



PGR Placement

Placement Provider:	Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT)
Project Title:	
Post:	Project Development FACTLab Initiative
Start Date:	Ongoing
Duration:	
Deadline for Applications:	Ongoing
Description of Placement:	<p>FACTLab space, launched in July 2015. FACTLab is a public facing prototyping space for artists and digital industries specialists in Liverpool. The space enables innovative ideas to be tested, iterated and delivered in a structured incubator environment that nurtures local creative and digital talent whilst offering encouragement and opportunities through other FACT departments.</p> <p>The FACTLab space is managed by a full time staff who oversee a programme of training, facilitated workshops and “Show and Tells” and supported by the wider FACT team. It is directed by the joint FACT/LJMU post Dr. Mark Wright who has co-designed FACTLab with staff and stakeholders alike.</p> <p>FACTLab will support the development of action research.</p> <p>Building on FACT’s existing collaborations with a cluster of creative/digital practitioners, including Draw & Code, Uniform, Studio Mashbo, Red Ninja and Apposing, FACTLab will facilitate collaboration with artists through solicited proposals. Those that demonstrate clear benefits to both parties that consider the immediate concerns of the research and how they can be co-designed to create impactful knowledge exchange through enriched arts experiences that is measureable, affective and has the potential for a pathway to market will be supported.</p> <p>FACT has a wealth of experience over 25 years of administering large-scale projects including AND festival and the three-year European funded project Human Futures, and is a digital lead in the Arts Council’s National Portfolio.</p> <p>The Pathways to impact are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jointly authored (artist/academic/creative sector) peer reviewed publications - Furthering meaningful engagement between marketing and the public designed to strengthen public consent of research themes. - Public facing testing and ideation in a “neutral” arts venue - Creative industries and other transdisciplinary sector awareness-raising - An arts-led research programme <p>FACTLab Rational: Research by Design</p> <p>Digital technologies are continually offering new possibilities for innovation and use. Researchers who observe current trends may often get led into studying a particular technology – we have seen the rise of “mobile phone” studies, and</p>

“internet studies”, examining the use of current technologies. We are used to trying to draw conclusions about the future, using theoretical concepts and empirical evidence of the past and present. Is this sufficient, when we know practices and technologies will change? One way to extend methods based in the present is to conduct speculative future-oriented research by doing experiments and engaging in design activities that that are informed by our knowledge as arts practitioners and researchers, while also using the practices of designers and to explore emerging socio-technical configurations, and indeed influence them.

FACTLab deploys an exploratory method which we have called “Research by Design”. This research method combines the power of theoretical perspectives with tangible “human-centered” design activities, “designer-user” approaches and exploration of the affordances of emerging technologies. In the field of design and study of technology-based practices these design-based methods that create “prototypes” or “probes” have been explored in a variety of forms over recent years (Suchman et al. 2002; Gaver et al. 2004; Coyne & Triggs 2007) although often over protracted periods of time. We used shorter, more iterative interventions (e.g. Crabtree 2004), combining social science and design methods in the style of design charrettes (Sutton & Kemp 2006). Although certainly inspired by insights into user inputs to innovation (Williams et al. 2002), and participatory design discourses (Argyris & Schön 1989; Buur & Matthews 2008), experiments should engage with “real” users developing “real” products and services, but as a way to leverage the practices of design, and the exigencies of use within “semi-real” situations of a few days to a few weeks.

Expected CPD Outcomes :

Networking skills, planning skills in large scale project delivery, in depth knowledge of a leading NPO working environment

Specific Skills/Experience/Training Required for the Placement:

Microsoft Office and Google Docs, confident phone and interpersonal manner with high level stakeholders, knowledge of contemporary theory and practice in arts and the sociological impact of digital spaces and appropriate research.