

UNIVERSITY *of* York

RON  
COOKE **HUB**

Annual Report 2013



# FOREWORD

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I am delighted to have the opportunity of writing a few words of introduction to this first Ron Cooke Hub Annual Report.

Appropriately named after a former Vice-Chancellor who has done much to cement relations with the city within which the University is located, the original concept was to create an iconic space that would bring together various internal and external communities - creating opportunities to meet and learn from each other, to share ideas and best practice and, perhaps above all, to forge links and to do business with each other in all its various guises.

Already, it has exceeded our expectations, winning numerous architectural awards and quickly establishing itself as the business meeting place of choice, both for the city of York and for the wider region.

The following pages will give a taste of the wide range of activities that now take place which include introducing students to employers via careers fairs, hosting contributors to the Festival of Ideas, and linking cutting-edge research with leading businesses through high-level academic symposia.

The variety of opportunities created for each of these groups is testament to the success of the Hub's initial plan, its imaginative design, and the staff who drive its activity on a daily basis. We also owe a huge debt of gratitude, of course, for the support that we received from the European Regional Development Fund towards its construction.

The Hub runs a lively business events programme covering a wide range of sectors from Science City York's creative approach to health - "Synergy Surgery" - which looked at how game developers could help solve problems in the health sector, to Justin Urquhart Stewart's "Global Finance Keynote" as part of York Business Week.

Over the past year, in excess of 1,000 companies have visited the Hub either to take part in events put on by the University or to run their own workshops and events. Early in 2013 we were pleased to be selected to host an edition of BBC's Question Time programme when over three million people tuned in to watch the episode. It was especially gratifying that the audience for the broadcast reflected the full range of the Hub's communities - local residents, students, businesses and members of academic staff.

The Ron Cooke Hub is currently home to the York Centre for Complex Systems Analysis (YCCSA) research group, which draws on what are usually separate disciplines to solve highly complex, man-made problems from curing viruses to managing ecosystems. It is also home to the White Rose Enterprise Systems group that studies the unique technical and socio-technical challenges involved in the highly complex, business-critical software systems that extend across and between organisations.

It is especially good to see the sheer variety of users of the Hub.

*Over 70  
companies  
have been  
represented at  
careers fairs*

*Over 30  
students have  
been funded to  
develop their  
own business  
ideas*

For example, over 70 companies have been represented at careers fairs in the Hub this year and over 30 students have been funded to develop their own business ideas in dedicated office space. During the year, 49 signed up to use the Hub's Student Enterprise Space.

Others have gained useful internships with Springboard businesses. YUSU and other society activities are commonplace in the Atrium and Pods, and with over 11,000 teaching hours per year the building is well used by our students.

Since 2013 marked the University's 50th anniversary, it is hardly surprising that much of it was spent reflecting on the past and what had been achieved since its foundation. These include accolades such as our position in the world university rankings and being invited to join the Russell Group of leading UK universities. However, the Hub is mainly about looking forward to new ways of doing things – if you want to test this, try knocking on a door in the Springboard business incubation corridor!

This publication covers only a small sample of the activities of the Hub. I hope you enjoy reading it but, most of all, I hope that it encourages you to come and see for yourself by attending an event, making a new contact and being part of this exciting facility.

Colin Mellors  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Business & Community)



11,000  
teaching  
hours per  
year

## VISION & MISSION

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The Ron Cooke Hub provides a social space for academics, businesses and students to collaborate and share ideas. The Hub seeks to nurture and develop partnerships between these three sectors whilst also engaging the wider community. In order to fulfil this vision there will be a vibrant and diverse programme of seminars, workshops, exhibitions, lectures, summer schools and conferences, combined with informal use of creative and social spaces, and open access study areas. This will ultimately result in the generation of new projects, access to new funding streams and stimulation of innovative use of the University's research base. The Hub will also play an important part in contributing to regional economic development.



Photo by John Houlihan

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# OVERVIEW FROM THE HUB BUSINESS MANAGER

## Grahame Brown

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The Ron Cooke Hub's 2nd full year of activity has seen significant growth in use of the building. A complementary increase in levels of engagement and interaction has also resulted as visitors, tenants and stakeholders alike have gained awareness of each other's activities, and generated a strong culture of mutual support.

Key measures indicative of the progress and development during the year include:

- 175,000 estimated footfall
- over 1,000 visiting businesses
- 165 commercially-booked events by external businesses and organisations
- £281,000 in conference revenue generated
- over £8.8m of active research grants in progress and over 10 major research-based conferences hosted
- 61% occupancy in Springboard start-up business space, with 50% retention of 'graduating' businesses on York Science Park
- 49 student businesses registered to the Student Enterprise Space
- 11,000 teaching hours delivered
- 40 free lectures, exhibitions and performances open to the public with 7,400 visitors attending, with the Hub forming an

anchor venue for the Festival of Ideas

- high-profile visits and tours by Princess Anne, Sir Stuart Rose and David Willetts MP
- introduction of the IT Academy to the Hub, bringing with it an additional strong core of business customers
- the Student Enterprise Space established good relationships with entrepreneurs in the Springboard following its relocation to that area
- the Law Clinic confirmed its move to the Hub, again to contribute to the building's ethos with its strong links between business, the public, and student learning
- a student Maths Skills Centre was set up to complement activity on Heslington West

More physical aspects of product development for the Hub have taken place in the form of:

- a new networking space and kitchenette for business residents
- simplified and improved working of the '3Sixty' immersive demonstration space
- installation of an Atrium projector and banner fixtures providing new marketing and revenue generation opportunities
- perhaps one of the most important improvements during the

year was the opening of the Kimberlow Lane car park and new access via Grimston Bar, enabling ample parking facilities for all

Marketing of the Hub continued in a range of forms and formats during the year and has had positive impact on ongoing success:

- Hub Twitter and Facebook accounts rose to 1,480 and 219 followers respectively
- key pages of the Hub website increased their hit-rates between 13% and 43%, with over 9,000 unique page views of the Hub homepage alone, equating to 25 per day.
- a new brochure was produced making the Hub's range of offerings clearer and more concise, issued in both email and one-third A4 formats
- a survey of 359 new University of York students found that the Hub was having a tangible positive impact on their decision to choose York over other universities
- the Hub Atrium hosted BBC Question Time featuring Michael Gove, Education Secretary; Emily Thornberry, Shadow Attorney General; Natalie Bennett, Leader of the Green Party; Anthony Horowitz, writer and York Alumnus and Mark Littlewood, Director General of the Institute of Economic Affairs, reaching a BBC1 audience of approximately 3m viewers

Plans for further enhancements to the Hub do not stop, with a

number of exciting improvements in the pipeline for the year ahead:

- a major submission has been made for a Doctoral Research Centre in the area of computer games research
- comprehensive availability of Wifi is to be concluded, giving ready availability to each and every Hub visitor
- an audit of copying facilities is being put in place to improve the capability, availability and cost of use of these machines to Hub groups
- work has begun on a plan for a real-time plasma screen feed showing current activities in the building and their locations
- high impact professional domain branding is to be implemented

It seems fundamentally clear after the Hub's second full year that the original concept and vision for the Hub was both sound and viable and the successes and synergies deriving from the facility continue to grow.



The managed office spaces in Springboard, which combine high quality accommodation with a great business environment, are an ideal home for a new business





**BUSINESS  
ENGAGEMENT**

# EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF) OUTPUTS

Karen Drum, ERDF Project Manager

The Hub was largely funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), a programme to promote regional economic growth, as part of a £19.6 m capital project to encourage knowledge transfer between the University and local businesses.

The Embedded Business Space and Technology Transfer project has created 9,468 m<sup>2</sup> of new floor space for knowledge transfer use on the Heslington East site and has enabled 61 Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises to receive assistance from the University - each a minimum of 12 hours of support. Assistance has been provided in several forms including facilities use, coaching programmes, student internships, and business incubation.

The outcomes reported from the project so far include 274 new jobs created, 10.5 jobs safeguarded and 6 new businesses created, with many further outputs in the pipeline.

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## BUSINESS COLLABORATIONS

### Mark Mortimer, Director, Research and Enterprise

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The Research Innovation Office supports academic departments to increase the volume of their research and knowledge transfer income and commercial exploitation of University-owned intellectual property. The Research Innovation Office team uses the Hub regularly, taking advantage of its unique setting and facilities to enhance the productivity of interactions with business partners.

Senior staff from IBM used the Hub for a “Research review” event, meeting academics from Environment, Economics and Management, Computer Science, Electronics, YCCSA, Physics, Chemistry, Health Sciences, TFTV and History. The day resulted in:

- support for the CAPACITIE Marie Curie bid for 12 PhD studentships. IBM provided in-kind support including hosting of students for 3 months and contributing to training;
- support for an EU framework bid in Wireless Monitoring for Healthcare which led to the Dependable Healthcare Centre for Doctoral Training and a new collaboration area between Computer Science and Electronics, IBM and Joseph Rowntree Foundation;
- follow-up meetings to expand areas of collaboration.

The Research Innovation Office hosted a network meeting for METRC, the N8 Universities knowledge transfer organisation for industry sectors including chemicals, energy and consumer products. Outcomes included new relationships with Israeli Chemical Ltd and a leading UK manufacturer of household products, currently

exploring funded research possibilities with science departments.

The Institute of Family Businesses used the Hub for a meeting and dinner exploring university-business interactions. Departments showcased research projects with regional family-owned enterprises including Flamingoland, Betty’s and Taylors, and Brocklesby.

The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) used the Hub for their public consultation on their innovation strategy, attracting a large number of businesses and public sector organisations. The University’s Biorenewables Development Centre and Green Chemistry Centre of Excellence are central to the LEP intent to develop an international innovation cluster in biorenewables, industrial biotechnology and agri-technology.

Research Innovation Office staff have been closely involved in York Business Week’s Accelerate Day. This event incorporates training seminars and networking to give local businesses the tools to grow. The Hub has hosted this event for the last 3 years and welcomed over 190 delegates in 2013.

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For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/about-re](http://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/about-re)

*Senior staff from IBM used the Hub for a “Research review” event. The day resulted in support for the CAPACITIE Marie Curie bid for 12 PhD studentships.*

# SCY (FORMERLY SCIENCE CITY YORK)

Professor Nicola Spence, Chief Executive, SCY

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SCY is a private tenant of the Hub and a leading provider of high-quality business and innovation services. It has a proud history of making things happen and it was this organisation that secured £19.6m towards the creation of knowledge transfer space across the Heslington East campus, including the Ron Cooke Hub, through the Embedded Space and Technology Transfer project.

Working in partnership with the University of York, SCY's priorities are to support businesses to achieve growth; develop new infrastructure to support the region's growth sectors; and help businesses to make valuable connections with the academic and research base. SCY have a network of over 3,000 key contacts across more than 1,500 businesses, universities and other public bodies and research companies.

In SCY's second full year of residence in the Hub, a total of 9 large-scale business events were held. These events have ranged from interactive workshops and weekend-long Synergy Surgeries to client meetings. SCY has found the co-location alongside businesses and academic departments to lead to many joint projects and events:

- 2013 saw the successful completion of the third largest ERDF project in the region, which was a partnership between SCY, the University of York and FERA.

- SCY completed the Specialist Business Services programme this year, which has provided high-level support to SMEs in Yorkshire and the Humber. Through this project, to date, SCY assisted in the creation of over 50 new businesses, aided businesses to create 141 new jobs and facilitated a total GVA increase of £5.2m.

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For further information, visit [www.scy.co.uk](http://www.scy.co.uk)



*SCY assisted in the creation of over 50 new businesses, aided businesses to create 141 new jobs and facilitated a total GVA increase of £5.2m*

*Oomph Wellness  
won the Shell  
LiveWire annual  
£10,000 Young  
Entrepreneur of  
the Year Award*

## SPRINGBOARD

Tracey Smith, Managing Director, York Science Park Ltd

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Springboard is York Science Park's exciting, unique and vibrant space located in the Ron Cooke Hub, specifically designed to cater for the needs of very early-stage businesses and entrepreneurs. Springboard provides a nurturing environment that stimulates creativity, and supports entrepreneurs to transform ideas into lucrative, sustainable businesses.

Office accommodation is high quality and low cost, and situated in close proximity to the Departments of Computer Science and Theatre, Film & TV and the Law and Management Schools.

We have seen keen interest from entrepreneurs in Springboard despite the tough economic climate. During the 2012/13 academic year the average occupancy was 61% however since its inception, Springboard has supported 34 companies with an average occupancy rate of 73%. There were no business failures within Springboard during the year, with 50% of the companies ending their subsidised period in the domain being retained within York Science Park managed premises; moving on to the adjacent Catalyst office building.

The Careers Department's Student Enterprise Space, a new tenant of Springboard at the end of the previous year, settled in well and showed much-increased activity. They were joined by The Law Clinic at the

*Touchright  
Software was a  
national finalist in the  
Innovation category  
of the 2012/13  
Landlord & Letting  
Awards*

end of the current year, an outward facing centre of the Law Department providing free-of-charge, legal advice for businesses and the public, coupled with supervised, live case handling experience for students.

A Networking Space including a kitchenette was installed, to enable Springboard businesses to mix both socially and provide opportunity for mutual support and cross-pollination of ideas. Other developments include a professional branding and identification of the domain's entrance zones.

Resident and former resident businesses shared a number of successes in 2012/13, the highlights of which were:

- Oomph Wellness won the Shell LiveWire annual £10,000 Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award competition for new businesses, are setting up an office in London, and have established a franchise in Hong Kong.
- Text Mining Solutions won award funding from the Technology Strategy Board towards the development of web-enabled user interfaces for knowledge management.
- Touchright Software was a national finalist in the Innovation category of the 2012/13 Landlord & Letting Awards.
- Former tenant Yatterbox sold their political social media website business to London firm Cicerco.

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For further information, visit [www.yorksciencepark.co.uk](http://www.yorksciencepark.co.uk)

# DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Emma Hodgson, Student Recruitment & Marketing Manager, Department of Computer Science

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The Department of Computer Science utilises the CPD suite within the Ron Cooke Hub to keep the skills of external engineers and professionals up-to-date in the disciplines of system safety engineering and safety critical software engineering, enabling them to keep on top of safety and security challenges.

The Department's courses are well-respected by the industry, with training provided for delegates from many different organisations, including:

- Airbus, GE Aviation Systems, Thales, Rolls-Royce, Jaguar Land Rover, Health and Safety Executive, British Energy

A notable course run in the Ron Cooke Hub this year was in "system safety education" developed for the rail industry in China, in conjunction with the University of Birmingham and sponsored by the Lloyd's Register Foundation. The request was prompted by the rapid expansion of the high speed rail network, demonstrating the need for system safety expertise in the Chinese railway industry. The course will initially teach lecturers and small cohorts from China in York before the material is taught in China, fully supported by our staff.

A total of 19 courses have been run for 232 delegates.

Some of the feedback received from courses held within the Ron Cooke Hub included:

*"One of the best courses I have been on. Have gained a good appreciation of system safety and in particular the analysis techniques involved."*

*"Enjoyed the mix of theory with industrial anecdotes – this was enhanced by academic lecturers with good practical experience."*

*"One of the most enjoyable, practical and effective external courses I've attended."*

*"Found the course excellent, definitely one of the best and most useful courses that I have been on."*

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For further information, visit  
[www.cs.york.ac.uk/professional](http://www.cs.york.ac.uk/professional)

Training provided  
for Airbus, GE  
Aviation Systems,  
Thales, Rolls-Royce  
and Jaguar Land  
Rover

## CORPORATE TRAINING UNIT

Anna Hastie, CPD Manager

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The University Corporate Training Unit run a programme of short courses for business, along with an executive education programme, with a number of these activities delivered through a bespoke training suite within the Hub.

Towards the end of the year the Unit held 7 short courses for business in topics including: Social Media Masterclass, Developing and Leading Teams, and Negotiation Skills. These full day and half day courses had a total of 73 (largely SME) delegates attending. As a result of this success there are already 16 day or half day courses planned for SME businesses for the coming year. There will be places for 12 delegates on each course, and these are showing signs of filling up in advance.

The Unit has delivered two 12 day Executive Development Courses to The Shepherd Group and one 12 day Executive Development Course for Garbutt and Elliot during the year. There have also been four 3 day Executive Development Courses for Garbutt and Elliot. All the feedback from these courses has been excellent and it is anticipated that this model of corporate activity will increase.

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For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/cpd](http://www.york.ac.uk/cpd)

*The Unit has delivered two 12 day Executive Development Courses to The Shepherd Group and one 12 day Executive Development Course for Garbutt and Elliot*



## IT ACADEMY

### Andrew Bettany, IT Academy Manager

The IT Academy, also part of the University's Corporate Training Unit, has been running for over eight years, and relocated fully into a dedicated training suite with adjacent break-out discussion area on the ground floor of the Hub at the beginning of this year. The Academy provides high-quality ICT training to business as well as University of York staff and students, and offers the opportunity to train for industry-leading qualifications from Microsoft certified trainers under the Microsoft IT Academy program.

The Academy takes advantage of the Hub's Pods and the adjacent 3Sixty for specific training exercises. Course and examinations include: MCSE; MCSA; Microsoft Office Specialist; PRINCE2 and ITILv3, Prometric, Certiport and bespoke courses. This year the Academy delivered courses to 165 learners and held over 40 Microsoft Prometric examinations - up from 137 learners the previous year.

Plans for the coming year are to attract even more businesses to the Academy for both courses and examinations, and an expansion of the range of courses and the availability of examinations slots. The Academy is also increasingly embracing social media with a view to improving its online presence in the region.

For further information, visit [www.it-academy.co.uk](http://www.it-academy.co.uk)

*The Academy delivered courses to 165 learners and held over 40 Microsoft Prometric examinations*





The background is a solid purple color. It features a complex pattern of thin, white, intersecting lines that create a grid-like structure with various angles. Scattered throughout the background are several semi-transparent, light purple circles of varying sizes, some of which overlap the white lines.

**STUDENT  
AND ACADEMIC  
SUPPORT**

# CAREERS

## Enterprise Officer, Jessica Noon

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The University of York's Careers office uses the Hub for a wide variety of student enterprise and employability activities and has a permanent physical stake in the building through its management of the Student Enterprise Space. The Hub's prestige has been key to generating added value and impact to Careers' activities, especially for its corporate and business clients.

Through Careers, the Hub provides a flourishing programme of support for budding student entrepreneurs. The Student Enterprise Space (SES), situated within the YSPL-managed Springboard domain provides a free-of-charge office base and postal address for promising student businesses, including business support events and proof-of-concept/ social enterprise funding opportunities. Following Careers' move to the current SES space in the Hub just before the beginning of the year, uptake has increased significantly. The number of students signing up to use the facilities has grown 206% this year (2012-13) alone, to a total of 49 students running 30 businesses. The reasons for this are clear; the integration of student businesses and external companies proves invaluable for the cross-fertilisation of ideas and support. There is a real community feel within the businesses of the Springboard (the next logical step for successful student entrepreneurs) from which students have gained immeasurably.

Key Careers' events this year in the Hub have included their flagship Careers Fairs, in Technology,

and Law, both hosted in the Atrium. These two events combined, attracted 75 top graduate employers and recruiting organisations, all looking for York student talent, with over 1,300 students attending. The first Assessment Centre Activity Day was also held in the Hub this year, with top companies such as Mars and IBM delivering insight workshops supporting students in preparation for the now widely-used assessment centre process.

The outputs of the Student Internship Bureau (SIB) have benefitted significantly from opportunities presented by the Hub. Facilitated by SIB, six Springboard tenants took the opportunity to engage the skills and motivation of York students during the year, through distinct paid Internship projects responding to the needs of their growing businesses, and providing valuable experience in return. This is exemplified by Text Mining Solutions, a double finalist in the 2013 York Press Business Awards, who recruited a postgraduate student studying Cyber Security, over an 11 week period to develop a more customer-friendly user interface on their web-site. SIB internships also act as a valuable talent-spotting tool, with Careers able to support local SMEs with students through funding opportunities several times a year.

*The number of students signing up to use the facilities has grown 206% this year*

*These two events combined, attracted 75 top graduate employers, with over 1,300 students attending*

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For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/careers/enterprise](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/enterprise)

# TEACHING & LEARNING SPACE

## Matthew Burton, Timetabling and Accommodation Services Business Manager

The high quality teaching spaces in the Ron Cooke Hub are proving to be very popular with staff and students alike, being ideally situated for associated breakout sessions, and with the Café area easily accessible in the Atrium between lectures and seminars. The most frequently used teaching and study spaces are the Study pods (28%), Lecture Theatre (12%), Lakehouse (7%), and finally, the various seminar rooms (38%). Computer Science, The York Management School, TFTV and Law School are the dominant departments currently scheduled for teaching in the Hub.

The Hub's 24 hour access Study decks have become increasingly well used, regularly at capacity during the day, and Study pods are particularly popular with students for group revision during the examination period. During the year increased student study access was opened up on the Island of Interaction, and un-booked events and meeting rooms are now also promoted as open to ad-hoc use.

In terms of teaching and associated uses, the total booked hours is due to rise from 11,033 (2012/13) to 12,749 hours booked ahead for 2013/14, or, considered in terms of 'student seats' this will rise from 69,200 in 2012/13 to 91,500 booked ahead for 2013/14. This has the potential to increase further due to spring module selections. These figures imply a one third increase in teaching space utilisation in the Hub, but with around 2 hours of

non-timetabled activities for every 1 hour of booked teaching, this is being achieved largely through increased room-use efficiency rather than eating significantly into the open availability of spaces.

For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/campuservices/timetabling](http://www.york.ac.uk/campuservices/timetabling)

*In terms of teaching and associated uses a one third increase in teaching space utilisation in the Hub*



## COLLEGE SUPPORT

### LANGWITH

Jon Fanning, College Principal

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The warm welcome and supportive attitude of the Hub has proved critical in allowing the new Langwith College to develop supportive and developmental initiatives for its students. The Hub Lecture theatre was used twice this year as a top quality cinema, and allowed an interesting and exciting presentation about the proposed Guatemala trek, while the Atrium has hosted a welcome talk, food and drinks for 500 new students and for a Ceilidh. Following the success of this Irish dancing experience it is hoped to transfer the popular Bollywood dancing session from the Hub exhibition space and to also add mid-term formals to the food and music mix the Hub is hosting for the College.

After all this excitement it has been necessary to have some quiet time, and the Hub has provided useful facilities for relaxation classes in its seminar rooms, and mentoring classes to prepare the next generation of Langwithians, held in its Study pods. The important College Council that governs Langwith is also hosted in the Hub, and hundreds of its students have taken advantage of the study, computer and catering spaces. Greater access to the Island of Interaction has been seen as a positive addition during the year.

For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/colleges/langwith](http://www.york.ac.uk/colleges/langwith)

### GOODRICKE

Jane Clarbour, Provost

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Goodricke College moved to the Heslington East campus in September 2009. The primary aim of the college is to make students' time at university one of the most memorable periods of their life, both academically and socially. This is done through a range of activities, led largely by the student body, with additional support from college staff, alumni, and friends of the college. Goodricke College takes great pride in their community's cohesive spirit as well as their excellent welfare support network.

Goodricke College makes use of the Hub Atrium annually to welcome all students at the start of their university lives, finding the large space and café well suited for networking associated with this reception. The versatile nature of the Atrium has allowed it to facilitate live College music and social events such as the Céilidh at the end of term 1. The college makes use of the Lecture theatre and Lakehouse for various student events such as their quiz night and as a venue for training their volunteer students. In addition these rooms are used for the Goodricke Public Lecture Series, which are attended by students, parents, staff and members of the wider public.

The Hub's study pods are regularly booked out by Goodricke students for music practice and group study activities and students make full use of the study decks available on the first and second floor.

For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/colleges/goodricke](http://www.york.ac.uk/colleges/goodricke)

## STUDENT SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

Rohit Maini, Student intern

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There were a total of 246 student society events and bookings in the Hub over the past year. The Graduate Students Association (GSA) ran 70 of these events, including regular drop-in support sessions for postgraduates based on Heslington East. The Christian Unions (CU) of both the Goodricke and Langwith colleges were also regular users for term-time meetings. The primary rooms used by societies were the study pods; which reflects a general pattern of student use of these rooms above any other sector of the Hub community. There were two major student-run conferences held at the Hub; these being run by the United Nations Association (UNA) and the International Development Society, both with attendances of over 100 people each.

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For further information, visit [www.yusu.org](http://www.yusu.org)

*There were  
a total of 246  
student society  
events*



# MATHS SKILLS CENTRE

## Francis Duah, Maths Skills Centre Manager

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The Maths Skills Centre offers free twice-weekly drop in support in Maths and Statistics within the Hub, to all students and staff at the University. Prior to 2012/13 all student contact with the Skills Centre was centred on Heslington West, but in 2012/13 this was extended to include two hour-long drop-in sessions in the Ron Cooke Hub. A popular workshop series was also added, in the Hub's computer suite. Given the success of this move, further arrangements have been made to continue these services into 2013/14. The weekly drop-in sessions have been relocated to a new room highly conducive to the activity. Users of the Centre come from a wide range of subjects where Maths and Statistics form an integral part of coursework, modules or dissertation requirements. Support is provided in the following three forms:

**Drop-In:** Tutors are available to help guide students and give advice on an ad-hoc basis

**One-on-One Appointments:** These are bookable online; typically for those who need more involved help and advice

### **Post-graduate Workshops in Statistics**

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For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/maths-skills-centre](http://www.york.ac.uk/maths-skills-centre)

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# RESEARCH GROUPS

# YCCSA

## Professor Susan Stepney, Director

The York Centre for Complex Systems Analysis (YCCSA) is an interdisciplinary research co-operative, whose research focus is “real world complexity requiring interdisciplinary solutions”. YCCSA is a fluid group of around 70 staff and research students which champions a model of bottom-up, inclusive interdisciplinary research by facilitating and nurturing a geographically and intellectually diverse community of researchers, from across the science and social science, and arts departments.

YCCSA members have a strong teaching, publication and research grant record. YCCSA has ~£6.3M of currently active research grants, £3.7M from the CIDCATS project to train PhD students, a further ~£1.4M from grants due to start in the new academic year from diverse funding sources, and a healthy pipeline of proposals accepted, submitted and in preparation.

Throughout 2013, a £12.5 million application has been developed, led by Professor Peter Cowling, to create a Centre for Doctoral Training in Intelligent Games and Game Intelligence (IGGI). The Centre is a collaboration between the University of York, the University of Essex, Goldsmiths College (University of London) and 60 organisations from the world-leading UK games industry and creative sectors. YCCSA helped to form links with those using games and gamification in their

research across the university, which was crucial to the project in demonstrating the level of expertise at York. Confirmation of the success of this application was received in November 2013.

YCCSA has continued its popular Friday “scone seminar” series, bringing together academics for in-depth presentation and discussion of leading-edge interdisciplinary research. This year





speakers were from York, Leeds, Durham, Bradford, Oxford, Southampton, Madrid, Lisbon, California, Canterbury NZ, the British Antarctic Survey, and the national Health & Safety Laboratory.

YCCSA ran its fifth annual summer school this year during which ten exceptional undergraduate students from universities around the world were resident in the Hub for ten weeks, embedded in an active research culture, and engaged in real (albeit small) research projects of their own. Each student had supervisors from two different academic departments, to foster interdisciplinary working. Projects this year included cancer modelling, detecting psychopathy in voice recordings and characterising symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

YCCSA has a programme of interdisciplinary international conferences, highlighting York's interdisciplinary reputation, and exploiting the excellent facilities available in the Ron Cooke Hub. In 2013, YCCSA hosted MMEE2013, the 4th Mathematical Models in Ecology and Evolution conference, showcasing the latest developments of mathematical modelling in evolution and ecology and featuring speakers from universities including Yale, Bristol, Montpellier and York, and from Microsoft Research.

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For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/yccsa](http://www.york.ac.uk/yccsa)

*Throughout 2013,  
a £12.5 million  
application has been  
developed, led by Professor  
Peter Cowling, to create a  
Centre for Doctoral Training  
in Intelligent Games and  
Game Intelligence  
(IGGI)*

*YCCSA has  
~£6.3M of currently  
active research  
grants, from  
diverse funding  
sources*

# WHITE ROSE ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS

Richard Paige, Professor of Enterprise Systems

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Enterprise systems are the large-scale, distributed, highly complex, and business-critical software systems that extend across and between organisations. As part of the Department of Computer Science, the Enterprise Systems group studies the unique technical and socio-technical challenges involved in the analysis, design, implementation, deployment and management of these types of systems. Cross-cutting themes for the group include the scalability of development techniques, architectures, and systems; agile approaches to design and development; identifying and handling unexpected behaviours; and issues of security, confidentiality and privacy.

In the 2012-13 academic year, the group, has undertaken research into the use of open-source software acquisition for small businesses, self-adaptive AI Systems and “model-driven engineering”. Over the past year, the groups’ research has been published at international conferences, including those on model-driven engineering (MoDELS, ICMT, ECMFA), software maintenance (ICSM), and software engineering (TASE). Professor Richard Paige and James Williams have co-organised the inaugural workshop on combining modelling and search-based engineering at the premier software engineering conference, ICSE.

The group worked on £2.5 million of research funding during the year, and supervised 21.5 PhD students, including students on the Large-Scale Complex IT Systems (LSCITS) doctoral training centre, which Professor Richard Paige directs.

In teaching, the group developed three new teaching modules for Masters students on mobile-application development, service-oriented architectures, and model-driven engineering, and Dr Louis Rose was nominated for a Vice-Chancellor’s Teaching Award.

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For further information, visit [www.cs.york.ac.uk/es](http://www.cs.york.ac.uk/es)



*The group worked on £2.5 million of research funding during the year, and supervised 21.5 PhD students*

The background is a solid blue color. It features a complex network of thin, white, intersecting lines that create a web-like pattern. Scattered throughout the background are numerous semi-transparent, light blue circles of varying sizes, some of which overlap the white lines.

# COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

# YORK CONFERENCES

## Claire Bennett, Conference & Event Manager

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York Conferences are responsible for hiring out venues, facilities and services for commercial activities throughout the University of York. Having the fantastic new venue of the Ron Cooke Hub in its portfolio, with its spectacular Atrium, quirky Pods, and high specification innovation spaces such as the 3Sixty, has provided the group with a premium opportunity. Clients range from internal departments to external companies at a local, national and international scale. These parties not only bring income into the University which can be circulated back into its core activities, but also generate business interaction and engagement providing wider benefits. Some key clients and events over the past year include: The 40th Institute of Physics Conference on Plasma Physics and Nuclear Physics Group Conference, JSR Genetics annual conference, Health Sciences' C2D2 conference, Barclay's Bank Seminar, Minster FM for a Corporate Day, The Royal Society's Regional Network Meeting and Computer Science's 4th IFAC. The group work with, and host, the Chamber of Commerce networking breakfast event on Accelerate day, which is based at the Ron Cooke Hub during York Business Week.

In addition to its commercial activities, York Conferences also used the Ron Cooke Hub to engage with the local community this year, through the St Leonard's Hospice 'Paws for a Cause' event; raising awareness

of a York charity but also providing an ideal opportunity for local exposure of the Hub. Following the success of this year's event York Conferences have agreed to act as host for the next year.

Between September 2012 and September 2013 the Hub hosted 165 York Conference managed events with a combined value of over £280k. Over the next year the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Management School Conference, the Mathematical Virology Conference and many more are already scheduled, within events on the books to a value of £324k.

York Conferences are planning a 'Keep it on Campus' campaign in the 2013/14 academic year and are keen to work with departments to gain University exposure across an international stage, helping to attract research grants and bids to host events at the University, all to enhance the University's overall available funds for future core investments.

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For further information, visit [www.yorkconferences.com](http://www.yorkconferences.com)



*The Hub  
hosted 165 York  
Conference  
managed events  
with a combined  
value of over  
£280k*

## HUB CAFÉ

Victoria Robinson, Catering Manager

With an increase in footfall resulting from greater overall use and awareness of the Hub, an additional college on Heslington East and increased timetabling for academic use of the building, the Hub Café has seen a significant increase in trading activity of 33% in the year. In response to this, the Café introduced a third (Express) sales till to reduce queue lengths at peak times. Significant growth in the year was accounted for by increased demand for evening meals which followed on from an extension in the café's opening hours from 5pm to 7.30pm. Sales of alcohol and a key range of essential grocery products were also brought in to satisfy local need, and a drinking water fountain was procured to provide improved customer service in response to student demand.

For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/hub/conferences-and-meetings/catering](http://www.york.ac.uk/hub/conferences-and-meetings/catering)

*The Hub Café  
has seen a  
significant increase  
in trading activity  
of 33% in  
the year*





The free public lecture series is enjoyed by members of the local, student, academic and business community



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Sarah Mitchell & Naomi Richards, External Relations Events Team

Under the auspices of the University of York's External Relations Department the Ron Cooke Hub provides a frequent venue for a variety of public and profile-raising events.



*BBC  
Question Time  
with circa 3 million  
television viewers  
was hosted in the  
Hub Atrium*

## PUBLIC LECTURES & EVENTS

In 2012-13 over 40 public lectures and exhibitions were held in the Ron Cooke Hub, with an average audience of 150 per event. This included the major Festival of Ideas, Royal Academy of Engineering conference and soiree, and one off speakers such as Sir Stuart Rose, Brian Sewell and Zoe Williams. BBC Question Time with circa 3 million television viewers was hosted in the Hub Atrium, also gaining significant internal and stakeholder interest and enabling the event to be uniquely opened up to a supplementary on-site audience of staff, students, public and business guests.

The External Relations events team continued to work with departmental researchers to put on three high profile Research in Focus exhibitions to a professional standard within the Hub Exhibition Space and 3Sixty during the year. There were additional major exhibitions on the University 50th Anniversary, the York Science & Innovation Grand Tour (led by the Research & Enterprise directorate), and the Vice Chancellor's Art Exhibition, arranged by student members of the Norman Rea Art Gallery.

For further information, visit [www.york.ac.uk/events](http://www.york.ac.uk/events)

*40 public  
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## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND OUTREACH

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A variety of community events were held in the Hub during 2012/13, many organised through the University of York's Widening Participation team, and a number of these events returning after previous visits to take advantage of the large central Atrium space and flexible break-out facilities.

Highlights were; the 'Big Deal' final in June in which 80, Year 9 & 10 students pitched their ideas to 12 invited business figures who acted as 'dragons'. The student-run York Entrepreneurs Society hosted 140 Year 5 pupils from Tadcaster Grammar for an 'Enterprise Day', again with pupils pitching design ideas to a judging audience from the business community. A certificate presentation and celebration evening for students took place as part of the Hemsworth Academy Challenge in May, with 90 Year 11 students attending along with their parents and carers.

## DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

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The Hub regularly hosts distinguished visitors, with the building itself along with the activities of its occupants making significant impact on its visiting audience. Amongst those visiting during the year were: Princess Anne, business delegations from BT and Siemens, Sir Stuart Rose, Francis Maude MP, John Dodds (Director of BIS), and the Former Korean Prime Minister Dr Han Sung-Soo, to name just a few. Graduation and court dinners are also regularly held in the Hub's Atrium, with invited guests from York City's influencers and funders.



Photo by Ian Martindale



BBC's Question Time was held in the Hub, attracting an audience of around 3 million viewers



# APPENDIX

# GOVERNANCE AND LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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## **Hub Strategy and Management Group**

Chair – Colin Mellors

Hub Business Manager – Grahame Brown

External Relations – Joan Concannon

Commercial Services – Jon Greenwood

Estates – Jon Meacock

Research & Enterprise – Mark Mortimer

York Science Park Ltd – Tracey Smith

Chair of Hub Forum – Susan Stepney

## **Hub Forum**

Chair – Susan Stepney

Hub Business Manager – Grahame Brown

York Conferences – Fiona Barrow

Facilities Manager – Keith Arnold

York Science Park Ltd (YSPL) – Kim Hodgson and Mick Aucker

York Centre for Complex Systems Analysis (YCCSA) – Simon O’Keefe

Computer Science CPD – Dawn Forrester

Corporate Training Unit – Anna Hastie

IT Academy – Andrew Bettany

Careers – Jessica Noon

Enterprise Systems – Richard Paige and Louis Rose

Goodricke College – Jane Clabour

Langwith College – Jonathan Fanning

Langwith College Officer – Jonathan Exon

Student Representatives – Dean Hickey (Goodricke) and Sam Maguire (Langwith)

Hub Catering – Victoria Robinson

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – Karen Drum

Science City York (SCY) – Becky Appleyard

Campus Estates – Kevin Roberts

Theatre, Film and Television (TFTV) – Carol Dove

Health, Safety and Security – Denis Fowler

# USE OF HUB FACILITIES

## Most commonly used Hub facilities

Room	Number of bookings
RCH/037 Lecture Theatre	598
RCH/204 YCCSA Seminar	533
RCH/041 Study Pod 2	510
RCH/042 Study Pod 1	500
RCH/017 Seminar Room	479
RCH/040 Study Pod 3	402
RCH/235 YCCSA Meeting Room	353
RCH/102e WRG Meeting Room	298
RCH/005 3Sixty Demonstration	264
RCH/018 PC Classroom	252
RCH/004 CTC Exhibition Space	155
RCH/103 CPD Seminar Room	142
RCH/001X (Atrium)	138
RCH/009 CTC Meeting Room	122
RCH/105 CPD Seminar Room	117
RCH/107 CPD Seminar Room	107
RCH/202 Platform	42





UNIVERSITY *of York*

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@theroncookehub