

Dear Woolf Friends,

From research to social good, from Cambridge to the wider world, the Woolf Institute is increasing the impact of its work this year, especially within political and policymaking circles.

With this goal in mind, we have further strengthened our ties to the UK Government's various ministries and departments. To support the recently relaunched Woolf Diversity Study, we are in discussion with several policy teams across the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. To showcase our interfaith expertise, we have secured a presence at the forthcoming International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief hosted in London by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Last week, our efforts reached something of a crescendo: a meeting at No.10 Downing Street with one of the Prime Minister's Special Advisers (known informally as SPADs).

Director of Research, Dr Julian Hargreaves and Claire Mathys, a freelance policy consultant hired to raise our profile within Westminster, spent an hour inside No.10 last week introducing ourselves and the Woolf Institute's portfolio of research, teaching, public education, outreach and policy-related activities.

We laid out the principles and values driving our efforts and shared our non-political, evidence-led and highly inclusive approach to understanding and supporting Abrahamic faith communities in the UK and beyond.



Left: Claire Mathys; Right: Dr Julian Hargreaves

In return, we were given valuable insights into No.10's current thinking on a range of issues: from social cohesion, to the economic uncertainty facing many of the UK's minority and "left behind" communities. There are significant challenges facing No.10: inflation, strikes and the continued fallout from breaches of the Covid-19 lockdown rules during the pandemic. Despite the testing times, it was reassuring to learn that SPADs are continuing to work hard, seeking to deliver manifesto pledges and effect social, economic and political reform.

Our glimpse inside No.10 was fascinating: the famous portraits of Prime Ministers arranged up its main staircase; the room chosen by Margaret Thatcher's as her private office (and, decades on, the venue for our meeting); and a close encounter with Downing Street's long-standing resident, Larry the Cat – asleep on a rug in reception. Our meeting ended with warm handshakes and a kind invitation to return to continue our conversations on faith communities and inclusion.

Best wishes,

Dr Julian Hargreaves
Director of Research

ITV EXHIBITION



How many Woolf people can you spot in this ITV News Anglia clip from the launch of our calligraphy exhibition?

If you missed the launch of The Written Word: Timeless Arabic & Hebrew Calligraphy, prints of the work are featured throughout the Woolf Institute building until the end of the year!

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)

READ OUR LATEST BLOG

PATRON'S TOUR ISTANBUL 2022

by Rick Sopher



NEW BLOG: PATRON'S TOUR ISTANBUL 2022

BY RICK SOPHER

Our trip, arranged by the Institute and comprising a small group of Jews, Christians and Muslims, both Sunni and Shi'a, showed us that religion pervades nearly everything in Turkey: its rich history, contemporary politics, social relations and prospects for the future all have a strong religious dimension. For although 99% of Turks recognise themselves as Muslim, their religiosity, ethnicity and many other elements vary greatly. We also found that the remaining 1%, including Jews and Christians, have a significance far greater than their numbers.

It is quite fitting therefore that the Woolf Institute, which is dedicated to fostering good relations between Judaism, Christianity and Islam and between religion and society in general should visit Turkey. First of all, as Rabbi Mendy Chitrik explained on our arrival, Harran in East Turkey is where Abraham discovered God. It is where it all started.



[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

The Woolf:

Within Living Memory

CALLING ALL ALUMNI OF THE WOOLF INSTITUTE

Were you a student at the Woolf? What was it like? Did it change your life? We are collecting memories from our alumni about their experiences of studying in Cambridge at the Woolf Institute, particularly those who studied here in the early days of the Institute. Please tell us where you came from, what you studied, what your first impressions of Cambridge were and how your research at the Woolf affected you and the decisions you took afterwards. What are you doing now? Have you kept in touch with people you met back then? Do you come back to Cambridge?

We would love to hear from you. If you would like to contribute a short piece of around 300 words, please send it to Liz Winter at ejw39@cam.ac.uk, together with any relevant photos you have.

We look forward to hearing from you.

[CLICK HERE TO SEND IN YOUR MEMORIES](#)

GOD ON "OUR" SIDE?

Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND
ARCHBISHOP KIRILL OF MOSCOW BOTH GOT
INTO TROUBLE RECENTLY FOR MIXING UP
RELIGION WITH POLITICS...



PODCAST: GOD ON "OUR" SIDE?

The Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop Kirill of Moscow both got into trouble recently for mixing up religion with politics...

The Archbishop of Canterbury ruffled some feathers in government circles when he said that there were "serious ethical questions about sending asylum seekers overseas". Archbishop Kirill of Moscow's intervention in favour of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, characterizing it as a defence of Orthodox Christian civilization was less nuanced. Should Archbishops get stuck into political debate? Jocelyn Cesari and Chris Cooper Davies discuss.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

COMING SOON

Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute

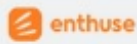
CITIES OF SANCTUARY

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