



Edge Hill
University

Research centre for
Arts and Wellbeing



Manifesto





welcome

The Research Centre for Arts and Wellbeing are committed to impactful interdisciplinary research that makes use of good practice in the arts and improves the lives of people, their communities and their wider environments.

Our research:

- takes place in different contexts
- has direct benefit to different age groups
- is cutting edge
- is local, national and international



The Research Centre for Arts for the Wellbeing is a research unit that reflects what Edge Hill University stands for: fostering relationships with schools, charities, statutory organisations and health services, generating research that is co-created with the people it intends to support and making a direct impact on the local, national and international community.

The central place of the arts in this work makes the centre a unique hub of creative activity that is very much needed within health research. The centre engages in truly interdisciplinary research activities bringing neuroscience, digital technologies and randomised controlled trials together with creative interventions, practice as research and performances that challenge mental health stigma or support public health messaging. At the same time, collaboration with national and international organisations, high profile publications, books with important publishers and peer reviewed articles in high impact journals testify to the high quality of the research produced. External funding from national and international funders adds not only esteem but also the capacity to push the boundaries of current knowledge advancing this topic area in new, unexpected and useful ways

Clare Austin

Professor Claire Austin
Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean,
Faculty of Health, Social Care and Medicine



When the world is changing in ways we don't like, when we are faced with environmental challenges, forced migration and displacement, when we experience loss and suffer from loneliness, turning to the arts may give us the sanctuary we need. Making art, singing in a choir, dancing with friends, going to the theatre with loved ones

may strengthen the compassion needed to care for those in need; may give us the vitality to stand up and fight against injustice; may equip us with the language to speak the unspeakable, the private, the intimate, the mystical and the precious... the arts can offer us all that other parts of our lives may not be able to: meaning, imagination and hope.

Committing our research to this topic, looking at what the arts can offer to the quality of our lives, has been difficult. The lengthy hours to get our research underway have been fuelled by our sincere interest in the topic. Extensive public engagement, interdisciplinary contributions and collaborations in smaller and larger teams have guided our research processes and outcomes, keeping the work useful to large groups of people. As our manifesto suggests, our research has been co-produced, impactful, targeting both promotion and treatment, locally, nationally and internationally. If these principles appeal to you, here is further information. Feel free to join us.

Professor Vicky Karkou
Director of the Research Centre for Arts and Wellbeing





Our commitments:

- Our research is co-produced, creative, questions conventional boundaries between disciplines and brings people together.
- We are committed to award-winning research of high impact.
- We support large trials on creative psychological interventions that can have impact on policy and healthcare provision.
- Our research with children makes a strong case for the value of safe uses of the arts to prevent the development of mental illness and promote wellbeing.
- We support sustainable provision of evidence-based creative therapies to meet diverse mental health needs.
- Our research looks at the relationship between physical and psychological outcomes supporting holistic interventions that can support people with medical conditions.
- We champion clear health messaging, raising awareness and supporting change through the use of embodied art forms such as dance and music.
- We are committed to bringing together leading researchers from around the world, to push the edges of knowledge and scholarship.
- We scale up creative projects from place-based delivery to regional, national and international provision challenging barriers of geography but also education, socio-economic status, culture, gender, sexual preference, ability or disability.



Our Research





Different Contexts:

Galleries and theatres



- Dancing the Blues: Getting out of your own way
- Arts for the Blues: Creating connections

Example: Arts for the Blues: Creating Connections

Arts for the Blues: Creating Connections is an immersive performance co-produced by artists and mental health service users that highlights the healing potential of creativity and offers opportunities for human connection.

Key message:

Our research is co-produced, creative, questions conventional boundaries between disciplines and brings people together.

Collaborating organisations:



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UNIVERSITY OF
DERBY

LIVERPOOL
lightHOUSE
working together to transform communities

Funded by



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ENGLAND**

Different Contexts:

Schools



- Children and young people in mainstream schools
- Children and young people in special schools
- Young people in colleges and universities

Example: Tackling the Blues

Tackling the Blues (TtB) is an award-winning sport and arts-based education programme. It supports children and young people aged 6-16 who are experiencing, or are at risk of developing, mental illness. TtB is delivered in partnership between the Faculty of Education and the Department of Sport and Physical Activity at Edge Hill University (EHU), Everton in the Community (EitC) and Tate Liverpool.

Key message:

We are committed to award-winning research of high impact.

Collaborating organisations:



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Different Contexts:

Workplace



- Systematic review on the use of the arts to support the wellbeing of helping professions
- A multi-levelled and multi-modal creative intervention in hospitals to support the wellbeing of clinical staff
- Creative writing to support the wellbeing of hospital staff
- Visual arts to support the wellbeing of teachers

Example: Support for the wellbeing of clinical staff through a multi-levelled intervention

With support from the Wellcome trust, we examined the role of the arts and arts therapies in the prevention, management and treatment of workplace mental health issues experienced by helping professionals. Results from our research are implemented and evaluated in local hospitals to support the wellbeing of staff including doctors in training.

Key message:

We engage in high quality research that leads to direct implementation.

Collaborating organisations:



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NHS
University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

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NHS
Health Education England

Different Contexts:

Hospitals



- Trials in secondary mental health services, ERA
- Development of interventions in primary mental health care, Arts for the Blues
- Engagement with children and young people's mental health, survey of CAMHs services

Example: Effectiveness of group arts therapy for diagnostically heterogeneous patients in mental health services: multi-centred trial

This study aims to test if arts therapies groups are effective for patients with different types of mental illness. It is the largest UK trial to date and the only one funded by NIHR that looks at more than one therapy.

Key message:

We support large trials on creative psychological interventions that can have direct impact on policy and healthcare provision.

Collaborating organisations:



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Different Age Groups:

Children, their families and their carers



- Children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Children with autism
- Carers of children with autism in the UK and in India

Example: Arts therapies in schools for prevention of mental health problems and mental health promotion

We work with children and young people at risk of developing mental health problems to engage them in preventive approaches to arts therapies.

Key message:

Our research promotes safe uses of the arts that can prevent the development of mental illness and promote wellbeing.

Collaborating organisations:



**Edge Hill
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Schools in



**Liverpool
City Council**

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**Edge Hill
University**

Graduate School

Different Age Groups:

Adults with mental health concerns



- Adults with mental health problems using services in mental health charities
- Adults with mixed diagnosis, ERA study
- Adult depression and anxiety in primary care mental health services

Example: Developing sustainable creative therapy interventions in mental health services

We are working with local mental health services to evaluate the feasibility of implementing the Arts for the Blues into mental health services. We are investigating how we can introduce this creative group therapy as part of routine service provision, how acceptable it is for participants and therapists and its impact for depression, anxiety, wellbeing and quality of life.

Key message:

We support sustainable provision of evidence-based creative therapies to meet diverse mental health needs.

Collaborating organisations:



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six degrees social enterprise
supporting your mental health



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Different Age Groups:

Healthy Ageing



- Psychological processes in aging
- Systematic reviews in dementia for dance movement psychotherapy, Cochrane Review
- Systematic reviews on the benefits of the arts in dementia, WHO commissioned work

Example: Ageing Better with an Active Mind

The Ageing Better with an Active Mind research project aims to encourage healthy ageing in Lancashire and Merseyside, where the elderly population with dementia is higher than the national average. The study aims to improve people's understanding of healthy ageing, promote a better understanding of brain health and raise awareness of key actions to reduce the risk of dementia.

Key message:

We champion clear health messaging, raising awareness and supporting change through the use of embodied art forms such as dance and music.

Collaborating organisations:



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Institute for
Social Responsibility
(ISR)



Cutting Edge Research:

Interdisciplinary collaborations



- Arts and neuroscience
- Digital for children and young people
- Digital interventions for adults

Example: Neuroscience meets dance: Towards a neuroscientific approach to mental health and wellbeing

We are planning a series of workshops that will inspire new research at the edge of creative and performing arts, and medical humanities, particularly dance movement psychotherapy. By bringing together leading researchers from these different fields, we are collaborating with colleagues from neuroscience research accessible to communities of practice, as well as to the general public.

Contributions from Goldsmiths College, University of Abertay, University of Melbourne, University of New York, University of Heidelberg, University of Haifa.

Key message:

We are committed to bringing together leading researchers from around the world, to push the edges of knowledge and scholarship.

Collaborating organisations:



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UNIVERSITY

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Arts and
Humanities
Research Council



Local, National and International Research

Scaling up place-based arts initiatives



- Collaborations with local and national organisations
- Funded projects from national and international bodies
- Founding member of the International Creative Arts Therapies Research Alliance
- Delivery of commissioned projects from WHO Arts and Health Office

Example: Arts for the Blues: Towards Integrating the Use of the Arts in Health and Cultural Settings to Tackle Depression and Improve Wellbeing

We are using implementation science to scale up the Arts for the Blues intervention, an arts-based group intervention designed to reduce depression and improve wellbeing amongst primary care mental health services in deprived communities. This grassroots project is now delivered in services in the North West of England as part of routine service delivery. We are currently also discussing scaling it up in Israel, Pakistan, Malaysia and Colombia.

Key message:

We scale up creative projects from place-based delivery to regional, national and international provision challenging barriers of geography but also education, socio-economic status, culture, gender, sexual preference, ability or disability.

Collaborating organisations:



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Local, National and International Research

Researching holistic approaches to health



- Collaborations with local and national organisations
- Funded projects from national and international bodies
- Founding member of the International Creative Arts Therapies Research Alliance
- Delivery of commissioned projects from WHO Arts and Health Office

Example: Dancing with Health: An EU Collaborative partnership for active lifestyles for the prevention and treatment of breast cancer

Dancing with Health is multi-site study that aimed to evaluate a dance programme for women in recovery from breast cancer across five European countries, Italy, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Lithuania and the UK. It introduced a range of Latin American dances presented within a sports and exercise framework with influences from dance movement therapy. Fifty-four women participated in the study showing improvements on anthropometric, fitness and quality of life measures.

Key message:

Our research looks at the relationship between physical and psychological outcomes supporting holistic interventions that can support people with medical conditions.

Collaborating organisations:



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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Who are we?



Director – Professor Vicky Karkou

Vicky is the Director of the Research Centre for Arts and Wellbeing, an internationally known researcher in the arts, arts and health and arts therapies.

research.edgehill.ac.uk/en/persons/vicky-karkou



Deputy Director – Dr Stergios Makris

Stergios is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology, a BPS chartered psychologist with particular research interests in biological psychology and neuroscience relating to the therapeutic uses of the arts.

edgehill.ac.uk/person/dr-stergios-makris



Deputy Director – Dr Michael Richards

Michael is a Senior Lecturer in Applied Health and Social Care. He is a community and chartered psychologist, with particular research interests in working collaboratively with marginalised groups using different methods including, art, poetry, film, photography, and drama.

research.edgehill.ac.uk/en/persons/michael-richards

Early Career Researchers



Dr Supritha Aithal

Lecturer in Counselling and Psychotherapy & CAMHS, Applied Health and Social Care, Faculty of Health, Social Care and Medicine, Edge Hill University, a speech and language therapist, a dance movement psychotherapist and a Bharatanatyam dancer with interest in the contribution of Arts within Health, Education and Community contexts.

research.edgehill.ac.uk/en/persons/supritha-aithal



Dr Shaun Liverpool

Researcher in evidence-based child & adolescent mental health. His research interests include: the development and evaluation of digital mental health interventions, shared decision making in child and adolescent mental health services and global youth mental health with a focus on minority and marginalised groups.

research.edgehill.ac.uk/en/persons/shaun-liverpool

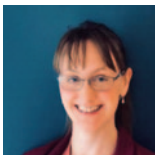


Dr Tasneem Patel

Lecturer in Mental Health. Allied Health, Social Work & Wellbeing. Applied Health and Social Care, Faculty of Health, Social Care and Medicine, Edge Hill.

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Researchers



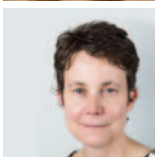
Emma Perris

Researcher for the Research Centre for Arts and Wellbeing on projects relating to the wellbeing of staff and scaling up projects. Also research and clinical expertise in dance movement psychotherapy for the health of mothers and their babies.



Pascale Barrett

Creative psychotherapist, dancer and researcher in therapeutic groups and performance



Georgina Roberts

Music therapist, researcher in perinatal health.

Ken Fletcher

Psychologist and researcher in digital technologies for children and young people







Steering Group Members

- Professor Martin McQuillan (Chair)
- Professor Vicky Karkou (Director)
- Dr Michael Richards (Deputy Director)
- Dr Stergios Makris (Deputy Director)
- Dr Cathy Butterworth (Head of Arts Centre)
- Magdalen Faulds (Impact Officer)
- Professor Helen Newall (Creative Arts)
- Dr Joanne Powell (Psychology)

Advisory Group

External Consultants

- Alex Coulter, Director of Arts and Health South West and Director of the National Centre for Creative Health
- Dr Simon Hackett, Consultant Art Psychotherapist, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust & Senior Clinical Lecturer in Mental Health, Newcastle University
- Clare Mahoney, Senior Programme Manager, Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Nisha Sajnani, Director of the Dramatherapy program at New York University & Principal Editor of Drama Therapy Review.
- Rebecca Ross-Williams, Creative Director & Chief Operating Officer, Liverpool Lighthouse.
- Valentina Cazzato, Lecturer in Cognitive Neuroscience, Liverpool John Moores University

Edge Hill University Members

- **Professor Helen Newall**, Creative Arts
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- **Dr Lena Simic**, Creative Arts
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- **Dr Jenny Daniel**, Creative Arts
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- **Professor Owen Evans**, Creative Arts
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- **Dr George Meikle**, Creative Arts
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- **Dr Kim Wiltshire**, English, History and Creative Writing.
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- **Dr Suzy Hansford**, Applied Health and Social Care
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- **Lee-Anne Widnall**, Applied Health and Social Care
- **Fleur Vickery**, Applied Health and Social Care
- **Gergana Ganeva**, Applied Health and Social Care
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- **Dr Shaun Liverpool**, Applied Health and Social Care
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