

## **Letter of support for University of Leicester staff from ICMS**

University of Leicester: “Championing Academic Freedom and the Importance of Constructive Debate”

The Board of International Critical Management Studies (ICMS) expresses its deep concern for the collective redundancies of staff announced by the University of Leicester.

The redundancies are justified as a means of supporting long term sustainability. But this justification is incompatible with

1. The targeting of individual academics whose work is most relevant to addressing contemporary crises, including those employed in the business school who are challenging existing, unsustainable models and practices. It is difficult to reconcile this approach with the University’s espoused aim of “Championing Academic Freedom and the Importance of Constructive Debate”. (<https://le.ac.uk/about/strategy-development/strategy>)
2. Maintaining checks and balances within the University as it appears that active union members are disproportionately identified for redundancy.
3. The shameful mobilization of progressive (e.g., decolonializing) discourse to justify redundancies (e.g., in medieval studies)
4. The further extension of precarity from contract staff to permanent staff who, even if they are not singled out for redundancy in this round, may fear becoming arbitrary targets of any future redundancies resulting from the failure of the University’s incoherent plan to deliver the important objective of long term sustainability.

Accordingly, ICMS calls upon the University to stop this plan and make the principles and information for its redundancies open to scrutiny, practicing the values of pluralism, dialogue and academic freedom that it espouses. This is a prerequisite for informed and meaningful debate about how to develop a coherent strategy for achieving a secure and non-divisive future for the University and its staff.

Sincerely

Albert J. Mills and Maria Araujo Misoczky

Co-Chairs, International Critical Management Studies