



Carra

ANNUAL REPORT | 2019-20

Foreword

For nearly nine decades, Cara has been dedicated to rescuing academics around the world who need to flee their homeland in order to escape conflict, arrest or persecution. The precise reasons why they are at-risk vary greatly, but they all suffer because of who they are and what they believe and consequently lose the ability to speak openly and to live authentically.

Our Fellows remind us that academic freedom is more than a principle; it is a vital matter of individual physical, mental and emotional freedom and, in some cases, is even a matter of life or death. They know the importance of upholding it, hence their willingness to undergo much suffering and many struggles in their quest for personal and academic sanctuary. They arrive often scarred emotionally as well as physically, and their journeys here can be profound experiences of loss: loss of home, family, friends, career, security, autonomy, language, culture, and so on. These feelings are compounded by the fact that their journey has frequently to be made in several stages, and at each stage they have to learn how to become part of a new community, and they are frequently reminded that they are strangers, refugees, aliens, and that their home is far away, with contacts and ties back home shattered, forbidden, lost.

Despite all this, they demonstrate astonishing resilience, and while their integration into the often-arcane workings of their host university and the wider research community can sometimes take

time, it is a process marked by growth and transformation, both for themselves and for those with whom they work and live. Wherever they come from, the Fellows bring with them a host of differences. They bring different perspectives and methodologies to the laboratories, lecture halls, seminar rooms and social spaces, asking different questions, thereby opening up new horizons and making their colleagues, students and neighbours more globally aware and more attuned to the creative potential of difference. Above all, they bear witness to injustice and suffering and to survival.

Their narratives may be harrowing, but they are also stories of extraordinary courage which highlight the capacity of human beings to survive and adapt – and, crucially, to renew themselves differently. The insightful cultural commentator, Timothy Radcliffe, has written that, *‘Confrontation with human suffering can precipitate a deeper sense of human kinship’*. The Cara Fellows bring us so much for which we in the UK are grateful, but more than anything else perhaps, they help us to understand the importance – and the possibility – of deeper human kinship in both science and society.



Professor Michael Worton
CBE, Cara Chair

(Front Cover) This year's cover photo shows Professor Mike Barer and Cara Fellow Parham Haidar at the University of Leicester, testing how efficiently masks can capture targets, especially COVID-19, by using microscopy to check the integrity of the capture system after exposure. The Leicester team hope the approach can be used to find and isolate individuals who unknowingly spread infection. Parham Haidar gives his own story on page 6 (Photo: Irina Elliott)

CARA: A VICE- CHANCELLOR'S VIEW

Finding safe and secure places of sanctuary for people who are forced to flee life-threatening situations is a global challenge. Universities have an important role to play in helping address this challenge by providing opportunities for at-risk academics to advance their studies and research in academic institutions in safe places. The significant work of Cara continues to be crucial in this context.

At Newcastle, we are committed to both social justice and equality, diversity and inclusion. A part of this commitment includes our vision to offer learning and research opportunities for sanctuary seekers to advance to higher level study or research whether this be at undergraduate, postgraduate or postdoctoral levels.

As the Vice Chancellor and President of Newcastle University, I am proud that we belong to the Cara Scholars at Risk UK Universities Network. We also host four Cara fellows working on important scientific projects with our leading academics. We are delighted to continue working with Cara and remain committed fully to doing everything we can to assist.

Professor Chris Day
Vice Chancellor and President,
Newcastle University

Cara's Work

– Making a Difference

Cara's origins go back to 1933, and to the determination of William Beveridge and other leading academics and scientists in the UK to rescue their colleagues in Germany from Nazi persecution, and so to *“prevent the waste of exceptional abilities exceptionally trained”* (Cara's Founding Statement, 1933).

Eighty-seven years on, that work continues. In many countries around the world today, extremists and despots are still trying to silence academics, often brutally, understanding the threat that highly-educated and free-thinking minds pose to their warped ambitions. Elsewhere, brilliant university teachers and researchers are caught up in violent conflicts. Others face persecution by the ignorant and intolerant because they are 'different' in terms of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

What happens to them matters. If academics are silenced or scattered, their societies will be impoverished. If those academics can never return to their work and their homes, that impoverishment will become permanent. The next generation will grow up in darkness. Truth will be suppressed, and lies will flourish. And the whole world will pay the price.

Cara works to rescue academics at immediate risk, and to support those who have been forced into exile, ensuring they can still develop their skills and make their valuable and unique contribution to the world, and return one day to their home countries to help rebuild better and more stable societies. Cara is now a recognised leader in its field, working globally, ready and able to assist any academics at risk, wherever they may be.

Our two main Programmes are our **Fellowship Programme**, which helps people to escape from immediate danger

with their families and to reach a place of sanctuary where they can continue their important work, and our **Syria Programme**, which provides Syrian academics in exile in the countries around Syria with opportunities to continue to develop their skills and to connect with colleagues around the world, often for the first time. Through the autumn of 2019 and the first months of 2020 both were operating flat out. At the end of 2019, our Fellowship Programme was engaged with over 300 Fellows and some 400 of their immediate dependents, and Programme staff were processing almost a hundred further enquiries. Our Syria Programme had nearly 500 Syrian academics registered on the Programme database, with around 140 directly involved in one or more of the Syria Programme strands. In the course of 2019, many Cara Fellows achieved notable successes in their study or research, and some secured academic jobs, in a very competitive market. A growing number of Syria Programme participants undertook valuable research projects and successfully submitted articles to peer-reviewed journals.

Then, in March 2020, everything changed, because of the Covid-19 virus. We had to close up our office at South Bank University, and the Cara staff joined the 40% or so of UK workers who suddenly found themselves ‘working from home’. Fortunately, we had been planning for the worst, and we had everything set up for as smooth a transition as possible. But outside events turned against us. As the world went into lockdown, borders were closed, UK Visa Application Centres shut their doors, and international travel came almost to a halt.

Our first thoughts, of course, were for those who were depending on us, our Cara Fellows and our Syria Programme participants. It soon became clear, very

sadly, that many academics who had been close to escaping from danger were now stuck in their home countries; it was suddenly very hard, if not impossible, to get them away. Others who were already working in the UK and elsewhere with our support found their schedules thrown into disarray by their host universities’ lockdown measures. Plans for future moves and academic job searches also had to be put on hold. Meanwhile, the wide range of face-to-face activities at the heart of our Syria Programme – workshops and research trips – all had suddenly to be cancelled or switched into ‘virtual’ events, joining an already impressive list of on-line activities.

Fortunately, with the enthusiastic and generous help of our university partners, our donors and hundreds of individual academics, we were able to adapt quickly, continue to deliver our vital support, and even find new ways of helping; and meanwhile the world got used to seeing academics standing next to Presidents and Prime Ministers, advising on the crisis and demonstrating just how valuable highly-trained minds can be. Our theme this year is ‘Cara Making a Difference’, and we hope that the stories that follow will show just how much we have been able to achieve over the past twelve months, despite everything – lives and careers saved, families kept together, new futures made possible. No doubt 2020/21 will present us with many more challenges but we are a small and nimble organisation and confident that, whatever happens, we will still be able to help many more threatened scholars, fulfilling our role as *‘a lifeline for academics at risk’*.

Stephen Wordsworth
Executive Director

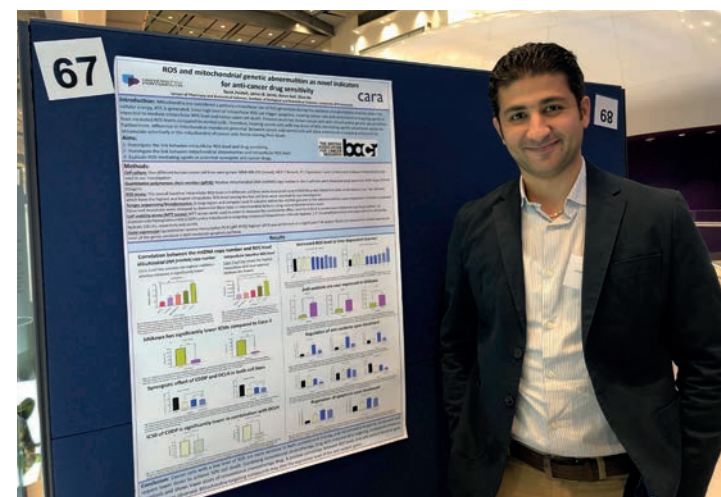
Cara’s Fellowship Programme

Cara’s Fellowship Programme team had a challenging but ultimately successful 2019/20. The first seven months saw dozens of new Fellows being accepted onto the Programme, and a lot of focussed effort by our staff and the host universities to get them and their families to safety, in a place where they could continue their work. Cara Fellows travel on regular visas, not as refugees or asylum-seekers, and most plan to return home when they can, so our task is to help them to develop their skills and to build the networks they will need when that day comes. While most come first to the UK, we currently have Cara Fellows also at universities in Germany, Ireland, Canada, India, Australia and Malaysia, and until recently also in Hong Kong.

The Covid pandemic made us change the way we work, but in practice the switch to ‘working from home’ caused minimal disruption. A bigger problem was the temporary closure of UK visa centres worldwide and the travel restrictions imposed by individual countries, which

made it impossible to bring new Fellows to the UK between March and July; but we used this time to provide extra support to Fellows already in placements and to refugee academics in the UK. As visa centres gradually resumed operations from July, our new Fellows were able to apply for their visas again, and travel. The first two had arrived by early September 2020, with more on the way.

The pandemic also sharply increased our costs. Many of our Fellows’ university hosts generously cover the full costs of the placements, but in some cases Cara also contributes to accommodation and living costs. With universities closing laboratories and other facilities during the lockdown, many Fellows doing postgraduate courses have had to extend their stay, while many postdoctoral Fellows had their plans for onward moves or progression into jobs disrupted. In many cases university hosts were able to take on the extra cost, offering in all some £90,000 by the end of August 2020, and we applied successfully for



*Cara Fellow Tarek,
University of Portsmouth*

special Covid-related grants from the Texel Foundation (£15,000) and the Andrew W Mellon Foundation (\$100,000) to help us to plug most of the remaining gaps.

The pandemic even brought a few positive changes. Three Career Development Workshops that had to be switched into Webinars reached far more Fellows than face-to-face events would have done and, with the tutors from Edinburgh, King's College London and Cambridge generously giving their time pro bono, cost us less than £200, rather than the budgeted £5,000. The Webinars are now a valuable resource on our website - <https://bit.ly/CaraCDW>.

42 Fellows completed their placements in 2019/20. Of those who have not yet been able to return home and are still in touch with Cara, nine have secured paid employment at universities or research institutes and eleven have gone on to further placements. At the end of July 2020, Cara was working actively with some 300 Fellows and some 450 immediate dependents:

- Some 130 Fellows currently at universities;
- Over 80 being helped into their initial placements;
- Over 75 Fellows making up our 'alumnus group', many now in academic jobs but still in regular contact with us;
- Others receiving small grants and advice.

As at end-July, some 110 new enquiries were being processed. 45% of these were from Syria, 14% from Turkey, 10% from Yemen, with smaller numbers from many other countries – around 20 in all. Roughly one-third of Cara Fellows are female; and Cara continues to promote the cause of female academics, who share the risks that their male colleagues do but also often face additional discrimination in their predominantly patriarchal societies.

Looking ahead to 2020/21, we have now fully resumed our normal work, focussing our initial efforts on bringing to the UK thirteen Fellows who had already secured placements, before moving on to the many other urgent and deserving cases. We are also planning to run a pilot of our new Mentoring Scheme, which we hope will benefit mentors and mentees alike.

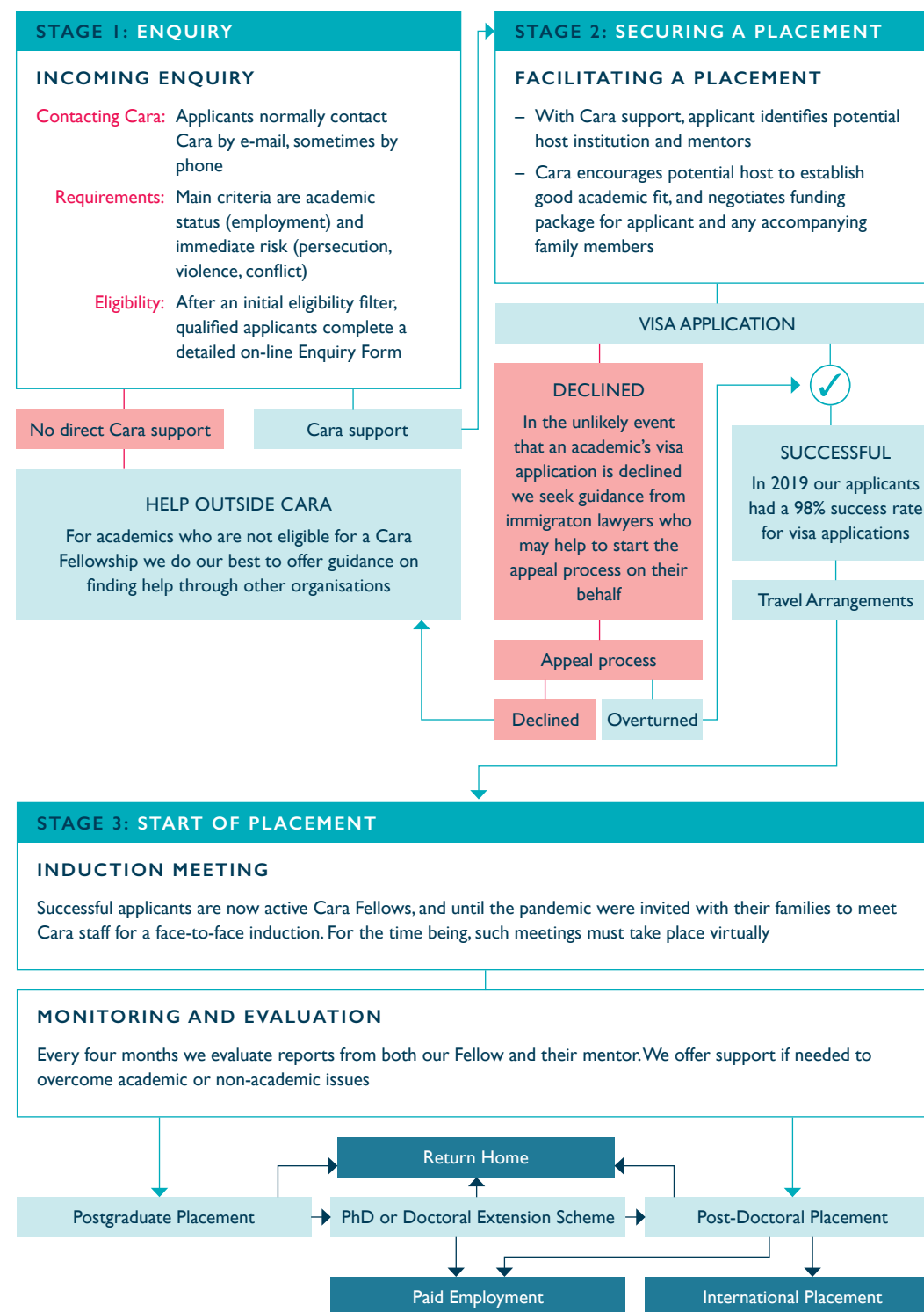
Our Fellows are highly skilled academics who make a real contribution to their host institutions. Despite the pandemic, many have continued to publish and some of them have taken part in Covid-related initiatives, including research, training and clinical activities. This Annual Report contains many stories from our Fellows, and from their supervisors; we hope that you find them interesting.

Zeid Al-Bayaty
Deputy Director/Fellowship Programme Manager

“As an academic, I am facing a twofold risky situation. First, we are under airstrike attack day and night. Second, they are trying to force me to serve their goals of pushing young people to the battlefield, otherwise they will consider me a traitor.”

Cara Fellow from Yemen

THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME: HOW IT WORKS



COVER STORY: FIGHTING COVID-19 TOGETHER

More than five years ago, I was forced to leave my home to complete my PhD in a safe environment. Being medically qualified, however, I couldn't abandon my purpose, saving human life. Thanks to Cara and Leicester I joined the highly supportive Barer lab, where my research has focussed on the use of face masks to catch the microbes that humans breathe out in health and disease.

Building on some very preliminary work detecting TB in masks adapted with an insert that microbes stick to, we explored the capacities and limitations of the system in order to develop it. We studied TB patients in South Africa and discovered the natural pattern with which the patients exhale the tubercle bacillus. The work was recently published in the Lancet Infectious Diseases journal. We also ran a pilot study on detecting a yeast, named *Pneumocystis jirovecii*, which affects people who are being treated for cancer and causes potentially fatal pneumonia (manuscript in preparation).

The COVID-19 pandemic has been another opportunity to fulfil my purpose in saving human life. Using the mask system we have developed, we have successfully detected exhaled SARS-CoV-2 in exposed healthcare workers and in hospitalised COVID-19 patients. We have found the exhaled viral signals are related to disease severity. The non-invasive mask has again shown great potential to assess individual infectivity (manuscript submitted).

Our research on COVID-19 didn't stop here. The current pandemic can distract clinicians from treatable co-infections which have symptoms, laboratory and radiological findings similar to COVID-19. Kidney transplant recipients are one group at increased risk. So we expanded our research to cover the East Midlands, Nottingham, Derby and Leicester, where we are sampling patients attending renal clinics for two important infections in terms of morbidity and mortality, SARS-CoV-2 and *P. jirovecii*.

In parallel to these clinical studies, we have undertaken developmental work in a more sophisticated way and designed a system that can assess multi-variables in order to improve the efficiency of mask sampling further as a point-of-care diagnostic. In fact, the WHO R&D Blueprint expert group identified development of point-of-care diagnostics as a highest priority at the community level. We currently fit the mask with a PVA sampling matrix. From this, DNA and RNA can be extracted, then submitted for diagnostic test for virus.

I can never imagine our research will stop, thanks to the generous support I have been receiving from Cara and Leicester. I am determined and confident enough to say my purpose in saving human life will be achieved, whatever the difficulties we face.

Parham Haidar
Cara Fellow, University of Leicester

COVER STORY: MASKED MEN

Parham and I have been working together with face masks for over five years now. It's not that we need protection from each other or the outside world - we use the masks to catch the microbes that people breathe out.

I remember Parham's first evening in Leicester well. I thought an international buffet would suit him best and he seemed receptive to all my suggestions. His English was strong and I felt things would go well. The only minor setback from my perspective was that chips were the only fare on offer he considered suitable!

His diet has expanded since then and, while he may not have explored all the culinary delights Leicester has to offer, he has left no stone unturned in the pursuit of his scientific studies.

Building on some very preliminary work detecting TB in face masks adapted with an insert that microbes stick to, Parham systematically set out to understand the capacities and limitations of the system, showing first how best to analyse for TB by PCR, moving on to work with volunteers to see what healthy people breath out and ultimately running a pilot study on detecting a yeast that affects people who are being treated for cancer. He has proven to be a thorough and determined researcher who, with guidance, produces excellent work.

The volunteer studies were great fun. He would have a mask-wearing small congregation, breathing, coughing and reading Alice in Wonderland in unison for periods of up to an hour. I am sure he would be excellent at leading antenatal classes. The results were fascinating,

clearly show that we all exhale around a thousand bacteria per minute and that what we breathe out depends on how we breathe. His work has led us to speculate that different languages may show unique potential to spread different microbes.

Parham's ground-breaking work has enabled us to study TB patients in South Africa and discover the natural pattern with which they exhale the tubercle bacillus. The work was recently published in the Lancet Infectious Diseases journal and is receiving much attention. He assembled his studies into a PhD that I am sure he would have been happy make into a massive tome. Fortunately our regulations and my red pen reduced this to a volume that raised only minor threats of hernias from his examiners. He was duly awarded his doctorate on January of this year; a hugely proud moment for him, his family, Cara and all who have contributed to his extraordinary journey.

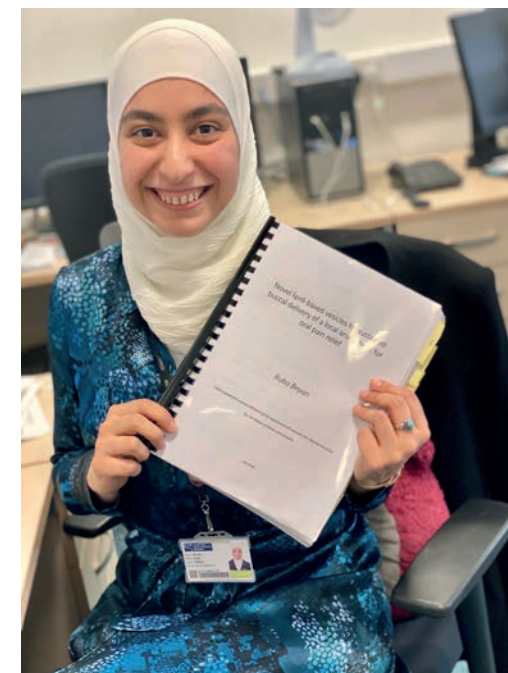
Parham has had to deal with challenges that would crush most of us; not least the fear that his family back in Damascus face constant danger. With Cara's support he has created genuine value for medicine, science and our all too threatened academic project.

Ironically, I always planned for Parham to work on adapting what we call Face Mask Sampling to detect exhaled viruses. That task has now been forced onto us and we have been frantic all working on this since March. We, including Parham, submitted our first paper on 15 August.

Professor Mike Barer
Professor of Clinical Microbiology
and Honorary Consultant Microbiologist
University of Leicester

Cara Fellows – Recent Highlights

- A Syrian Postdoctoral Fellow at Imperial College London and his colleagues, unable to continue working in their lab during lockdown, started running the staff testing facility for Covid-19 at Hammersmith Hospital. He is working on developing technologies aimed at optimising antimicrobial use and has also submitted a paper for publication.
- An Iraqi Fellow specialising in the field of Stem Cell Biology completed his two-year placement at the University of Cologne, Germany, and returned to Iraq, where he has been delivering virtual lectures on Covid-19 for Al Nahrain and Kirkuk Universities.
- A Palestinian Fellow working in the field of Public Health, with a focus on Dentistry, was supported by the Royal Society to apply successfully for a Tier 1 Global Talent Visa, a rare recognition of exceptional talent.
- A Yemeni Fellow at Jesus College, Cambridge, who was also supported by the Royal Society to apply successfully for a Tier 1 Global Talent Visa, has been granted the title of Affiliated Lecturer at the Cavendish Laboratory and has been given beam-time access at the Elettra Synchrotron facility in Trieste, Italy.
- A Palestinian Fellow at the University of Glasgow published a chapter in the *Handbook of Healthcare in the Arab World* and delivered a talk virtually at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) on Covid-19 in Palestine. The Fellow also received a scholarship from the Microbiology Society.
- A Syrian Postdoctoral Fellow undertaking research on Smart Grid Technology at Newcastle University has had several papers accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals, co-authored with his academic mentor at the University.
- A Syrian Fellow at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) has secured a permanent position at the same University as a Lecturer in Physiology and Pharmacology, after only one year of her two-year postdoctoral placement.
- A Turkish Postdoctoral Fellow in the field of Social Psychology at the University of St Andrews secured a permanent lectureship position at the University of Dundee just six months after her arrival in the UK.
- A Pakistani PhD Fellow specialising in media censorship and politics at Solent University is working with the University as Inclusive Curriculum Consultant.
- A Syrian PhD Fellow at De Montfort University has had her first book chapter published in the *Handbook of Materials for Nanomedicine* and has had a second paper accepted for publication.
- An Iranian Fellow at Reading University published in the *European Yearbook on Human Rights* and represented the Law School at a public lecture.
- A Syrian PhD Fellow at Bath Spa University has had his paper accepted at *54th Annual International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition*, based on his doctoral research.
- A Syrian PhD Fellow at Queen Mary, University of London, was accepted for a poster presentation at the *11th World Biomaterials Congress* in Glasgow.
- A Turkish Fellow at the University of Oxford has had a paper accepted for publication in the *Journal of Baltic Worlds*. She was also invited to give a seminar on 'anti-gender movements in Turkey' at Södertörn University in Sweden.
- An Egyptian Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Edinburgh has been elected as Chair for Supergen Bioenergy Hub's SHARE Network. He has also taken on the role as Managing Editor for the journal *Biomass and Bioenergy*.
- A Yemeni Fellow at the School of Dentistry at the University of Birmingham has been offered a Tier 2 position as a Researcher at the University after successfully applying for a research grant.
- A Turkish Fellow undertaking a postdoctoral placement in the field of Education at Coventry University secured paid employment at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan.
- A Syrian Fellow at Liverpool John Moores University successfully completed her PhD, and secured a position as a Formulation Scientist a part of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership project with Catalent Pharma Solutions (a pharmaceutical company) and Aston University.



Ruba Bnyan, a Cara Fellow from Syria, on her PhD Viva day

“I got threatened by students in my class who did not pass. They resorted to the armed groups and militias, who reached where I live and they threatened me to make me work according to their demands and not to disagree with their ideas and thoughts.”

Cara Fellow from Iraq

A SUPERVISOR'S STORY: ASTON

I first met Alia on 2 September 2016. I was 10 months into my position as an Aston academic, when I was asked by my Head of Department if I would be interested in supervising a Syrian PhD student sponsored by Cara. I never heard of Cara before and, after some reading about the work they do for at risk academics, I was very keen to have a chat with the potential candidate. Arranging for the video conference with Alia was not a straightforward task, as I was informed that she didn't have access to electricity and internet 24/7. I therefore didn't know what to expect from that meeting, but the minute I started talking to her, I was mightily impressed. Although she was quite nervous, she came across as a very polite and mature person who knew exactly what she wanted to do with her life. For someone who had never left Syria, her spoken English was very good and she put her points across eloquently. And I will never forget her sunny personality and smiley face.

She joined us in January 2017, and she has been a joy to work with ever since. Together we tweaked her original PhD ideas and came up with a very ambitious but also extremely exciting and original

research project around the creation of a novel, biodegradable and antimicrobial biopolymer-based membrane as a dressing material for wound healing, starting from cheap biomass waste. Alia submitted her PhD thesis at the end of August 2020, published two research papers, presented her work in two International conferences, and co-supervised three masters students.

From the moment Alia joined the Aston community, she became part of it. I was extremely impressed by her positive attitude (her glass is always half-full), her ability to integrate with a completely new culture and way of life, and her forward thinking. She represented the University at numerous outreach activities, including the *Big Bang UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair*, and inspired other young women through her participation at Aston's *Women in Engineering* day. Three and a half years down the line, I can definitely say that thanks to Cara, not only did I get a brilliant PhD student, but I also made a life-long friend. Alia is now in the process of writing a postdoctoral grant application to support the next stage of her career, and hopefully we will continue our joint academic adventure long into the future.

Dr Eirini Theodosiou
Aston University

A CARA FELLOW'S STORY: NEWCASTLE

The conflict in Syria caused major devastation. Many lost their lives and livelihoods, including academics. This also had a major impact on the infrastructure for academic work in Syria, most of which was destroyed or seriously damaged. In the search for safety, some lucky academics – including myself – got a chance through the Cara Fellowship Programme to move to the United Kingdom. This gave me an opportunity to work at Newcastle University, a challenge which I am relishing. This would not have been possible without Cara staff, and their collaboration with Newcastle University. It gave me hope once again, not only to continue my personal life and aspirations, but also to build my academic career and develop my scientific ideas. It also gave me the ability to follow the rapid scientific developments that occurred in recent years which, unfortunately, were absent from academic life in Syria during the war years.

My involvement in scientific research upon my arrival in the UK gave a real boost to the capabilities that I had built during my years of work in universities and research centres in Syria. The research project I am currently working on links the plant physiological parameters of potato plants with datasets obtained from UAV-based imaging, to understand potato growth and productivity and response to stress. The cooperation of my colleagues here at Newcastle, and the support I received from them, has had a very positive impact in overcoming the very negative psychological



effects of the years of war that I lived through in my country. The positive attitude and the support from Cara and Newcastle University has helped me in implementing my research project, in cooperation with my colleague Dr Prashar and his team. I started doing something which I enjoyed – being an academic again, learning and using new techniques, meeting researchers and discussing new research projects and plans. It all added another meaning to my life.

In the end, I should say that it was the initial contact with Cara which helped me, and I will always be grateful to Cara for its support.

Cara Fellow from Syria

Cara's Syria Programme

As an important part of our work to help academics at risk around the world, Cara has since 2006 run regionally-based support programmes. Following on from our regional operations for scholars from Iraq (2006-12) and Zimbabwe (2009-13), our Syria Programme in the region was launched in 2016, to sustain and facilitate the continued academic development, contribution and professional connection of Syrian academics in exile in the region. Over the last four years, our ability to respond to the changing needs and circumstances of our Syrian colleagues has been one of the Programme's major strengths. In 2019/20 we again drew in new participants, yet most of those who first got involved three or more years ago are still actively engaged. Confronted with the challenges of Covid-19 in March 2020, almost all of the Programme's six activities were successfully migrated online.

Research continues to provide the perfect vehicle for achieving the Programme's goals. We have awarded

forty-one research grants since late 2018, providing opportunities for over 240 Syrian academics to work with experienced UK-based mentors and Principal Investigators – our successful 'partnering model'. As well as offering valuable action-learning opportunities, this research results in a growing number of publications in respected peer-reviewed journals, which are helping Programme participants to build their professional profiles in the wider international academic arena. Topics range widely – for example, the looting of Syrian museums, the image of Syrian women in recent Syrian literature, the economic impact of displaced people on a host community, and Syrian forest damage since 2011. Syria Programme participants and facilitators contributed nine articles to a Syria Programme special issue of 'Education & Conflict Review' – <https://bit.ly/CaCEID>.

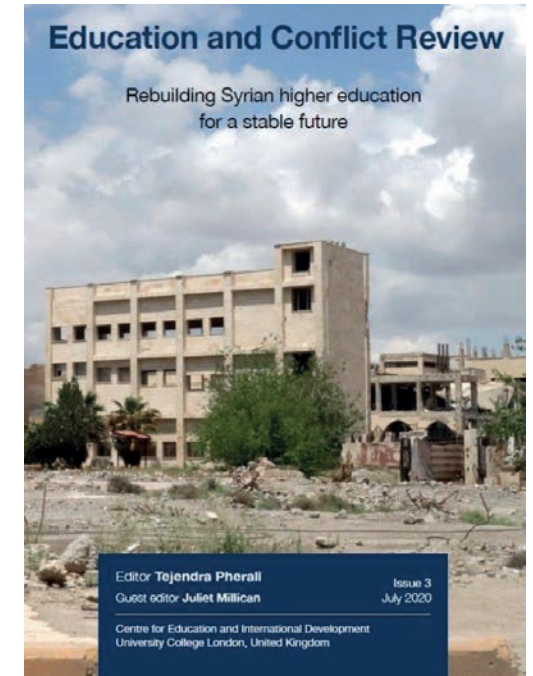
None of this would be possible without the support of some 240 UK and non-UK university discipline and Academic English experts, who are supporting the

Syria Programme on a voluntary basis in our Syria Programme 'Peer Review College'. Our most recent call for volunteer mentors received over 40 responses, 22 of whom have now been allocated across twelve study teams as co-mentors.

In addition, 2019/20 saw an increasing number of Syria Programme 'spin-off' initiatives, led by UK-based academics, being successfully funded through the UK Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) - 30 Programme participants are involved in these as paid researchers, gaining further valuable experience. Cara, as their 'institutional umbrella', is a named partner on the bids, and as a result we are increasingly establishing Cara as the organisation to which researchers turn first to engage with their Syrian colleagues.

Higher Education in Syria faces dramatic challenges. It is obviously critical to the future of Syria and to the building of a sustainable pluralist stable society there, yet it is being largely ignored by the rest of the international community. This is not just about the longer term but about the immediate – in particular, the challenges facing those striving to sustain delivery of Higher Education to thousands of students in the non-regime North. Syrian academics in exile in Turkey are already playing a critical role as educators in helping to sustain their institutions, and Cara's Syria Programme will continue to work to fill the vacuum, supporting research to address the challenges which these institutions face and building connections and networks at the personal and institutional level, regionally and internationally.

We owe a considerable debt of gratitude to all the university experts who are supporting the Syria Programme on a voluntary basis and to the UK universities



July 2020 saw the launch of a Syria Programme Special Issue of UCL/IOE's 'Education and Conflict Review'

“ We say a huge thank you for keeping us safe, giving us hope, and changing our life for the best! Without that support, I would have never been able to start my PhD and meet with people who are leading the field I am passionate about! ”

Cara Fellow from Syria

that are also supporting the Programme financially and in-kind. Please email robertson@cara.ngo should you wish additional information.



Syria Programme: Arts and Humanities field visit to the 'Museum of Innocence', a museum in Istanbul created by the novelist Orhan Pamuk as a companion to his novel *The Museum of Innocence*

SYRIA PROGRAMME: A SYRIAN ACADEMIC'S STORY

Education has always been my passion; I believe it is the best way to make the world a better place. When the Syrian revolution started in 2011, I was a lecturer at Aleppo University and had big dreams for my academic future. I could not, however, ignore the increasing suffering of millions of my people who wanted nothing but dignity, democracy, and freedom. The situation kept deteriorating, and the brutal Syrian Regime committed heinous crimes trying to suffocate the uprisings. Two of my students were detained, tortured and burned to death just because they had provided some medical aids to a few colleagues who had been shot during a peaceful demonstration the day before. My life was in danger, and I had to leave my job, my city and my dreams.

I moved to the countryside and volunteered with the Red Crescent to help poor displaced people. That was my first step away from academia. The situation got worse after the region got out of the Regime's control. Together with a group of well-educated friends, I co-founded a local council and worked hard as a volunteer to provide the basic needs and services for the IDPs and the host community.

The worst was yet to come; ISIS took over the town, and my colleagues and I were wanted dead. I left for Turkey and started a new chapter of my disoriented life. I worked for humanitarian NGOs, but



*Syria Programme: Istanbul workshop,
January 2020*

my heart was still yearning for academia. I volunteered at Gaziantep University as a lecturer of English Conversation for preparation-year students, but voluntary work alone does not put food on my family's table. Therefore, I worked as a freelance teacher and trainer. My self-efficacy as an academic diminished, and, like the majority of exiled Syrian academics, I experienced psychological trauma after all the dangers I went through.

I was introduced to Cara by some academic colleagues in late 2018 and started feeling a bit like an academic again. Communicating with other academics was an invaluable opportunity for me to retain my academic identity. Cara's Syria Programme has enhanced my research skills through a wide variety of workshops in addition to disciplinary and interdisciplinary research schemes.

Moreover, I was offered a research incubation visit to the University of Kent in 2019, which was a real eye-opener for me. I was so happy to be introduced to such a resource-rich academic environment. My visit to the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UETL) made me think of a precious idea for my planned PhD research. With Dr Tom Parkinson's invaluable guidance and Cara's great support, in addition to the University of Kent's generosity in approving that I do my PhD on home tuition fees, I am now a PhD candidate at the University of Kent.

I can leverage my experience as an exiled academic and my passion for education, along with the skills I have developed in the field of training and capacity building, to start my PhD research study focusing on professional development for Syrian academics exiled in Turkey. I hope that my academic colleagues and I can participate in rebuilding Syria's higher education.

Nidal Alajaj, Syria Programme participant

SYRIA PROGRAMME: A UK ACADEMIC'S STORY

Cara's Syria Programme supports Syrian academics to sustain their academic work in exile. Though arts and humanities scholars were initially underrepresented on the Programme, a dedicated arts and humanities strand funded by the Mellon Foundation was established in late 2018, and has greatly increased the Programme's disciplinary diversity. I met Nidal Alajaj at the first Arts and Humanities workshop in Istanbul in December 2018. It was clear that while he was new to the Syria Programme, he was well known and respected among Syrian academics in Turkey and has a passion for fostering community.

Previously a lecturer in English Language at the University of Aleppo, Nidal's career trajectory was disrupted by the conflict in Syria, which forced him to abandon his job and postgraduate studies and flee to Turkey in 2014 with his family. He now teaches English privately to Syrians living in Gaziantep, Turkey, including many academics on the Syria Programme.

Nidal and I share interests in academic development and academic writing support, and after some initial chats we began to formulate ideas for research collaborations. This ultimately led to Nidal undertaking a research incubation visit to the University of Kent in summer 2019. Kent is a longstanding supporter of Cara

and provided Nidal with office space and accommodation on its Canterbury campus for two months.

Nidal and I collaborated with Dr Marion Heron (University of Surrey) and a Cara Fellow at Birkbeck College on a small-scale research project focusing on interdisciplinary and intercultural research writing. This marked the beginning of a strong, reciprocal working relationship, and our team has since been successful in securing British Academy funding and submitted our research to respected journals.

During his visit Nidal also participated actively in early brainstorming workshops for the University of Kent's then-nascent Migration and Movement research group, helping us to build our research community and mount a bid for this to be one of the University's signature research themes. He was also able to visit several universities across the UK, participate in conferences and symposia, and immerse himself in an Anglophone context.

I am very happy that Nidal will return to the University of Kent's research community as a PhD student at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education from next academic year, where he will begin an ethnographic study of professional development for Syrian scholars in exile.

Dr Tom Parkinson
University of Kent

Cara in Scotland, 2019/20

In last year's report I mentioned that we were awaiting the arrival of five new Fellows. I am pleased to say that all of them have now settled well in their host universities and are adapting to life in a new place. Another couple of Fellows may arrive over the next few months. So our Cara Scotland family is growing! We are grateful to all the host institutions for their support, and to individual staff members who continue to go above and beyond in assisting. Like any large family, we've also celebrated a wedding and welcomed a couple of babies. One retired couple hosted a Cara Fellow for his first few months and have since taken on a role in welcoming new Fellows to Glasgow. This kind of practical help is invaluable and is much appreciated.

Academic colleagues at the University of Edinburgh have kindly taken their English Language workshops online and the Fellows have enjoyed and benefitted from these. The rivalry in the quizzes is quite something! You can read more about these workshops in the piece written by Hala (on page 23). A colleague also organised volunteer English tutors for a number of the Fellows and I know for many this has been a lifeline, especially during lockdown when the Fellows were not being exposed to an English language environment. There are so many different ways in which people contribute and we are thankful to them all.

A highlight from this year was the inaugural Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE)/Cara/Young Academy of Scotland (YAS) lecture. This was hosted by the RSE on 18 November and the speaker was Dr Bertrand Ramcharan, former Acting UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, speaking on the topic *'The Human Rights Idea in the Philosophy of the Scottish*

Enlightenment'. The event was attended by approximately 150 people and was very well received. Due to the current situation, this year's event will be a virtual one and should take place in October. The YAS also runs an At-Risk Academic and Refugee (ARAR) professional scheme and I am pleased to note that one of our Fellows was accepted as a member this year.

In the earlier part of the year, before Covid hit, I visited many universities, research institutes, civic society groups and trusts, discussing the work of Cara and raising engagement with our work. I have particularly enjoyed working with the Universities of Sanctuary programme, both with their Scottish Coordinator and the Scottish network, exploring how universities might start to collaborate, or expand their collaboration, with Cara. We very much look forward to developing our work with Scottish universities and societies in the years ahead.

Sheila Mills
Cara Scotland Manager



Cara's Scotland Manager, working from home during the pandemic

Career Development for Cara Fellows

I first became involved with Cara towards the end of 2018 when I was contacted by the Deputy Director to discuss career development support for Fellows. At that time I was Chair of a task group of career professionals who specialised in supporting researchers as well as a careers consultant at the University of Edinburgh, so I was in a good position to understand what careers support was available for academic researchers across the UK.

Although I was aware that Edinburgh University hosted Cara Fellows, this was the first opportunity I had had to offer my support. Over the next year, I provided individual careers guidance to some of the Fellows at Edinburgh and wrote a guide on academic career planning, including information on building academic profiles, job search and applications advice, that could be shared with Fellows across the Cara network. I had the opportunity to present at the first Cara Scotland and North of England conference organised by the then new Cara Scotland Manager, Sheila Mills, where I was privileged to hear from some of the fellows Cara is supporting.

When Cara successfully won funding from the April Trust to develop their careers support for Fellows I offered to plan a one-day careers event for Scotland with the support of Cara staff, using my network to source some interesting speakers, and to provide contacts of careers professionals who were able to contribute to a similar event in London. Unfortunately, both the Edinburgh and London events had to be cancelled when it was clear travel would be difficult due to the coronavirus pandemic.

With uncertainty in the academic job market due to the economic downturn, Anne Forde from the University of Cambridge and Donald Lush from King's College London (both of whom had been due to speak at the London careers event), suggested we develop some online careers support to help Fellows in a challenging job market. We created 3 interactive webinars for Cara Fellows on the academic job market, raising your professional profile, and academic applications, ensuring we were providing advice that could be useful both to Fellows early on in their academic career and to others with many years' teaching and research experience. Through speaking to Cara staff and Fellows we developed our understanding of Fellows' experiences, enabling us to design what we hoped was appropriate support. The webinars ran during July and August with between 35 – 55 Fellows attending each one. We were pleased to see Fellows actively engaging with the activities we designed, they asked lots of questions and many commented that they found the content valuable. The webinars were recorded to provide a lasting resource for any interested Fellow unable to attend and for new Fellows (<https://bit.ly/CaraCDW>).

From our perspective, Anne, Donald and I had a very positive experience of working with Cara and gained great personal satisfaction from using our professional expertise to support many remarkable fellows. We hope to continue collaborating with and supporting Cara in the future.

Dr Sharon Maguire
PGR Careers Manager, University of Edinburgh

A CARA FELLOW'S STORY: PORTSMOUTH

I've lived in Damascus since I was born. Both of my parents are professors at Damascus University. I graduated from the school of Pharmacy with a Master's degree, trying my hardest to do my best, even after the war started, to improve and develop my knowledge and experience so that I can help as much as I can in rebuilding my homeland again.

I applied for a PhD in my country and I got a placement at Damascus University. However, due to financial sanctions and the dire situation facing Syria's academics caused by the never-ending conflict, I was unable to start it. The war took every single dream from us. The war doesn't allow anybody to dream. I had nothing to do, but deep inside I knew that, as it is well said, "Education is necessary to unlearn privilege, unlearn exclusion, unlearn discrimination, unlearn prejudice, unlearn WAR". So, I tried hard to continue what I really wanted to do and achieve my dream of getting my PhD.

Before the war started in Syria, I had visited Exeter University in the United Kingdom in 2001 with my Dad when he was doing scientific research there. That visit sparked my dream to continue my study. I am still looking forward to pursuing an academic life, and I have just achieved a PhD from Portsmouth University. I must express my very profound gratitude to Cara and the University of Portsmouth. I am grateful to each member of Cara for their patience and support in overcoming numerous obstacles I faced through my research journey and in securing me this placement at Portsmouth. Everyone in life has big dreams, and Cara helped me in achieving mine. Now, Cara has helped me again by securing me a

placement at Swansea University, where I can continue my academic career and achieve my goals of teaching and pursuing the sustained acquisition of knowledge. The support that Cara provided can't be matched by that of some parents, because Cara believes in this:

"A society which respects and cherishes the freedom of its academic institutions and their members is much less likely to fall victim to the enemies of freedom in general than a society which does not. Without freedom, how little of what happens on this planet has ultimate moral significance?" (Lord Robbins, President of The Royal Society, 1966)

Nour, Cara Fellow from Syria



Cara Fellow Nour at the University of Portsmouth

A SUPERVISOR'S STORY: PORTSMOUTH

I first became aware of Cara at an information event at the University of Portsmouth, and the excellent work that they are doing towards fulfilling a vital mission. That event featured a talk by an impressive Cara PhD Fellow from Syria, who had found her way to Portsmouth through Cara. Here was living proof of how the chance to live in safety and make progress through unhindered studies can enable one to thrive and truly reach their potential. Later that year, when I was myself asked to consider supervision of a potential PhD Fellow from Syria, I did not hesitate to accept, and created a research project plan. Some months later, following completion of all the necessary administrative procedures, all very ably aided by the continued assistance of Cara, Nour arrived to start her first day as a PhD student in my research laboratory.

Today, wind forward four years and I have the great satisfaction of having mentored a recently graduated PhD scientist, who has authored a high quality thesis as well as several publications from her work within molecular cancer research. The journey Nour took from the beginning was a long and steep one, there being at the start only a slight overlap between her knowledge and the particular area of molecular bioscience research which she was about to enter. However, she threw

herself fully into the mire, with only the certainty that her success depended almost entirely on her own application. Within the first year, her work had already yielded a substantial body of data that placed her on a solid trajectory to lead to a first manuscript for publication.

Alongside the hard graft of daily lab work throughout the PhD, Nour also participated in many activities that contribute to the development of a PhD scholar. These included university graduate development workshops, Journal Club and research seminars. Moreover, she had the valuable opportunities of presenting her work, internally as well as at major international cancer research conferences, supervising undergrad honours projects in the lab, helping me to run laboratory practical classes, and participating in science communication to a lay audience as a Cara Cumberland Lodge Scholar.

Now that she has been awarded her PhD this year, I can only express my appreciation and satisfaction at having worked with Nour, and having the opportunity to guide her work. I thank Cara and the University for realising her potential and enabling her to make a lasting impact on the research field while still as a student, setting her on a course for continued academic success into the future.

Dr Sassan Hafizi
Portsmouth, August 2020

A CARA FELLOW'S STORY: FROM PALESTINE TO 'GLOBAL TALENT'

The conflict in Palestinian Territories puts lives there at tremendous risk and prevents Palestinian experts from continuing their development and communicating with international higher education institutions to improve education, health care and wellbeing for the vulnerable in war areas.

I read about Cara's support in its website and I wrote to them explaining my situation. Cara was able to find a host university in the UK where I could progress my research to promote health and education for vulnerable societies in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs). It took me six months to leave the Gaza Strip because of the continuous siege. Cara was in continuous contact with me, always assuring me that my Fellowship would start as soon as I was able to come to the UK. Once I left Gaza Strip, Cara booked a flight ticket and hotels to facilitate my travel from Egypt to UK without delay.

During my Cara Fellowship in the UK, I received an award to build partnerships with countries in the Middle East and to develop health care promotion projects in LMICs and areas suffering from long-lasting conflicts. I gained experience in teaching

students, conducting health research, evaluating complex health interventions and addressing the social determinants of health. I delivered lectures in public health for refugees and those in areas of conflict. I published reviews for assessing health risk factors and health interventions in refugee settings in conflict areas and LMICs, and developed a model for a global Master's programme to promote higher education in LMICs and across the world. I was given the opportunity to join advanced courses for learning and teaching in higher education.

Cara continuously reviews its Fellows' progress and solves any obstacles we face as international academic visitors. As a result of my Fellowship and the progress I achieved, I was granted a Tier 1 Global Talent visa. This will allow me to continue collaboration with UK universities to develop health promotion projects to empower existing infrastructure, health system capacities and WHO primary health care programmes to secure sustainable and equitable access to primary health care services in conflict zones, and to build partnerships with LMICs' Governments, NGOs, international agencies, health professionals and families.

Cara Fellow from Palestine

A CARA FELLOW'S STORY: STRATHCLYDE

Words cannot express how the Cara Fellowship has changed my life. I was a successful academic back home where I was an Assistant Professor. I had a long history of teaching and publishing. However, it wasn't easy to move this academic success to universities in the UK. I needed a step that introduced me to academic life here.

The Cara Fellowship was this step. I was granted a visiting researcher position at the University of Strathclyde, and was lucky to be under the supervision of two academic experts at the School of Law. Therese O'Donnell and Paul James Cardwell were generous in providing all the essential support needed during my Fellowship, and facilitated my participation in academic activities within and outside the University. The key moment was when one of my supervisors recommended me to be a

A CARA FELLOW'S STORY: LEEDS

I completed my Bachelor's degree in Dentistry from the University of Mosul in 2009. In 2015, I completed my Master's degree in Dental Public Health at the University of Sheffield. By the time I finished my master's degree, Mosul was occupied by ISIS and my family was forced to flee. I faced an uncertain situation/risky situation. My main concern was to protect my family and our future. Eventually, we lost everything in Mosul. The situation was uncertain and so fragile.

I tried everything to get an opportunity to complete my PhD and protect my family from the war. I got in touch with Cara in 2016, which was the only organisation that

visiting lecturer at another university, which meant that I started to teach and supervise Master's students in the area of my expertise. As a result, I established an academic network with staff members at different universities, which helped me to teach at a third university. The Cara Fellowship also helped me to participate in the activities of different bodies, such as the UN Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries.

Having links with different universities and with the help of my supervisors, I managed to secure a permanent position as a teaching Fellow to prepare and teach a course in my area of specialisation. Generously, Cara continues to provide me with support to progress my career, including workshops to help Fellows to strengthen their skills and be more familiar with the British system.

Cara Fellow from Iraq

responded to my application. They were so sympathetic to my case. I was very honest and transparent with them as well. I was only worried about what Cara might ask in return for their sponsorship, such as a guarantee, which other sponsors had previously asked for. Surprisingly, the answer I got from them was 'nothing'. I kept asking them the same question and the answer was always 'nothing'. Cara is only interested in seeing me progress and get my PhD without placing any future commitments. I can't thank them enough and I keep saying that Cara is one of the most wonderful things to happen to my life. It is a unique organisation with a pure humanitarian goal, which is rare nowadays!

Yahya, Cara Fellow from Iraq

“My life was threatened by fighters from the militia because a young man wanted to study for a Master's degree in Social Work without providing academic documents and I rejected him. I have no choice but to flee my country to avoid persecution.”

Cara Fellow from Libya

HOSTING A CARA FELLOW IN THE LAW SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE

For the past 18 months, Strathclyde Law School has been delighted to welcome an Iraqi scholar as a Cara Fellow and help him to continue his academic progress. Although the University has previously partnered with Cara, this was the first opportunity the Law School has had to support the work of a Cara Fellow. Supervision duties were shared between myself and a colleague who is a specialist in the area of International Law. Our Fellow was already familiar with aspects of academia in the UK, having previously completed a PhD in the UK, and had established links with several universities in the region.

Our Cara Fellow also had an impressive record of publications in English, and used his base within the Law School to develop his publication records, enhance his professional associations and strengthen his CV with a view to obtaining a permanent academic role. He became a key part of the Law School community, attending our events and networking with staff within and outwith his research area. An academic

visitor from the University of Copenhagen, who is also part of a UN Working Group, led to an invitation to contribute to a closed meeting of that Working Group. This fruitful outcome demonstrates the importance for, and benefits of, Cara Fellows being fully involved in departmental activities.

Unfortunately, the COVID pandemic disrupted the latter part of his stay. The move to remote working prevented further face-to-face discussions with his supervisors and other colleagues. However, we were able to converse over Zoom and continue to assist his professional development. We were keen to support him in his applications for posts in a very difficult environment, and are delighted that he was offered a part-time teaching post at a leading University in Scotland. We are very grateful to him for being part of our community, and he will be much missed when we eventually return to on-campus working.

Prof Paul James Cardwell



Cara Fellow Yahya at the University of Leeds (see previous page)

A CARA FELLOW'S STORY: FROM PALESTINE TO SCOTLAND

I completed my PhD at a prestigious university in Scotland under a scholarship. Afterwards, I went back to Palestinian Occupied Territories to conduct research in relation to my expertise. After months of submitting job applications, and due to the political nature of my research interests, I struggled to secure any lectureship post. Eventually, I was offered a full-time permanent lectureship at the best university in the Occupied Territories, Birzeit, but was denied the right to apply for a work permit due to Israeli occupation measures against Palestinian academics moving between the West Bank and Gaza. I was advised then by a colleague to contact Cara, which I did. The Cara team helped me in securing a postdoc fellowship at the same university, to conduct research that I care deeply about. I am currently contributing to several committees at the university as well as teaching.

Being an English language teacher by profession, I am passionate about helping

people to reach their potential. In the first week of my fellowship, I learned about Cara's Programme for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) support for their Fellows at Scottish Universities. Feeling grateful for Cara's support, I wanted to give back, and so I volunteered for a one-to-one weekly session with a Cara Fellow. The Fellow I am paired with enjoys the sessions and appreciates the progress in his speaking skills. I have also been invited to contribute to the English Language workshops for Cara Fellows in Scotland, arranged and delivered by the University. This experience has been really gratifying, especially because my expertise in comparative linguistics means that I am able to draw the Fellows' attention to the reasons for some of the structural and speaking mistakes they commit, which are due to the influence of their native Arabic on English. The feedback I have received is heart-warming and it gives me a sense of fulfilment, and further motivates me to continue with this activity to keep the brilliant work of Cara going.

Hala, Cara Fellow from Palestine

A SYRIAN FELLOW'S STORY

As I am sharing a story of hope and success, I will not go into details about the situation in Syria and what drove me to seek help to leave it. Cara's help, financial and emotional, was very immense I still feel the whole PhD journey was a dream.

When I contacted Cara, I not only got a quick response, but also an assurance that "everything is going to be OK". Starting from the English exam, visa application, flight tickets, a lift from the airport, a cosy room, a phone call to check on me ... all of that and more was part of Cara's support.

As my PhD thesis revolves around Cara's work itself, I had great support in data collection that enabled me to finish my

PhD in three short sweet years. To add to that, Cara's efforts to open the eyes of its Fellows to the importance of finding a job, along with the help of a great supervisor, pushed me to apply for an international post-doctorate in a reputable institution while I was in the third year of my PhD. The dreamy academic path I started with Cara was destined to continue as I was a successful candidate and am now about to start my academic career officially.

I will be forever indebted to the Cara team for how they approach exiled academics and how they support them, as our country needs this more than ever.

Baraa, Cara Fellow from Syria

UK Partnerships

Our closest relationship is with all the members of the UK Universities Network, without whose practical and financial support we couldn't function. We were delighted to welcome two new Network members in 2019/20, and look forward to further growth in the year ahead. A full list of the Network members is on page 25.

Since our foundation in 1933 we have worked closely with the British Academy and the Royal Society, and we continued this cooperation in 2019/20. As reported on page 27, the Royal Society once again hosted our 'Science and Civilisation' lecture in 2019. We also continued our close collaboration with the British Council throughout 2019/20. In particular, we are grateful to the Council for once again providing fee waivers for Cara Fellows from Syria who take their International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exams in the region.

In July 2020 we agreed with the Trustees of the Sir Hans Krebs Trust to continue our cooperation for a fifth year. The late Sir Hans Krebs was a Nobel Prize winner who was supported by Cara in the 1930s when he was forced to leave Nazi Germany, and the Trust's awards are funded from the sale, by his family, of his Nobel Prize medal. The *Sir Hans Krebs Trust/Cara Fellowships* are helping to ensure that future generations of biomedical scientists who are prevented from carrying out research in their own country because of persecution or oppression have the opportunity to continue their important work. Cara looks forward to continuing this work in 2020/21.

In 2019/20 we also continued our partnership with the Northern Consortium, a charity established in 1987 by leading

universities in Northern England, and its trading arm, NCUK, who now partner with 16 universities in the UK and many more overseas to help meet the charity's objective of increasing access to higher education for international students. A 3-year grant from the Northern Consortium (NC) in 2017 has helped make it possible for academics to escape from danger in their own countries and to study for PhDs at NC member universities; and we were delighted to hear in August 2020 that the award was being renewed for a further three years.

In Spring 2020 we nominated our fourth '*Cumberland Lodge Scholar*'. Cumberland Lodge, the educational foundation in Windsor Great Park, launched a scholarship scheme in 2017 to accept a Cara PhD student each year, for two years. This collaboration was inspired by our shared history as organisations founded in response to the rise of Nazism in 1930s Germany. Every year, a Cara PhD Fellow is selected to join the existing Cumberland Lodge Scholarship scheme for doctoral students, to benefit from intercultural exchange and to gain transferrable skills in critical thinking, communications, networking and public engagement.

Throughout 2019/20 we continued our cooperation with the Society for Applied Microbiology (SfAM) and the Microbiology Society, who generously provided support for a Cara Fellow in their special field.

We are very grateful also to Goodenough College, to International Student House, and to William Temple House, who offer generous scholarships to cover accommodation costs for Cara Fellows in London.

UK NETWORK UNIVERSITIES, 2020

In the course of 2019/20 we welcomed two more universities to the UK Network – Swansea and Teesside – bringing the total to 121. Network members generously offer fee waivers and often accommodation and financial support for Cara Fellows and their families. The great majority also contribute a voluntary annual subscription too, to help

cover our running costs. We thank them all. Equally, we thank those many members of their staffs, who give so generously of their time, pro bono, to help our Fellows and to support our *Syria Programme*. Our work would be impossible without their enthusiasm and commitment.

Aberdeen | Abertay | Aberystwyth | Aston | Bath | Bath Spa | Bedfordshire | Birkbeck | Birmingham | Bournemouth | Bradford | Brighton | Bristol | Brunel | Buckingham | Cambridge | Canterbury Christ Church | Cardiff | Cardiff Metropolitan | Central Lancashire | Chester | Chichester | City University London | City & Guilds of London Art School | Courtauld Institute | Coventry | Cumbria | De Montfort | Dundee | Durham | East Anglia | East London | Edinburgh | Edinburgh Napier | Essex | Exeter | Glasgow | Glasgow Caledonian | Glasgow School of Art | Goldsmiths College | Goodenough College | Greenwich | Heriot Watt | Hertfordshire | Highlands and Islands | Huddersfield | Hull | Imperial College | Kent | Keele | King's College London | Kingston | Lancaster | Leeds | Leeds Beckett | Leeds Trinity | Leicester | Lincoln | Liverpool | Liverpool Hope | Liverpool John Moores | Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine | London | London Business School | London Metropolitan | London School of Economics | London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine | London South Bank | Loughborough | Manchester | Manchester Metropolitan | Middlesex | Newcastle | Newman University Birmingham | Northampton | Northumbria University Newcastle | Nottingham | Nottingham Trent | Open | Oxford | Oxford Brookes | Plymouth | Portsmouth | Queen Mary | Queen Margaret | Queen's Belfast | Ravensbourne | Reading | Regent's | Roehampton | Royal Central School of Speech & Drama | Royal Holloway | SOAS | Salford | Sheffield | Sheffield Hallam | Southampton | Solent | South Wales | Staffordshire | Stirling | Strathclyde | St Andrews | Sunderland | Surrey | Sussex | Swansea | Teesside | University of the Arts London | University College London | Ulster | Warwick | Westminster | West of England | West of Scotland | Winchester | Wolverhampton | Worcester | Wrexham Glyndwr | York | York St John | (121)

International Partnerships

There is no other organisation like Cara in Europe, but we work with a wide range of like-minded international partners, including in particular our two US counterparts, the Scholars at Risk Network (SAR) and the Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund. In October 2019 Cara was honoured to receive a Centennial Medal from the Institute of International Education's President Dr Allan Goodman, in recognition of our work together. We look forward to continuing our partnership with IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund and with SAR in the years ahead.

In 2019-2020 Cara again served as Vice-Chair of the New York-based Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, a grouping of NGOs and UN agencies formed in 2010 to highlight the problem of targeted attacks on education, particularly during armed conflict. The Coalition's biggest achievement so far has been the launch in 2013 of a project which, under the leadership of Norway and Argentina, then developed into the 'Safe Schools Declaration'. GCPEA's work to persuade more countries to adopt the Declaration and the accompanying Guidelines continued throughout 2018/19 and by July 2020, 104 countries – well over half of all UN members states – had adopted both. This is making a real difference to those caught up in conflict, with many endorsing states

taking steps to enshrine their positive decision in domestic legislation and military doctrine. We were also closely involved in the preparation of GCPEA's flagship publication, *Education under Attack 2020*.

In 2019/20 we continued to work with the *Philipp Schwartz Initiative* (PSI), run by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation with support from the German Foreign Ministry and a number of German foundations, which helps at-risk academics to find places at German universities. So far, Cara has supported thirty-one successful applications in seven application rounds, and is now working with several German universities on applications for the eighth round. Several Cara Fellows are now working at German universities with PSI support. In 2020, Cara also continued its cooperation with the French funding scheme for at-risk academics, the *Programme national d'aide à l'Accueil en Urgence des Scientifiques en Exil* (PAUSE), from which several Cara Fellows have also benefitted.

In 2019/20 we further developed our partnership with the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), with Cara's Chair and Executive Director both addressing the December 2019 meeting of the ACU Council. We look forward to developing this cooperation further in 2020/21, on the basis of our 2017 Memorandum of Understanding.

“ I suffered from persecutions and threats in my work to follow them and their illegal orders, because I do not belong to the same race and do not believe in their backward ideas. ”

Cara Fellow from Yemen

Events

On Monday 28 October 2019 over 100 guests came to the Royal Society in London to hear the distinguished philosopher and Cara Patron, Baroness Onora O'Neill of Bengarve, deliver Cara's seventh Annual 'Science and Civilisation' Lecture. Taking as her theme, 'Communication and Democracy in a Digital Age', Baroness O'Neill challenged early assumptions that digital technologies would support democracy and wider civic communication and participation. In her view, the established systems of legal, regulatory, professional and cultural quality control were being bypassed or replaced by powerful intermediaries whose control of information and communication all too often neither supported nor secured respect for ethical norms, but inflicted cultural and political damage. The consequences for democracies could well be profound. Her talk was followed by a lively Q&A session, and by a buffet reception for all. An audio recording is available at <http://bit.ly/BONofB>.

On 13 November 2019 our Director spoke in a Panel Discussion at Pembroke College Cambridge, on the topic, 'Should we provide Safe Havens for Academics at Risk?' The event was in the run-up to a College Giving Day a week later. This raised an amazing £45,134, 150% of the target amount, to help an academic at risk from persecution to go to Pembroke to continue their research.

On 18 November 2019 the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Young Academy of Scotland and Cara jointly hosted our first lecture in Scotland. A full house heard Bertrand Ramcharan, former Acting UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, discuss the role of Scottish Enlightenment thought in shaping contemporary human rights ideas.



Baroness O'Neill delivering Cara's 7th annual 'Science and Civilisation' lecture at the Royal Society

On 22 November Cara's Chair and Director both spoke at an event hosted by the Association of Commonwealth Universities at King's College London, on 'Journeys to Belonging: What Role for Higher Education?'

In early March 2020, just before the Covid-19 lockdown began, our Director spoke at a Conference in Cambridge, on the theme of 'Cambridge: City of Scholars, City of Refuge (1933-1945)', to introduce the event's keynote speaker, Professor the Lord Krebs, the son of one of the many German academics helped by Cara in the 1930s. The organisers' opening remarks, our Director's talk, and Lord Krebs's address are available at <http://bit.ly/SWJKCam>.

Three children of people who were helped at that time by the SPSL, as Cara was then, also spoke:

- Miriam Glucksmann, on 'Two Paths to Strangeways: Alfred Glucksmann and Ilse Lasnitzki' (<https://bit.ly/CamMGIksn>)
- Robin Perutz, on 'Max Perutz in his own words, 1936-1945' (<https://bit.ly/CamRPtz>)
- Vivien Perutz, on 'The Impact of the Emigrés from Nazi Europe on British Art History' (<https://bit.ly/CamVPtz>)



Around the world, the liberty of many academics and even their lives are in danger. Their hard-earned skills risk being lost.

Since 1933, Cara has helped thousands of them to escape. We are working to rescue many more now.

But we need your help to do it.

cara | '10 x 20'

Please go to www.cara.ngo/10-x-20-appeal, and help us to get your colleagues to safety.

Some 400,000 people work in Higher Education in the UK, and more in the UK's learned societies. If 10% of them were able to give just £20 to Cara every year – £5 per quarter – our finances would be transformed.

Council for At-Risk Academics, Registered Charity No 207471

Fundraising

Cara has to raise new funds every year, to be able to continue its work. We are enormously grateful to the 80 UK universities who contributed over £322,000 in voluntary annual subscriptions in 2019/20 – roughly two-thirds of Cara's annual running cost bill.

Our '10 x 20' fundraising initiative, launched in November 2017 and aimed, ultimately, at getting 10% of those working in higher education in the UK to contribute £20 per year, is continuing to grow. As at 31 July 2020, we had over 210 Direct Debit subscribers, pledging nearly £35,000 per year. We will work to increase this further in 2020/21, to strengthen our funding base. We also received many generous one-off donations, including donations in memory and gifts to mark a wedding or anniversary.

In the course of 2019/20 Cara staff continued to submit funding applications to a wide range of existing and potential institutional supporters; most were successful. Some donors prefer to remain anonymous, but the following are happy to be acknowledged:

- Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund
- Andrew W Mellon Foundation
- The April Trust
- Dowager Countess Eleanor Peel Trust
- Eddie Dinshaw Foundation
- French Huguenot Church of London Charitable Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Harbour Foundation
- Microbiology Society
- Microsoft Limited
- Murdoch Trust
- Northern Consortium
- Open Society Foundations
- Sir Hans Krebs Trust
- Sir Joseph Hotung Charitable Settlement
- Society for Applied Microbiology
- Texel Foundation
- Thriplow Charitable Trust
- Whitaker Charitable Trust
- Wolfson Foundation
- Worshipful Company of World Traders

We warmly thank all our donors; we could not continue our work without them.

Financial Performance in 2019

Cara's Financial Year is the calendar year. In 2019 most universities continued to pay the funds they were providing for accommodation and living costs for the Cara Fellows they were hosting as restricted donations to Cara, rather than paying the Fellows direct. As a result, Cara's final income in 2019 totalled £2,246,299, while expenditure and commitments on awards and programme and project work for the year amounted to £2,458,543. The total net movement of funds was a deficit of £177,876 (2018: a surplus of £414,061). This was entirely due to timing issues affecting restricted funds, following

two years of restricted surpluses. Cara's unrestricted funds were in surplus in 2019. On a cash basis, there was an overall surplus of £368,398 (2018: £594,589), mainly due to the advance receipt of restricted funding for Fellowships and for the Syria Programme, which is already committed for 2020/21.

During 2019, the total value of assets held by Cara's investment advisers, Investec, rose from £290,236 at the end of 2018 to £328,253 reflecting a wider recovery in the markets since the end of the previous year. The value of these investments fell sharply in March 2020, as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, but much of the fall had been made up again by end-July.

SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
for the year ended 31st December 2019

	2019 £	2018 £
Income		
Donations and legacies	2,239,708	2,592,010
Investment income	6,591	6,468
Realised gains / (losses) on investments	(1,057)	1,625
Unrealised gains / (losses) on investments	35,425	(17,282)
Total income	2,280,667	2,582,821
Expenditure		
Raising funds	3,159	3,142
Charitable activities:		
Grants payable	1,913,537	1,685,260
Programme and project work	523,673	462,479
Governance	18,174	17,879
Total expenditure	2,458,543	2,168,760
Net income (expenditure) for the year	(177,876)	414,061

All of the operations undertaken by the company during the current and preceding years are continuing operations.

The retained net loss for the year based on historical cost is £213,301 (2018 – net gain £431,352).

Auditors' Opinion: We confirm that the information given in the summary income and expenditure account and the balance sheet shown on pages 30 to 31 is consistent with the annual accounts of the company for the year ended 31 December 2019 which have been audited by ourselves.

David Warren BA FCA Senior statutory auditor, 3 June 2020

For and on behalf of Cocke, Vellacott & Hill Statutory Auditor Chartered Accountants
Unit 3 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, London SE16 2XU

BALANCE SHEET
as at 31st December 2019

	2019 £	2018 £
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	1,885	4,839
Investments	328,253	290,236
Total fixed assets	330,138	295,075
Current assets		
Debtors	75,966	221,037
Cash at bank and in hand	1,728,306	1,359,910
Total current assets	1,804,272	1,580,947
Liabilities		
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(1,351,602)	(915,338)
Net current assets (liabilities)	452,670	665,609
Total assets less current liabilities	782,808	960,684
The funds of the charity:		
Restricted Income Funds	413,596	706,601
Unrestricted Funds - general	343,693	263,989
Unrestricted Funds - revaluation reserve	25,519	(9,906)
Total charity funds	782,808	960,684

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 3 June 2020 and signed on its behalf by:
PROF MICHAEL WORTON (Trustee)
DAVID URE (Trustee)

Company Registration No: 00641687 Charity Registration No: 207471

GOVERNANCE AND STAFF

President

Professor Sir Malcolm Grant CBE

Patrons

Mr Greg Dyke

Rabbi Baroness Neuberger DBE

The Baroness O'Neill of Bengarve CH CBE FBA

Professor Lord Patel of Bradford OBE

Mr Jon Snow

Dr Rowan Williams (The Rt Revd and Rt Hon The Lord Williams of Oystermouth PC)

Trustees at 31 July 2020

Chair: Professor Michael Worton CBE, Former Vice-Provost (International), UCL

Hon Secretary: Professor Alan McCarthy, Emeritus Professor of Microbiology, University of Liverpool

Hon Treasurer: Mr David Ure, Company Director, formerly Chair of the Reuters Foundation

Ms Nicola Dandridge CBE, Chief Executive, Office for Students

Professor Penelope Gardner-Chloros, Professor Emerita of Sociolinguistics & Language Contact, Birkbeck, University of London

Professor Colin Grant, Vice-Principal (International), Queen Mary University of London

Professor Mark Hammond, Former Chief Executive, Equality and Human Rights Commission

Professor Sir Deian Hopkin, former President of the National Library of Wales; former University Vice-Chancellor

Ms Lilia Jolibois, Non-executive Director and Member of the Audit Committee of Future Group S.A., France, and Board Director of the INSEAD Foundation

Mrs Anne Lonsdale CBE, Former President, New Hall (now Murray-Edwards College), Cambridge, and Cambridge University Pro-Vice-Chancellor

Dr Joanna Newman MBE, Secretary General, Association of Commonwealth Universities

Ms Tabitha Nice, Litigator in private practice, later non-practicing Chief Adjuster, Specialty, for a Lloyd's managing agent.

Mr Nigel Petrie, Retired in 2016 as Chairman of AD Group, an entrepreneurial technology business.

Mr Stephan Roman CMG, Former Director for South Asia, the British Council

Professor Paul Weindling, Research Professor, History of Medicine, Oxford Brookes University

Staff as at 31 July 2020

Executive Director: Stephen Wordsworth CMG LVO

Deputy Director, Fellowship Programme Manager: Zeid Al-Bayat

Senior Fellowship Programme Officer: Sana Ibrahim

Fellowship Programme Officer: Narmin Ali

Fellowship Programme Officer: Laura Puiggalí

Fellowship Programme Officer: Oscar Saunders

Fellowship Programme Officer: Lucia Simms

Fellowship Programme Assistant: Yacine Ait Larbi

Middle East Adviser: Kate Robertson

Syria Programme Officer: Lena Cohrs

Syria Programme Officer: Chloe Palmer

Syria Programme Assistant: Ipek Velioglu Melis

Cara Scotland Manager: Sheila Mills

Volunteers and Interns

Cara could not function without the support of the volunteers and interns who have so generously given their time to work with Cara over the last year:

Harbinda Hanspal | Sara Bermudez | Arzu Abbasova | Hadil Louz

Data Protection

In view of the sensitivity of the personal information that Cara processes, Cara is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Cara's registration may be viewed at:

<https://ico.org.uk/ESDWebPages/Entry/ZA066134>

“ This email is to thank Cara that gave me a lifeline. I would be forever grateful to Cara that literally saved my life and supported me to pursue my studies. ”

Cara Fellow from Syria

“ On my last placement day, I would sincerely like to thank you for your very generous sponsorship and your Incomparable support. You have given to my career a massive boost, I feel I am now able to look for the next step with all confidence and enthusiasm. ”

Cara Fellow from Libya

“ The Fellowship Programme literally changed the course of my and my family’s life. Please be reassured that I am doing my best to remain worthy of your generous support. ”

Cara Fellow from Turkey

Cara (Council for At-Risk Academics)
LSBU Technopark
90 London Road
SE1 6LN

T: 020 7021 0880
F: 020 7021 0881

info@cara.ngo
www.cara.ngo

Charity registered in England and Wales No 207471
Company registered in England and Wales No 641687

Middle East Office (since 2008): 101 Uhod Street, Amman, Jordan.