

## Research Newsletter

### Brett and Lucy Update

Thank you to all staff for the work you have carried out so far this term. It has been exhausting and a steep learning curve, with many challenges and equally lots of learning and success.

Our newsletter showcases various research successes within our department. We should be very proud of these. We should remember too that failure is inevitable in academic life. Rather than feeling shame when we fail, we should be open about failure. To borrow from a recent editorial for a special issue on failure in academia, we should also be proactive. Rather than wasting failure, we can learn from it. After a rest, you might find this 'Manifesto for better research failure' interesting: <https://bit.ly/37NVUUH>

We also hope that readers will appreciate that the successes showcased in these pages are a result of a great deal of hard work across time. Relationships are vital too. Success is not simply an individual achievement but is relational. *Why* and *how* we relate with each other as colleagues in daily interactions shapes our success. External collaborations and friendships are important too. We should not forget though the importance of families in shaping success, giving us hugs when we fail, and celebrating when we are successful.

Wishing everyone the best for 2021.  
And Happy Christmas!



### Inside this issue:

#### New Publications

Read about the latest publications from colleagues in Sport & Exercise Sciences

#### Research Theme Update

Read a summary of our theme seminars this term

#### New Colleagues

Read a little bit about our fantastic new colleagues

## DSES Successes 🎉

### Recently Published Outputs

Cheng X, Zhao KP, Zha X, Du X, Li Y, Chen S, Wu Y,... **Hind K**, Tian W. (2020). Opportunistic screening using low-dose CT and the prevalence of osteoporosis in China: a nation-wide multi-centre study. *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research*.

Hanson, C., **Oliver, E.**, **Dodd-Reynolds, C.**, Pearsons, A., & Kelly, P. (2020). A modified Delphi study to gain consensus for a taxonomy to report and classify Physical Activity Referral Schemes (PARS). *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*.

**Hind, K.**, Oldroyd, B. (2020). Bone mineral density precision for individual and combined vertebrae configurations from lumbar spine dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry scans. *Journal of Clinical Densitometry*. 24:4:673-677

**Hockin-Boyers, H.**, Jamie, K. & **Pope, S.** (2020). Moving beyond the image: Theorising 'extreme' female bodies. *Women's Studies International Forum* 83: 102416.

**Monforte, J.**, Perez-Samaniego, V., & **Smith B.** (2020). Travelling material↔semiotic environments of disability, rehabilitation and physical activity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 30(8), 1249-1261.

**Monforte, J. & Smith, B.** (2020). Conventional and post qualitative research: An invitation to dialogue. *Qualitative Inquiry*.

**Nichol, A.J.**, Hayes, P. R., Vickery, W., Boocock, E., Potrac, P., & Hall, E. T. (2020). Athletes as 'sites of normative intersectionality': Critically exploring the ontology of influence in sport coaching. *Sociology of Sport Journal*.

**Rigby, B.P.**, van der Graaf, P., Azevedo, L.B., Hayes, L., Gardner, B., and **Dodd-Reynolds, C.J.** (2020). Challenges, opportunities and solutions for local physical activity stakeholders: An implementation case study from a cross-sectoral physical activity network in Northeast England. *BMC Public Health*. 20:1760

Vickery, W., & **Nichol, A.J.** (2020). What actually happens during a practice session? A coach's perspective on developing and delivering practice. *Journal of Sports Sciences*.

Wiltshire, G. Clarke, N. **Phoenix, C.** & Bescoby, C. (2020). The role of sport-based social networks in the management of long-term health conditions: Insights from the World Transplant Games. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*.

### Recent Grant Successes

**Stacey Pope** was awarded just under £45k for a COA Extension for her AHRC Project Female Sports Fandom in the North East.

**Smith B.** (2020-2023). Making every contact count for the health of disabled people: Training the social workers of today and tomorrow in physical activity promotion. NIHR ARC NENC & Sport England. £180K.

### Recent Grant Applications Submitted

**Nichol, A.J** (Co-I). Skilled social interaction and emotion management in refereeing: Learning from the career stories of expert practitioners. FIFA Research Scholarship Programme.

**Smith, B.** (Co-I). Para-sport influencers: Social media as a platform of para-athletes self-representation and social justice. ESRC. £370K.



## Congratulations!

Dr Martin Roderick  
was recently awarded  
a Chair.

Huge congratulations  
Professor Roderick

## A toast!

Congratulations to  
Rebecca on her  
recent engagement.

We look forward to  
celebrating in person  
in 2021 with you!

## Recent Research News

**Iain Lindsey** has received a contract for an edited book which has now been signed. Details are: Keech, M., Lindsey, I. & Hayton, J. *Implementing Sport Policy: Organisational Perspectives on the UK Sport System*. Routledge. It is due to be published in 2022.

**Emily Oliver** and **Fiona Duncan** are working with Public Health England's Health Improvement Directorate to establish good practice exemplars for the Public Mental Health Prevention concordat programme. Findings of Oliver and Duncan's recent SPHR-funded research is informing both consideration of how good practice might be identified, as well as highlighting where existing provision can be expanded to influence broader determinants of mental health.

**Stacey Pope** was interviewed by Healthy Magazine, the UK's top selling health and fitness magazine, about how women's sport has been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 in comparison to men's sport.

As part of the *Weathered Lives* project, funded by the *Wellcome Trust*, **Cassie Phoenix** hosted a sold-out online workshop entitled 'Weather Wonderings'. This event involved academics working across multiple disciplines offering intellectual ideas about weather, including how weather impacts our health, wellbeing, body-self relationships, and movement.

**Brett Smith**, in his capacity as the *President of the International Society of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, recently initiated a 'Meeting of societies from the sport and exercise sciences.' Following conversations, over 25 major societies that span different disciplines from around the globe are now involved in a collective project – an alliance – that revolves around equality, equity and inclusion. Led by Brett, this is first time in the history of the field that a large number of societies from different disciplines have been brought together and agreed to pursue work collectively. More to follow!

**Karen Hind** has established a partnership with global medical imaging company, GE Healthcare. This month the partnership has seen the installation of a new state-of-the-art dual energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA) scanner in the Truscott Imaging Suite at Maiden Castle. The DXA will be used to support a number of student and staff research projects, with imaging assessments of bone density and body composition in athletic and clinical populations. The Truscott Imaging Suite is a first for the department and was built as part of the ~£30m university investment in the Sports and Wellbeing Park at Maiden Castle. The suite has been named after Dr John Truscott who was PhD supervisor of Karen in 2001-2005.

Image: DXA Scanner



## Top 100 cited Researcher!

Professor Brett Smith was recently identified in a science-wide analysis of citations as in the top 100 cited researchers in the field of sport sciences. This makes him within the top 2% of cited researchers in the world across all sport science disciplines.  
[Read more here](#)





## Significant Invitations

In November, **Dr Iain Lindsey** was invited by a new House of Lords Select Committee to present to a seminar that marked the start of their inquiry into a “National Plan for Sport and Recreation”. Iain spoke and responded to questions on the topic of “Childhood physical activity and youth sport”. Drawing on this recently published review of PE, school sport and physical activity policy, Iain highlighted continuing inequalities in young people’s engagement in physical activity, the need for greater accountability in school’s spending, and the importance of developing greater co-ordination of local provision for young people.

In partnership with County Durham Sport, the Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences recently facilitated a ‘Networking and Learning Event’ for local organisations addressing physical activity inequalities that have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The event on 26th November built on commissioned research that department members, **Dr Iain Lindsey** and Dr Damian Haslett, have been undertaking locally with community organisations whose responses to Covid-19 had been supported through Sport England’s Tackling Inequalities Fund (TIF). Katy Thompson from County Durham Sport indicated that “the research and event has created valuable opportunities for organisations to come together and connect, share challenges and successes, and learn from one another. In addition to this, it has provided County Durham Sport with valuable learning into how we can support the work of the organisations beyond the TIF programme”. A full report of learning from the research with Tackling Inequality Fund projects will be published in the New Year.

**Javier Monforte** was invited to join the Editorial Boards of the journals *Sociology of Sport Journal* and *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*. With **Brett Smith**, he was also invited to write a chapter for the edited book *Ethnography and Rehabilitation*.

**Cassie Phoenix** was invited by the British Society of Gerontology (BSG) and British Geriatrics Society (BGS) to present her work on Physical Activity and Healthy Ageing at the first joint BSG and BGS conference.

**Stacey Pope** was invited to join the Editorial Advisory Board of the journal *Leisure Studies*.

**Karen Hind** was invited to a webinar as part of the Global BASES Conference in November, entitled ‘Physical and psychological transitions from athlete to retirement’. Karen was also invited to talk on findings from the UK Rugby Health project for the ‘Athlete Z’ symposium.

**Brett Smith** was invited to contribute a white paper for the Canadian Government new national strategy for Digital Research Infrastructure. He was invited to write a chapter for the edited book *Researching Disability Sport* (Routledge). Brett also received 4 international invites to give talks on disability and physical activity and 4 to speak about qualitative research. These included invitations from the *International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity* and a plenary at the *International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*. Brett was also invited to edit a journal special issue on ‘Co-production in sport, exercise and health’.

## Training Courses we liked!

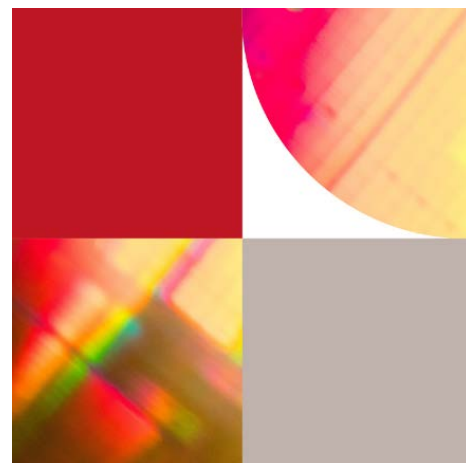
**Iain Lindsey** attended a Research Retold workshop on 'Communicating Research Beyond Academia' on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

**Cassandra Phoenix**, **Stacey Pope**, and **Brett Smith** attended the Research Impact workshops led Professor Mark Reed on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October.

*“The research and event has created valuable opportunities for organisations to come together and connect, share challenges and successes, and learn from one another”*

Katy Thompson, County Durham Sport

Check the DSES News and Events page for all of the latest news stories



## Postgraduate Researcher News

This term has seen a range of exciting new developments for our growing PGR community. Specialist peer-led training and support activities have boosted the research environment. These include **The Theory Lounge**, a laid-back group for conversations that help develop understanding of research philosophies, concepts and ideas, and **The Dugout**, a writing oasis to provide time and peer support for developing written work. In addition, we launched the **first-ever DSES PGR study space**, providing our researchers with specialist facilities for interacting, hosting meetings and visiting researchers, as well as pursuing their own work.

Our students have continued to disseminate their work, including:

- **Sophie Phillips's** research, 'A systematic review of the validity, reliability, and feasibility of measurement tools used to assess the physical activity and sedentary behaviour of pre-school aged children' was presented at the *International/European Congress on Obesity* in September.
- **Lauren Kamperman's** work on 'Challenging exclusion in elite spaces: examining 'dual careers' at the intersection of sport and education', was presented at the interdisciplinary *Global Challenges Conference* held at Durham in November.
- **Ben Rigby's** paper with Caroline Dodd-Reynolds and researchers across Fuse, 'Challenges, opportunities and solutions for local physical activity stakeholders: An implementation case study from a cross-sectoral physical activity network in Northeast England', was published in *BMC Public Health*.

Congratulations to **Gianmarco Dellacasa**, who will be joining our PGR community in the Spring having successfully gained one of two Applied Research Consortium (ARC) PhD Studentships offered at Durham. The ARC focuses on applied health research and innovation in North Cumbria and the North East, and Gianmarco's proposal will contribute by understanding physical activity as a route to engagement and health for adolescents experiencing multiple disadvantages. He'll be supervised by Emily Oliver, Caroline Dodd-Reynolds and Leanne Trick (Psychology). Gianmarco comes from a background of working with disadvantaged teenagers in Rome and Stockholm, and is broadly interested in any research or activism promoting equality and physical activity.

### Running a 'Research Taster': Reflections from a postgraduate researcher

**Marianna Bottiglieri** researches individual differences in stress experiences and coping, a particularly pertinent topic during the current pandemic. She reflects on lessons learnt from a research taster with 1st year students:

"After a month, my main learning has been how to put together a visor perfectly. And accepting that it will fog, sooner or later. Don't fight it. Another important element with visor and mask is to ask twice participant's names, particularly if you are not using your first language. On one occasion I was happily testing the wrong person, while the right one was waiting for me downstairs. The misunderstanding became clear only during the introduction: "Experiment!? Which experiment!?". More seriously, a key challenge was the careful production and feedback process needed for risk assessments and lab protocols to be approved. Although at times I was really afraid of not starting, there was a first (serious) lesson to learn: everyone is working in the same direction. This might be obvious, but what I mean is that there is a sense that "we are going through the same thing, and we will get out of it together", that I would attribute to the challenging times, and it is somewhat reassuring. It is the same feeling that I had when I started meeting students participating. There was small, casual talks in the corridors, where they told me that it was cool to get out of their houses and to do something new. It was my feeling too. Through a number of these casual conversations, questions, e-mails, misunderstandings, and experimental procedures, I reminded that the best part of doing research with people, is people. In times of social distancing and Covid, it was a lesson worth remembering."

*New peer-led support activities including THE DUGOUT and THE THEORY LOUNGE.*

*For information regarding The Dugout, please contact [ben.rigby@durham.ac.uk](mailto:ben.rigby@durham.ac.uk)*

*For further information on The Theory Lounge please contact [rachel.kurtz@durham.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.kurtz@durham.ac.uk)*

*Congratulations to PhD student Tony Bennett*

*Following on from receiving the Order of Merit medal in Portugal (equivalent of the MBE in the UK) for his contribution to sport, Tony was granted the rare distinction of being bestowed an honorary member of the Professional Golf Association (PGA). The Confederation of Professional Golf also honoured Tony with their prestigious 'Special Recognition Award' for services to golf.*

*Alongside his PhD, Tony is a PGA Master Professional who works for the International Golf Federation as Head of Disability and Inclusion. He is also the President of The European Disabled Golf Association. Tony is supervised by Brett and Martin.*

## Research Theme News

The start of term has marked a return to our weekly research seminar and workshop programme. Thank you to everyone who has contributed sessions to this. It has also been extremely positive to see so many of our postgraduate students attending these sessions, who make up such a critical part of our research community.

Our opening sessions back in September included 'Roundtable' discussions on our research themes, *Sporting Lives* and *Healthy Communities*. It was great to hear so many examples of project updates from this year, along with discussions about future research ideas. These informal conversations are so important for keeping us in touch with each other's research plans, perhaps more than ever given we are not currently able to work in the same space.

This term we have also included in the programme some 'Open Sessions: Research Conversations', to allow us the space and flexibility to determine a topic at the time of the seminar. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this term these sessions have focused on overcoming the challenges of undertaking high quality research within the restrictions of Covid-19, as well as how to protect our research time. Research development and training sessions have been focused on 'Data Management' and the 'Durham Research Methods Centre'.

Perhaps my personal favourite in the programme is the opportunity for presentations on research, so a huge thank you to our postgraduate students and staff who have delivered some stimulating research presentations this term. In addition, we have had focused sessions on advancing impact in DSES and supporting PGR research in DSES. In October, our Head of Department and Director of Research Professor Martin Roderick and Professor Brett Smith, offered some reflections on our department and research strategy, which included a SWOT analysis of the DSES. Research strategy, advancing impact and postgraduate provision are all areas we will return to at future sessions – and indeed our research away day.

Seminars will recommence in the usual Wednesday 9.30am-10.30am slot from 13<sup>th</sup> January, and a full timetable will be circulated in the new year. Thank you to everyone who has made suggestions for this. As always, if you have ideas over the next year for future seminars/workshops that could be useful, please don't hesitate to contact me to discuss this.

I would like to finish with an email I recently received from Dr. Damian Haslett. Most will be aware that congratulations are in order for Damian after recently completing his PhD and being awarded a postdoc position at Loughborough University. Before leaving for his new post, Damian told me: 'I thought the research seminars were brilliant. To hear ideas from researchers across disciplines and at different career stages every week was inspiring and so useful for me'. I do hope, moving forwards, that this is a culture we can continue to grow through our seminar programme and the research we are developing in our themes.

Merry Christmas everyone! Dr. Stacey Pope, Theme Leader

**Hot off the press!** Emily has produced a *British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences* (BASES) article about inclusion and our department. More to follow! Thanks Emily for leading on this important work.

### How can we become more inclusive researchers? A department's journey so far

Dr Emily Oliver shares the learnings of The Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences at Durham University about inequalities in the research process

#### Introduction

Increasing awareness of long-standing inequalities is currently driving global debate, reflection and overdue social change. Sport and exercise contexts have featured strongly in terms of inequalities in opportunities to be active during the Covid-19 pandemic, welfare in elite sport, and the increasing visibility of athletes as activists.

While as a sector we research issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, arguably our practices have not always fully embraced these ideals. To consider where this might be the case, for several years as a Department we have been working with our

#### What can sport and exercise scientists do?

- Work with a wide range of individuals and stakeholders to identify and fund priority research areas.
- Promote a diversity of reviewers on funding panels (internally and externally), including non-academic stakeholders.
- Work to remove policies and practices that perpetuate inequalities (e.g. inflexible contracts or funding systems) so that the sport and exercise science research community diversifies.

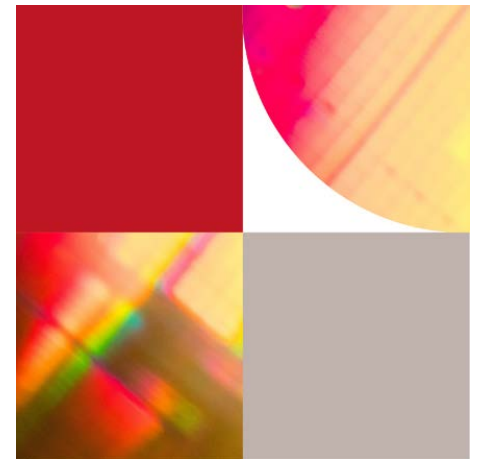
*Transforming sport through research to improve local lives and global communities is central to what we do. Addressing physical inactivity and building a fair and vibrant society by creating healthy communities for all is also what we do*



**We lead research to help reduce inequalities, promote social justice and ensure better health and wellbeing within and through sport, exercise and physical activity**

## New Colleagues

### Dr Shaun McLaren Teaching Fellow



#### What excites you about joining the department?

The expertise within Durham's Sport and Exercise department is extremely diverse and unique! The opportunities for multi-disciplinary research collaboration and development are really exciting. I think we have excellent programmes and I'm looking forward to teaching on them.

#### Could you describe the research you are going to pioneer here?

My main research interests are in the programming, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of strategies to improve sports performance and athlete health. Over the past 4 I've been particularly interested in the use of subjective tools to manage the training process. My goals are to pursue this research avenue through a wider lens of sporting lives, subcultures and performance.

#### Describe yourself in five words?

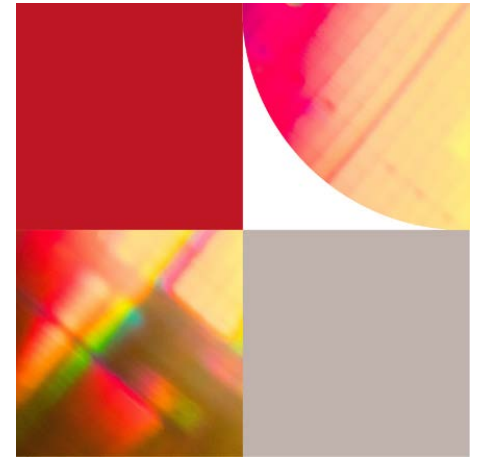
Shouldn't drink as much coffee ☺

#### What are your interests outside of academia?

OK, I could cover the typical responses here, like playing football and being a rugby coach at Stockton RFC. But a fun fact that not many people know is that I used to be a club DJ on the underground house music scene in Middlesbrough. Classic dance music is something that's always appealed to me, both in rhythm and culture. But when it's time to relax, Britpop is my go-to. I was born in the 90's and it seems that my musical interests have stayed there!



**Dr Adam Nichol**  
**Teaching Fellow**



**What excites you about joining the department?**

Since joining the Department in August, I have thoroughly enjoyed working in such a collegiate, friendly, and driven team. I have been (and continue to be) excited by the clear commitment of the Department to research and address issues of social (in)justice, (in)equality, and health and wellbeing in all aspects of practice. I am looking forward to continuing to collaborate with and learn from colleagues to provide diverse and high-quality research and education.

**Could you describe the research you are going to pioneer here?**

Broadly, my research focuses on the sociology of influence and noninfluence in sport and sporting organisations. Here, I intend to build upon and extend previous work, using a critical approach to pedagogy to consider how, when, why, and under which circumstances coaches, athletes and others (inter)act in specific ways and attempt to be influential. For example, I hope to fuse sociological theory on norms and noticing to unpick the original intended influence of pedagogical (inter)actions and how this compares to (or not) the actual influence of practice. Collectively, the main purpose of this body of work is to underpin and support more critical and ethical practices which have positive influences on the wellbeing of individuals and their preparation for sports performance. Secondly, I plan to build on findings from a previous UEFA-funded study exploring reasons for match official dropout which highlighted that referees often feel lonely, isolated, disconnected from the wider footballing fraternity, and underprepared to deal with the realities of their role. Specifically, I hope to develop critical understandings of how (experienced) match officials manage (their own and others') emotions when (inter)acting with a wide range of stakeholders and the associated influence that this has on mental health, identity, and wellbeing. In doing so, I aim to contribute to the wider knowledge base to inform the training, development, and practices of those who undertake highly stressful, pressurised, and conflict-laden roles.

**Describe yourself in five words?**

Loyal, kind, considerate, diligent, motivated.

**What are your interests outside of academia?**

Outside of academia, I am a National League match official in football and a coach with Northumberland Cricket Board. I also educate coaches and referees in roles as a Coach Developer for the ECB and a Referee Developer for The Football Association. I enjoy playing golf and can often be found in the rough, trees or water!



**Dr Javier Monforte**  
Postdoctoral Research Associate



**What excites you about joining the department?**

There are different aspects to be excited about. Right now, I cannot help but long for meeting my new colleagues in person. Videoconferencing works, but I cannot wait to gather together in the meeting room and having unstructured conversations. I am looking forward to establishing fruitful connections with the youngest members of the department. Of course, I am excited to continue my intellectual collaboration with Professor Smith and keep learning from him. As part of my new role as the PDRA representative, I am also interested in learning how the research committee works.

**Could you describe the research you are going to pioneer here?**

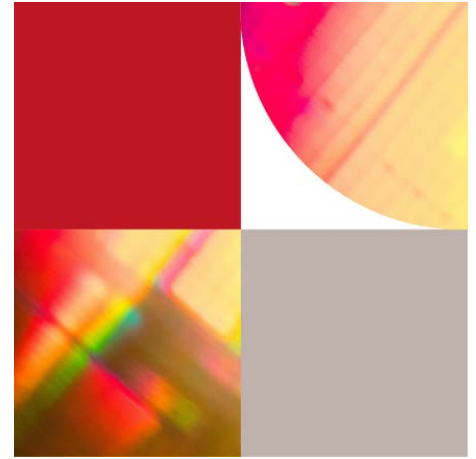
One example of the research I am going to pioneer is: 'Making Every Contact Count: Training the Social Workers of Today and Tomorrow in Supporting Disabled People to be Physically Active'. This 3-year project is funded by Sport England and the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR). Alongside this, I will conduct research on the process of becoming a qualitative researcher, as part of my role in the *International Society of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*. I will also be writing about postqualitative inquiry, posthuman disability studies and narrative analysis.

**Describe yourself in five words?**

Passionate; inventive; chill; sociable; leftist

**What are your interests outside of academia?**

My main interests are basketball and literature, especially short stories. I enjoy going to the cinema and having random conversations over a cold beer. I also like discovering new eating places and keep going to my favourite ones. Eating pizza and paella valenciana always lift my spirits.





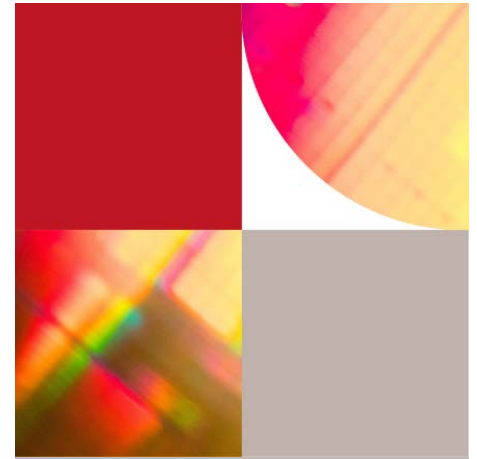
## Reminders

- RIS circulate weekly emails outlining funding opportunities and other updates, these are useful to keep up to date on research grant activities
- Keep checking the [Covid-19 research related support page](#) for new funding opportunities
- [Extending the impact and reach of your research](#): If your impact work is relevant to one of the UN's 17 sustainable development goals, then your research could be made into an animation.

We would like to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing everyone in 2021!



If you would like any information to feature in the next newsletter, please complete the following submission [form](#). If you would like to sign up to receive a copy of this newsletter, please contact Lucy at [ses.researchadmin@durham.ac.uk](mailto:ses.researchadmin@durham.ac.uk)



## Upcoming Events

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### December 2020

Take a deep breathe after a long term...and rest!

### January 2021

Watch out for the upcoming seminar series which will be circulated soon. We will also share these via our new website.

Please keep sharing ideas for what seminars you would like with Stacey.

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