



Sefydliad Ymchwil Cymdeithasol ac
Economaidd a Data Cymru

Wales Institute of Social and Economic
Research and Data

INSIGHT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



The Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data (WISERD) is a national, interdisciplinary, social science research institute.

We have been designated by the Welsh Government as a national research centre. Using innovative approaches, our research spans the fields of economics, sociology, geography and political science.

We are a collaborative venture between the universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, South Wales and Swansea – working together to improve the quality and quantity of social science research in Wales and beyond.

Our research effects change by influencing the development of policy and practice across a range of sectors.

WISERD hosts the UK-wide WISERD Civil Society Research Centre, a major investment by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), and a number of other major research grants.

At Aberystwyth University, WISERD includes the Centre for Welsh Politics and Society, and hosts the EU-funded GLOBAL-RURAL, IMAJINE and ROBUST projects.

WISERD also hosts ADR Wales (Administrative Data Research Wales) – a collaboration between Welsh Government, Swansea University Medical School and WISERD at Cardiff University. ADR Wales is part of the ESRC funded ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK).

WISERD publications data on pages 10 and 11 provided by Elsevier: www.elsevier.com.



Director's report

Welcome to WISERD Insight. I'm delighted to be able to report on 2019 – my first year as WISERD Director. It has been a privilege to take on the role while Professor Ian Rees Jones takes forward our new ESRC-funded Civil Society Research Centre. This year has truly marked the end of one chapter and the beginning of another, and has strengthened WISERD's position as an important national research centre.

One of the most significant developments of 2019 was our success in the highly competitive Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Centres Competition, where we secured £6.3 million as reinvestment into the continuation of our civil society research.

This is the third major funding award in WISERD's ten-year history and will involve an ambitious new five-year programme of work. You can read more about all the new projects on our website and download the latest civil society booklet at www.wiserd.ac.uk.

We're looking forward to building on expertise and innovation from across our five partner universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, South Wales and Swansea, and involving co-investigators from across the UK, Europe and internationally. We'll also be working in close partnership with our colleagues from the public, private, policy and third sectors.

In February 2020, we launched the new ESRC-funded Civil Society Centre at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay, with the stakeholder event, *Celebrating Civil Society Research: A New Chapter*. We're grateful to Mark Drakeford AM,

First Minister of Wales and Professor Alison Park, Director of Research at the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) for speaking at the event.

Our WISERD colleagues at Bangor University are planning a further celebration of the new Centre this autumn. This will also mark the start of a new series of events promoting WISERD research at Bangor, bringing together researchers from across the University to lay the foundations for future interdisciplinary research projects.

2019 saw WISERD hold its 10th Annual Conference, which took place at Aberystwyth University. The theme was *Civil Society and Participation*, and we welcomed over 150 delegates. Three of the WISERD co-directors and I took part in a special plenary panel, to reflect on our previous ESRC-funded Civil Society Centre, which began in October 2014. We looked back on how we've been able to help shape policy so far and discussed how the new programme aims to influence policy in Wales and beyond.

The 2019 event also comprised, for the first time, a pre-conference symposium. *An Unsettled Status? Migration in a Turbulent Age* was hosted by WISERD

WISERD's success is testament to its collaborative approach with universities and charities across Wales, Europe, and the world. Facts have never been more important, and having a world-class knowledge hub helping us in government to make the right decisions, will help us build a better Wales for us, and for our future generations.

Mark Drakeford,
First Minister of Wales, speaking at Celebrating Civil Society Research: A New Chapter (pictured right)





researcher, Rhys Dafydd Jones, at Aberystwyth University and involved researchers from across the UK. A few weeks later our event, *Rural Hate and Hostility*, also at the University, welcomed participants from Welsh Government, local government and a range of civil society groups.

WISERD completed some exciting projects in 2019 that aim to provide valuable resources for researchers. As part of our Fringe session at the TUC Congress in Brighton, we launched WISERD's new interactive service, *UnionMaps*. This allows users to access data on union membership for over 400 unitary authority and local authority districts of Great Britain.

Also, in partnership with the Carnegie UK Trust, the Institute of Welsh Affairs, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, and representatives from the public, private and third sectors, we've launched the *Understanding Welsh Places* website. This brings together statistical information about towns and small communities in Wales – the places all too often overlooked by public policy.

As part of the new ESRC-funded Civil Society Centre, we'll be continuing to focus on finding new and improved ways to search, discover, map and visualise data.

We'll be developing our existing *WISERD DataPortal*, which helps researchers to re-use and re-purpose existing data. We'll also be developing our recently launched *WISERD Education Data Lab*, which aims to provide new and independent analysis of key educational issues and involves innovative use of administrative educational data.

Over the last year we've continued to support our early career researchers and are extremely proud of their achievements and their contribution to WISERD's work. Three WISERD researchers – Constantino Dumangane Jr (now a lecturer at the University of York), Wil Chivers and Ian Thomas (both at Cardiff University) – successfully secured places on the 2019 GW4 Crucible scheme.

Dr Stuart Fox (now a lecturer at Brunel University London) was awarded the Dillwyn Medal for Social Sciences from the Learned Society of Wales, in recognition of outstanding early career research, particularly for his work on political and civic attitudes and behaviour, which considered young people's political engagement.



A number of WISERD PhD students have also made a significant contribution to capacity-building and the sustainability of WISERD's work, and have presented their research at international events.

We're pleased to congratulate Dr Samuel Brown following his appointment as a WISERD research officer at Swansea University and to Samuel Mann following his appointment to a WISERD post-doctoral position, also at Swansea. Samuel has secured a place on the Global Labor Organization Virtual Young Scholars Program. His research on the economics of sexual orientation has been covered by *The Conversation* and shared extensively via online tabloid newspapers.

Another colleague to join us recently is Dr Jean Jenkins from the Cardiff Business School. Jean has worked closely alongside WISERD for a number of years and presented her research on employment rights in the garment sector at the 2019 *Hay Festival*. Alongside a UK government-funded Global Challenges Research Fund project with WISERD in partnership with colleagues in India and her work with the Clean Clothes Campaign, Jean recently started a new project with Dr Katy Huxley at Cardiff University, on *Urgent Appeals: Data and Shared Learning*.

It's been great to see the impact of WISERD research in 2019. Research by Professor Gary Higgs and his team at the University of South Wales (USW) has been incorporated into the consultation documents that will inform the latest version of the *Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019)*.

The USW team has also developed software that provides insight into demand for sporting facilities, which will be used by up to 40 sport governing bodies, including Welsh Gymnastics and Sport Wales. Additionally, their research carried out with Tenovus Cancer Care on measuring access to cancer services in Wales was rewarded with the USW Best Future Impact Award.

The Welsh Government published a report written by WISERD's Professor Alan Felstead and Rhys Davies at Cardiff University, featuring new evidence about work in Wales. Alan and Rhys, both from Cardiff University, are part of the team to have successfully secured funding of £1.95m from the ESRC for a new Productivity Outcomes of Workplace Practice, Engagement and Learning (ProPEL) Hub, which aims to boost productivity within businesses and the UK economy.

WISERD's new ESRC-funded Civil Society Centre aims to transform our understanding of how civil society is affected by forms of civil exclusion and expansion, civic loss and gain, and the potential for civil society organisations to play a key role in civil repair.

WISERD also carried out an evidence review for the Children's Commissioner for Wales on the human rights of children in Wales and a survey of almost 10,000 children to guide the Commissioner's three-year workplan for children and young people.

2019 saw the completion of the *Successful Futures for All* project, which added value to the Welsh Government's existing evaluation of the progress of the Pioneer Schools in developing the new 3-15 curriculum in Wales. Dr Nigel Newton contributed significantly to media coverage around the new curriculum and presented findings from our project to members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee of the National Assembly for Wales.

WISERD's research also continues to help support the rural economy and make a difference to our rural communities. As part of the EU Horizon 2020-funded project, ROBUST, WISERD researchers in Aberystwyth are working with the Welsh Local Government Association and rural civil society groups to develop a new 'Rural Vision for Wales'.

This time next year, our Cardiff team will be preparing to move into Cardiff University's new Social Science Research Park (sbarc I sparc). WISERD co-director, Professor Chris Taylor, has been appointed as the new centre's academic director and we look forward to supporting him in promoting new partnerships between academia, and public, private and third sectors.

I hope this report provides an insight into how our research, networks and international collaborations are developing and that you'll continue to follow our progress as we start our exciting new chapter.

Sally Power
WISERD Director

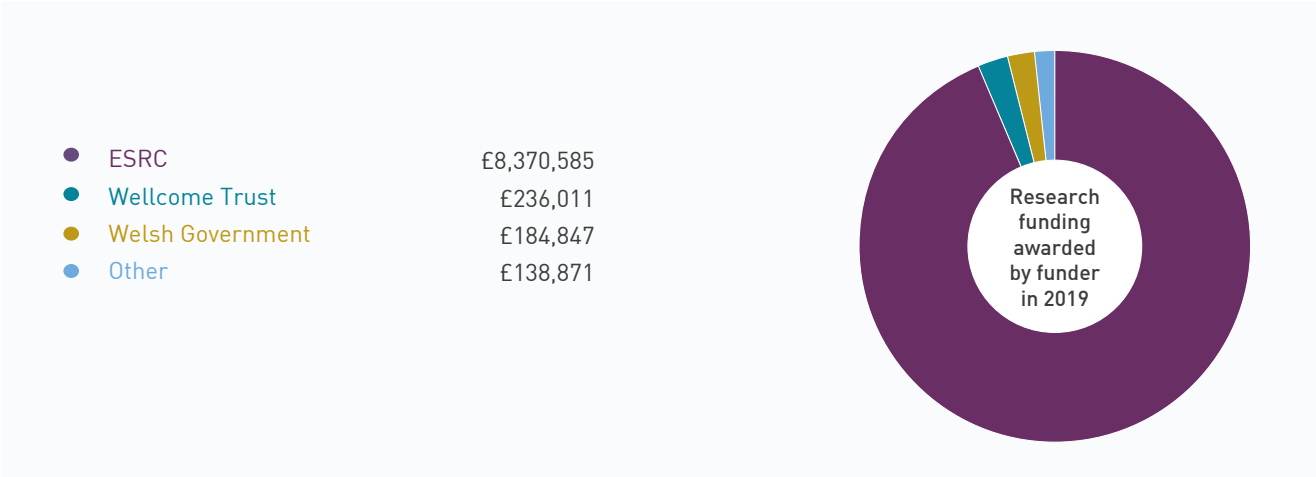
Income profile

WISERD has an outstanding track record of winning competitive research funding. In 2019 we successfully secured new funding from a wide range of organisations in the public and third sectors.

Research grant capture in 2019

During 2019, WISERD applied for **23 research grants** across all five partner universities and was involved in research bids, including those led by other organisations, to the value of **£16.4m**.

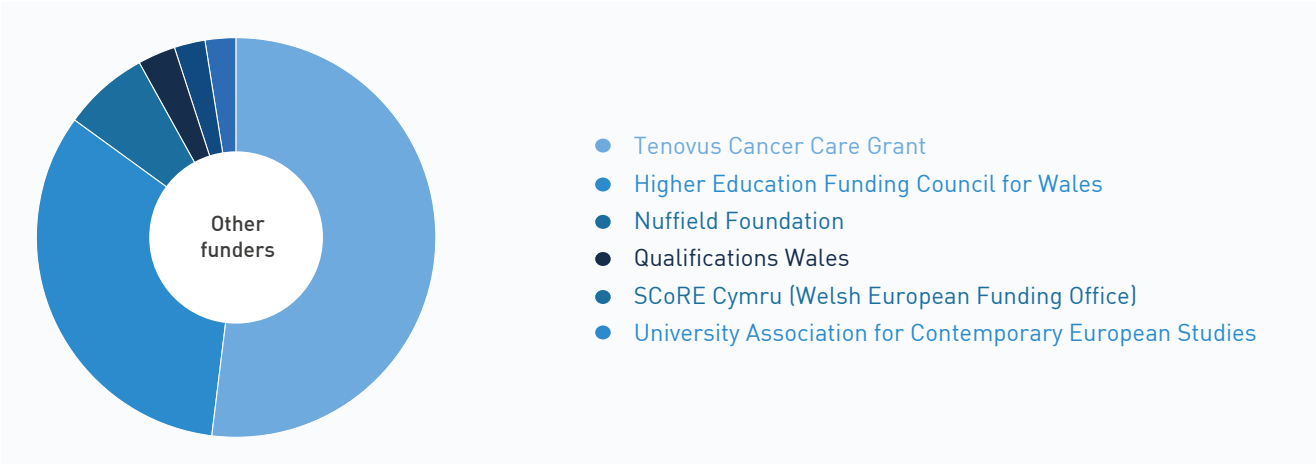
WISERD’s total research grant capture amount for 2019 was **£8.9m**.



Over **8.3m** of this new funding was from the **Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)**, which is part of UK Research and Innovation, and includes the following large research grants:

WISERD Civil Society – Civic Stratification and Civil Repair (started October 2019)	£7,927,418
The political economies of school exclusion and their consequences (started October 2019)	£374,858

Over **£138k** of this new funding was from other funders:



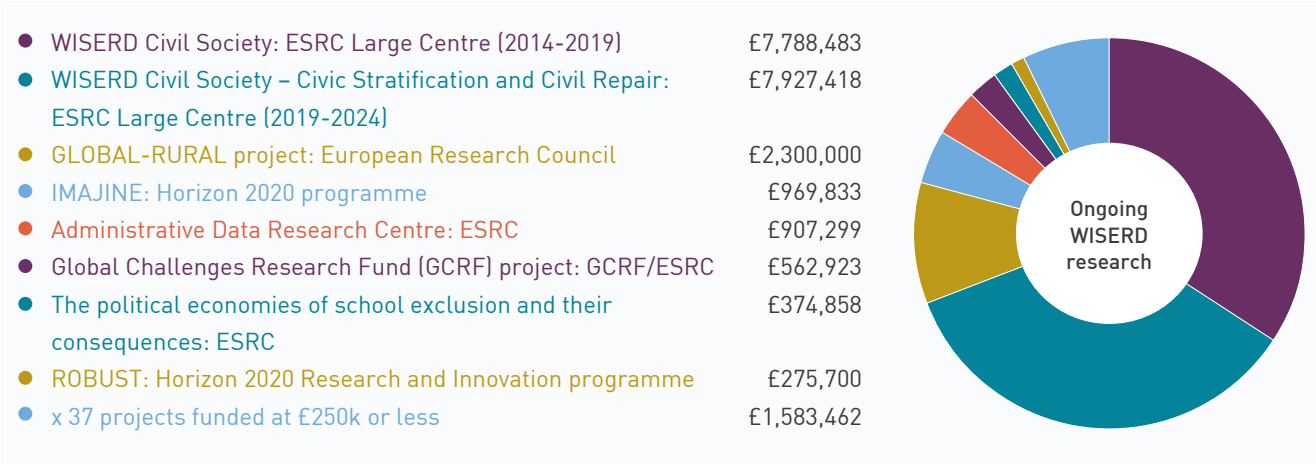
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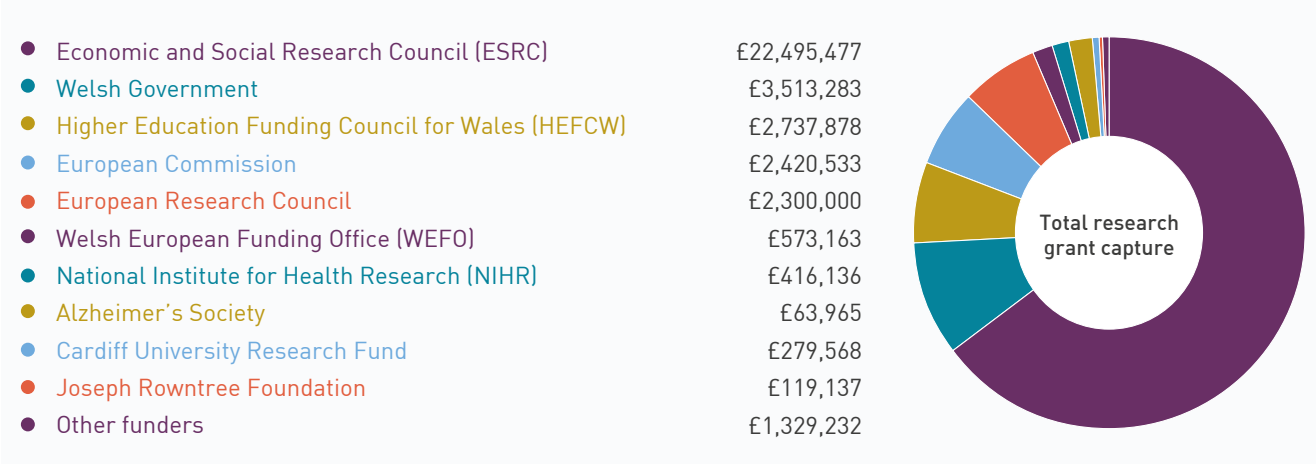
Current WISERD research

The value of ongoing WISERD research in 2019 was **£22.7m** across **45 research grants**.



Research grant capture 2009-19

Since 2009, WISERD has submitted **251 research funding bids** across the WISERD partner universities, with a success rate of **59%**. WISERD’s total research grant capture since 2009 is **£36.2m**.



International links

WISERD is proud to have established many international links, through fieldwork, collaborative research and events, hosting visiting academics and attending conferences abroad. Some of these are highlighted below.

Sardinia

WISERD research at Aberystwyth University inspired a GLOBAL-RURAL thread of films at the annual *WOW Film Festival* in Aberystwyth. A highlight of the event was the screening of a documentary film, *En Route*, featuring young migrants in rural Sardinia, made as part of the WISERD Civil Society and GLOBAL-RURAL projects.

Canada

Dr Sioned Pearce and Dr Christala Sophocleous from Cardiff University took part in a research exchange trip to Canada. The visit was a first step to forming long-term links with Canadian colleagues, through which to explore issues of sub-state social policy and the role of civil society in different contexts.

Brazil

Professor Michael Woods from Aberystwyth University and former WISERD researcher, Francesca Fois, ventured into the Amazon rainforest to lead a workshop on research and rural development. With support from the Global Challenges Research Fund and the Centre for International Development Research at Aberystwyth (CIDRA), the workshop was organised with colleagues at the Universidade Federal Oeste do Pará in Santarem, bringing together participants from over 20 Brazilian universities and civil society organisations.

Russia

Honorary Professor and Leverhulme Emeritus Fellow, John Morgan, has been appointed to the editorial boards of two leading Russian academic journals. He joins *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniia* (Sociological Studies), the journal of the Institute of Sociology, Russian Academy of Sciences, and *Filosofi Zhurnal* (Journal of Philosophy), published by RUDN-Russia People's Friendship University.

China

WISERD published new research on civil society, welfare and governance in China in 2019. Over the past three years, WISERD has been part of a successful international Newton Advanced Fellowship scheme with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), funded by the British Academy. WISERD's civil society research in China will continue with a new ESRC-funded project led by Professor Paul Chaney.

Bangladesh

Professor Paul Chaney jointly held an international conference with Professor Nasir Uddin from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chittagong on citizenship rights and the Rohingya crisis. This was part of a series of Global Challenge Research Fund project events.

Delhi

Visiting Fellow, Dr Sarbeswar Sahoo from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, delivered a WISERD seminar in Cardiff and a presentation at the 2019 *WISERD Annual Conference* in Aberystwyth. Dr Sahoo also jointly delivered a workshop with WISERD in New Delhi on civil society and good governance.



Publications

WISERD produces a range of publications for academic, policy and practitioner audiences, including newsletters, reports and blog posts.

In 2019, WISERD published **over 80** academic publications, including:

- Journal articles 55
- Books and book chapters 4
- Reports and briefings 17
- Datasets 15
- Other 10

In 2019, WISERD published **16** blog posts, one of which was originally published by *The Conversation*.

You can read these on our website: www.wiserd.ac.uk/blogs.

Since 2008 WISERD has published **over 700** academic publications, including:

- Journal articles 466
- Books and book chapters 124
- Reports and briefings 126

Journal articles published in 2019

Outputs in top citation percentiles
Publications in top 10% most cited journals worldwide

17.1%

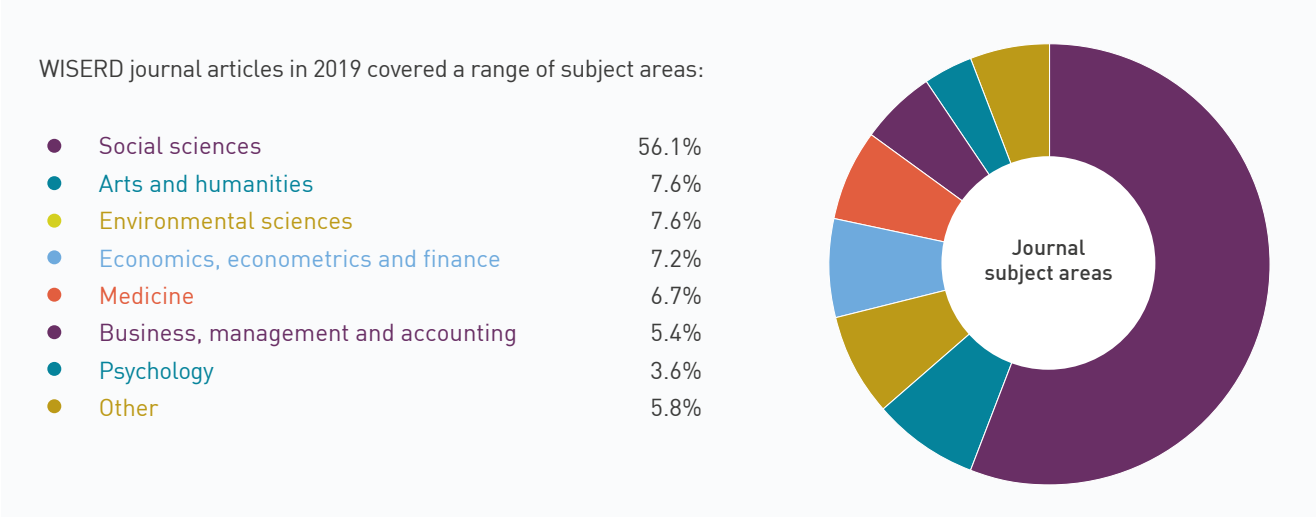
International collaboration
Publications co-authored with institutions in other countries

24.4%

Publications in top journal percentiles
Publications in top 10% journals by CiteScore Percentile

50%

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Civil Society and Social Change

A new WISERD book series is being published by Policy Press. Series Editors are Professors Ian Rees Jones and Paul Chaney, Cardiff University and Mike Woods, Aberystwyth University.

The series will comprise a core set of edited volumes reporting on research findings from across the ESRC-funded WISERD Civil Society Research Centre. Selected titles in the series will be available open access.

The series will be launched in October 2020.

Launch titles:

The Foundational Economy and Citizenship
Comparative Perspectives on Civil Repair
Edited by Filippo Barbera and Ian Rees Jones

Putting Civil Society in Its Place
Governance, Metagovernance, and Subjectivity
Bob Jessop

Civil Society and the Family
Esther Muddiman, Sally Power and Chris Taylor

Civil Society through the Life Course
Edited by Sally Power

See more publications on our website: www.wiserd.ac.uk/publications.

Events and engagement 2019

WISERD organised a variety of events throughout 2019, including conferences, seminars, practical workshops and training. These provide opportunities to share our research findings, develop our research skills, learn new methodologies, and collaborate with partners and stakeholders.

Over 1,200 people registered to attend WISERD-organised or hosted events in 2019, including researchers and PhD students, colleagues from the third sector and business, policymakers and practitioners.

Over 200 people attended 15 training events, including courses run by the National Centre for Research Methods, a session on getting published in well-recognised journals, using spatial data from social media, training by the UK Parliament's Knowledge Exchange Unit on ways to engage the UK Parliament and National Assembly for Wales with research. Researchers were also supported with regular opportunities to take part in writing days and writing weeks.

Over 150 people attended the 2019 WISERD Annual Conference at Aberystwyth University, where the keynote address was given by Professor Sarah Neal, University of Sheffield. Students participated in two postgraduate competitions, held in partnership with the Learned Society of Wales and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Wales Doctoral Training Partnership. Two major conferences also took place at Swansea University in 2019, on City Deals and austerity, jointly organised with the Morgan Academy. WISERD also jointly hosted an evening lecture and one-day symposium at Cardiff University with the Royal Anthropological Institute, the Learned Society of Wales, and the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, on *Social Anthropologies of the Welsh: Past and Present*.

Network-related events played a key role in our 2019 events programme. Over 300 people attended our ESRC Festival of Social Sciences event at St Fagans National Museum of History, which was held in conjunction with our Cultural Participation Research Network and showcased the *Anchor Peoples* project.

Our Politics and Governance Network worked with the Wales Centre for Public Policy to organise the conference, *Welsh Policy and Politics in Unprecedented Times*, which brought together 45 academics, practitioners and policymakers to discuss present and future challenges facing Wales, notably in relation to Brexit and the new devolution of powers.

WISERD researchers in Aberystwyth from our WISERD Language and Culture Network have joined the European Network for Language Diversity to help promote research across Europe. This involved taking part in the *GWLAD, Future Wales Festival*, celebrating 20 years of devolution at the Senedd in Cardiff, and contributing to the UNESCO-sponsored *Our Voice in the World Festival* in Aberystwyth.

The WISERD Wales Housing Research Network co-hosted the *Wales Housing Research Conference* with the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, Shelter Cymru and Welsh Government.

WISERD continues to have a presence at key stakeholder events and during 2019 we took part in *gofod3* and the *Co-production Network for Wales*. We also hosted a joint conference with the Voluntary Sector Studies Research Network and presented papers at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Voluntary Sector Studies Network (VSSN) *Voluntary Sector and Volunteering Research Conference*. Some key external engagement events also included our delivery of a 'Fringe' event at the *TUC Congress* and a session as part of the 2019 *Hay Festival*. High-profile events such as these continue to provide excellent opportunities for public engagement.

Digital engagement



WISERD website page views
93,142



WISERD website users
49,378



Mailing list subscribers
2,018



Twitter followers
4,515