wider University Melbourne-Manchester mobility fund, which few researchers in Humanities had attained. The funding model involved equal funds shared between SALC /HSIF from Manchester and discretionary Heads of School funds (Melbourne). Outside of SALC, there are also less formalised research links in SEED and SOSS.

Both institutions have engaged in low-level bi-lateral discussions concerning developing a more comprehensive, less elaborate and more manageable scheme, which would also be more wide-reaching into the social sciences, law and other discipline areas. Beyond research projects, it has been agreed that the strategic relationship would be particularly enhanced through PhD exchange opportunities and collaboration on major research thematic initiatives. The results of this visit now provide a more substantive platform to take these proposals forward in a more meaningful way.

Having developed a positive response at Melbourne on all fronts, the key issue now will be maintaining forward momentum and developing a sustainable funding model that widens the scope in the respective faculties of Humanities (Manchester) and Arts (Melbourne, which includes social sciences).

Purpose:

The visit was intended to consider and explore the following:

- Extend the SALC based links via the recent Creative Manchester initiative (particularly through the Institute for Cultural Practices, Centre for New Writing etc.) which links directly to the cultural institutions we visited at Melbourne, including the Victoria College of the Arts, all of which map directly onto Manchester's internationally recognised work in Music, Drama and Film Studies extending to the Social Sciences, such in Sociology, Political Science, Geography, Anthropology and Development Studies, as well as Law (such as the new Centre for Statelessness). Professor Uma Kothari (GDI) is currently based in the Department of Geography at Melbourne as a 'Chancellor Fellowship' and provided useful advice and attended meetings with us during the visit. Her presence at Melbourne will be useful in potentially engaging in the new research project around the broad theme of 'Statelessness' (see below)
- Discuss how receptive Melbourne might be to widening this collaboration into the social sciences. Note, while the academic profile between Manchester and Melbourne is very similar the social science disciplines at Melbourne are located within the Faculty of Arts, with the exception of Geography which is now located in the Faculty of Science.
- In particular we sought to explore the potential for developing exchange opportunities in both directions for PhD students and for MA students in regard to ICP (museum studies, art gallery management, cultural policy etc.).
- Explore existing and/or future merging research themes that would be of relevance to Manchester researchers.

We discovered that there is a widespread interest and support at Melbourne in all these areas, and a desire to create a dedicated funding stream that was more comprehensive, manageable and fostered cross-disciplinary research in addition to projects aligned by the equivalent Schools.

Outcomes and Key issues emerging - Headlines

There is widespread enthusiasm and support to further embed and extend the existing relationship with particular emphasis in:

- The Victorian College of Arts (part of Melbourne University) has particular interest in expanding the current synergies with SALC through Music, Theatre, Writing and practice-based arts, as well as through digital media, film and TV and also via their 'Conservatorium of Music, which is Australia's oldest and most prestigious music institution. The VCA is part of the UniMelb but is its own entity. Its Director, Jon Cattapan, was enthusiastic and is currently in Manchester and will be meeting colleagues in SALC (Music, Drama, Film Studies). Forging PGR exchanges would directly benefit our students because of their state of the art studio facilities, which Manchester does not have by comparison as we are not an arts or media production school as such. Given the idea of apprenticeships and the cultural focus of the new Industrial strategy, it may well be beneficial to have some staff learning from VCA's approach to teaching and training.
- A new Centre of excellence has been sponsored by Melbourne that brings together the practice-based VCA with the Art History dept in the School of Culture and Communication, and will work very closely with the new bespoke privately funded collection and site of the Buxton Gallery (Director: Ryan Johnson). This Centre would be of benefit to Manchester in terms of Art History, and ICP – museum studies, art gallery management etc., and also various Centres in SALC that deal with migration/war/humanitarianism through the visual arts (Centre for the Cultural History of War, for instance, has an ARC grant with some of its members). This will provide further opportunities emerging from the recent Creative Manchester award, which provides significant investment for the Institute for Cultural Practices (SALC), Centre for New Writing (CNW) and JRR1 (SALC as lead school). Any practice-based activities could be linked with VCA, and ICP would benefit from forging stronger links with the School of Culture and Communication (Head, Jennifer Milam). From Melbourne's perspective of graduate education, we met with Kate MacNeil who saw this as a direct possibility, particularly with mutual MA and PhD students interested in placements in international institutions and mentoring by comparable academics.

<http://vca.unimelb.edu.au/>

<https://mcm.unimelb.edu.au/>

We toured their new state of the art studios in Melbourne - converted from a 19th century police horse stables garrison - with the most impressive design for practice-based students. Their film and TV school is also renowned, and they were particularly interested in the fact that Drama teaches documentary film/docudrama etc.

- With the exception of Geography engagement with the Social Sciences at Melbourne has been patchy to-date, although some ad-hoc 1-2-1 collaborations between individual researchers do exist and we were aware that CMIST will be visiting Melbourne in May/June 2018. However we discovered wholesale support from Melbourne to do more in this area and whilst recognising that existing individual collaboration is important there is an appetite to 'take this to the next level' and engage in a wider more joined up and strategic relationship. There was particular interest in our major research institutes and how a future Manchester/Melbourne collaboration might foster more interdisciplinary, thematic and cross-disciplinary research, and help address and/or identify societal challenges (in line with the emerging UK Industrial Strategy Fund where international collaboration will be essential) and/or current and the emerging ARC research centres of excellence.

The Associate Dean for Research, Faculty of Arts (Andrew May) agreed that he would consider taking a new funding proposal from Manchester to his senior management team and to engage in an initial mapping exercise to identify researchers across the social sciences who might be interested in developing collaboration with Manchester researchers particular around key themes linked to our research institutes.

ACC also agreed to share with them the SALC-Humanities Consortium model with a view to identifying more funds to spread across the discipline areas such as social sciences, without being bound to the discretionary funds of the individual Heads of School as the current model requires. That model was for 3 years and it will be coming to an end in Dec 2018 for Melbourne and July 2018/19 for Manchester. Moreover there will be two new incoming heads of school at SHAPS and SOLL in 2019 (Jan). Therefore the time is right to overhaul the entire model at both ends of the partnership and to seek further investment to cover a wider area and to expand into PGR exchange.

- PGR Opportunities – we agreed that medium/long-term supervision opportunities were best taken forward by way of initial exchanges of PhD students, preferably by way of a pilot model in a specific area from of the following:

Summary of potential PGR exchange opportunities

<i>Melbourne</i>	<i>Subject area</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<i>Victorian College of Arts</i>	<i>Music, Drama; film practice; Writing</i>	
<i>School of Culture and Communications</i>	<i>Museum studies art gallery management, English and Art History</i>	
<i>Science</i>	<i>Geography</i>	
<i>Humanities and Social Sciences</i>	<i>Thematic approach preferred – e.g. 'Statelessness' and/or other cultural theme</i>	

The cost of living in Melbourne is significant and would impact on Manchester researchers being based there. Consideration might be given to creating some form of supplement to any bursary awarded to students travelling there or the visits to Melbourne would be of longer duration. Melbourne has a college system like Durham and Oxbridge in addition to locally based students. It therefore has a number of residential colleges that could provide campus based accommodation outside of normal semester times (November/December), though this would nevertheless incur a cost that could be negotiated on our behalf by the Faculty of Arts. Contact and follow up details will be sent to us to then help explore these options further. We noted that the new exchange agreement with Copenhagen might provide a model that could be rolled out quickly to prime a similar initiative with Melbourne that might be piloted initially around a particular theme.

New research collaborations

Two new initiatives at Melbourne provide fertile ground for linkage at Humanities

1. The Centre for Visual Arts (COVAR) based in the Victorian College of the Arts has three main research themes (indigenous art and art history; re-thinking Asia and statelessness - see below); there is also interest in enabling practice-based Manchester researchers to visit for short/medium studio placements and/or potential internships with the Buxton gallery.

2. 'Statelessness' - based in Melbourne's Law School and funded via a major philanthropic donation this interdisciplinary centre will explore major issues ranging from colonialism, slavery to modern day issues of displacement, migration with significant links to UNHCR. This initiative maps directly onto research incorporated within our 'Global Inequalities' beacon and major research institutes such as GDI, HCRI and the Centre for the Cultural History of War. Again, Uma Kothari's presence in Melbourne provides us with a useful conduit to monitor developments with this initiative and to alert Melbourne to our interest in future collaboration in this area which maybe usefully explored further should our proposed joint symposium go ahead .

For more information on the 'Statelessness' Centre go here:
<http://law.unimelb.edu.au/centres/statelessness>

Next Steps: Key Actions and Maintaining Momentum:

Maintaining momentum and ensuring coordination of follow up actions will now be vital. This has become paramount particularly as a direct result of our visit proposals are being taken forward (at Melbourne) to the Faculty of Arts 'Executive Group' to prepare for a cross faculty scheme to be taken forward in the next budget round to further Manchester-Melbourne collaboration.

Some immediate follow up will be maintained as Professor John Cattapan, Director of the VCA and Professor Charles Green, Research Chair, School of Culture and Communication will visited Manchester from 26-29 April as part of Professor Carden Coyne's conference on the visual arts, war and human rights. ACC also suggested that Abi Gilmore make a follow up visit to Melbourne to liaise with SCC and COVAR colleagues, and meet with Kate MacNeil about the potential for MA exchanges via ICP.

Noting that the SALC HSIF Consortium fund will come to an end in due course, unless it is renewed, we advise that consideration be given towards creating a small 'Melbourne Group' at Manchester (with social sciences and law buy in) to keep collaboration on the agenda and to drive forward ensure that actions are taken forward with regards to the connections that we have made during this visit and recommendations for pursuing further collaboration with Melbourne by way of the following:

Melbourne-MCR Symposium

Both parties should consider investing in an event or sand pit at Manchester and/or Melbourne which brings together researchers from both areas who have either (i) existing joint collaborations and/or (ii) are receptive and have made initial joint connections to bring these researchers together either (a) around a specific thematic research collaboration of joint of interest and/or (b) allow researchers the time and opportunity develop their own approach in this areas (the outcome might be to identify major research themes and or industrial/philanthropic areas of mutual interest)

Maximising collaboration opportunities in the social sciences

The existing SALC – Melbourne consortium should be used as a model of best practice to further integrate social science disciplines within both institutions. This would require a rethinking of the current complicated model of school-based and limited funding in order to provide for both Arts and Humanities as a whole in both institutions, and to prime interdisciplinary and collaborative work. Andrew May also felt that a SKYPE conversation with the Head of SOSS would be useful at this stage, but again we would want to make sure that the new model serviced the various schools as a whole.

New funding models

It was agreed that the current funding model largely driven by SALC based investment into the consortium has worked well but in terms of due diligence should be reviewed and refreshed particularly in light of the likely expansion into the social science areas at both institutions. ACC/JR can take this forward in concert with the proposed 'Melbourne group', but it would need the input from the other schools and Faculty Internationalisation Director, the PGR Director and the Dean. Andrew May (Dean Research, Melb) felt we

needed to strike while the iron was hot to come up with a Faculty level model. Examples of potential models are detailed below and can provide a foundation on which to initiate discussion.

ACC/JR
April 2018

Potential funding models for future collaboration

As outlined in the report, the SALC led Manchester-Melbourne consortium is approaching the end of its initial three year cycle (ends in Dec 2018 for Melbourne and July 2019 for Manchester). In Melbourne, the current arrangement relies on discretionary funds from the three Schools involved and there is an appetite to elevate any future scheme to a Faculty level model. The Dean for Research for the Faculty of Arts at Melbourne, Prof Andrew May, is willing to take such a proposal to the Faculty of Arts Senior Management Team. It is assumed that any future arrangement would involve an equal level of investment on both sides. If we are to take this forward we first need to determine an appropriate internal funding arrangement to support this initiative from 2019/2020. Two possible models are outlined below:

1. Ring-fence a portion of existing HSIF Internationalisation funds specifically to support collaboration with the Faculty of Arts at Melbourne. Proposals would require match-funding on an ad-hoc basis from the relevant Schools (we anticipate the focus to be SALC and SoSS but there would still be scope for interdisciplinary research involving Law, SEED or AMBS). Funding levels would need to be agreed with Melbourne but indicatively, if £25,000 of HSIF internationalisation were ring-fenced this could equate to £50,000 with School match funding (£100K including Melbourne's contribution).
2. Establish a standalone fund which operates independently of current HSIF Internationalisation arrangements. This would require a commitment of funding from the Schools wishing to participate (level to be determined) and possible additional contribution from Faculty. Successful proposals would be selected by a panel with School/Faculty representation and subsequent agreement with counterparts at Melbourne.

Alongside the discussions around future arrangements for a Faculty level bilateral research fund, there is scope for the Simon and Hallsworth endowment to support engagement with Melbourne specifically in the social and political sciences. For example, a joint symposium on an appropriate theme could facilitate interaction between researchers on both sides.