

Arts-Methods Funding Report
Constructing Knowledges Symposium
May 21, 2019

This document provides a report on outcomes of the Constructing Knowledges Symposium, an event developed to facilitate interdisciplinary contact by creating more opportunities to exchange knowledge about the topics, methods, and approaches used in different academic disciplines. The event described below took place 21 May, 2018. It was funded through the Arts-Methods Researcher Conference Funding initiative.

The Constructing Knowledges symposium was developed in response to a perceived lack of interdisciplinary interaction between postgraduate researchers from different academic departments at the University of Manchester. Led by a group of researchers representing three different departments, the event was envisioned as a one-day workshop that would postgraduate students from a variety of backgrounds to discuss their research and disciplinary approaches as they related to a specific theme. It was decided that, in order to maximize the reach of the event, this inaugural session should focus on a topic that appealed to multiple disciplines. “Environment as Context” was chosen as the focus for this inaugural session.

The event consisted of a series of presentations and activities that highlighted how academics from different departments understood, approached, and interacted with environment as a concept. The symposium consisted of three groups of moderated presentations, organized around the natural, global, and urban environment. Speakers on each panel delivered a five-minute presentation introducing their research and discussing how their work intersected with the theme of the environment. A forty-minute period between the first two panels was dedicated to fostering interdisciplinary discussion and networking through games. This was achieved by compiling a numbered list of discussion points that corresponded to numbers written on game pieces. Tea and coffee were provided at the breaks between panels, allowing participants to engage organically and build their academic and professional networks.

The “Constructing Knowledges: Environment as Context” event produced a number of tangible outcomes. The symposium proceedings were documented in real-time over the course of the afternoon and posted on twitter using the @ConstructKnow twitter handle. A blog has also been developed for the Constructing Knowledges symposium, so that interdisciplinary reach of the symposium—which attracted twenty-nine participants from across a range of disciplines, including History, Law, Physics, Environmental Science, Materials Science, and Archaeology—can be enhanced and maintained. Guest authors and event organizers alike are continuing to regularly contribute to this initiative.

Feedback was collected from participants at the end of the workshop via a short questionnaire. The response to the event was overwhelmingly positive (See Appendix). As a result, plans to

organize additional events under the umbrella of “Constructing Knowledges” are forthcoming. These potential include a series of social events to help maintain the networks that were constructed at the event, and will be publicized using social media and the newly developed Constructing Knowledges Listserv (CONSTRUCTKNOW@listserv.manchester.ac.uk). Additional workshops under the head of Constructing Knowledges are also being planned based on participant feedback, including a second Symposium event focusing on public engagement in partnership with the Manchester Science Festival.

Appendix



Constructing Knowledges Series: Environment as Context

21 May 2018

1-5pm

We are pleased to announce a call for presenters for an informal afternoon symposium dedicated to making interdisciplinary connections amongst postgraduate researchers at the University of Manchester.

Participants will introduce themselves and their research with an informal five-minute presentation, followed by a discussion panel made up of researchers with similar subjects and approaches.

University of
Manchester

Samuel
Alexander A202

In the first event of this series, we explore how academics approach environments across a variety of disciplines. From reimagining historical landscapes to examining how contemporary spaces impact the human condition, we invite researchers from fields including history, archaeology, geography, social sciences and science to share a non-expert introduction to their subject and to broaden their understanding of the role that the environment plays in disciplines beyond their own.

Come to network and learn, stay for the good conversation!

The event is free and will take place 1-5pm on Monday 21st May 2018.

To participate, send an informal brief summary of your work and a biography to constructingknowledges@gmail.com by Friday 27th April 2018.

Non-speakers are also welcome and registration will open Tuesday 1st May 2018.

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

The breaks & chances to mingle more casually - also the questions to the panels were very interesting.

What themes would you like future events to cover?

Self expression through + identity

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

More of the same, also a mixer?

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

I really enjoyed the whole event.

What themes would you like future events to cover?

The more diverse — the better! Better!
Anything to do with Innovation,
Technology OR Economics (in general)

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

I enjoyed the ones we had today!

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

No Maybe Yes

meeting people from other areas

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

~~Discussions~~ Discussions through games
Just seeing breadth of research across University

What themes would you like future events to cover?

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

Mixer / Social
Monthly interfaculty coffee

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

Panels were great. Really enjoyed the games bit - it encouraged increasing discussions, would probably be improved by having groups / games more.

What themes would you like future events to cover?

Historical / Economic contextualisation, Theoretical Approaches, Technology

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

More games!
Some kind of roundtable discussion at the end of the session
theme could be good, and maybe a closing speech / talk on
the theme?

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

panel

What themes would you like future events to cover?

science and public policy

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

Yes

No

Define useful? For many research not really but it was very interest ✓

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

No

Maybe

Probably

Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

No

One person

Several people

Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

No

Maybe

Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

I enjoyed the conversations that came about. Panels and games helped this.

What themes would you like future events to cover?

I think an event discussing public engagement with respective fields would be fun.

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

I thought the games actually work surprisingly well.
The group panels would good too.
Socialising events between faculties would be good

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

The break-out discussions

What themes would you like future events to cover?

-Class
-Economics
-Symbols

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

More of this!

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

I really enjoyed panel 1 + 3 and found
the game session fun and innovative

What themes would you like future events to cover?

I loved the focus on medical landscapes but would
like more focus on less traditional medical
spaces.

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

Reading groups.

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

Yes

No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

No

Maybe

Probably

Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

No

One person

Several people

Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

No

Maybe

Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

Panel 3

What themes would you like future events to cover?

Social Themes

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

Collab Projects / Demonstrations

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

All of the talks!

What themes would you like future events to cover?

** Policy*

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

** More informal events*

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

Games session, useful for networking

What themes would you like future events to cover?

Disability

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

Constructing Knowledges Evaluation Form

Did you find this event useful?

- Yes No

Would you consider attending a similar event in the future?

- No Maybe Probably Definitely

Did you meet anyone from a different faculty at this event?

- No One person Several people Many people

Do you feel there is a need for more inter-faculty networking on campus?

- No Maybe Yes

What was your favourite (or least favourite) part of this afternoon?

The ice-breaker games + variety of disciplines

What themes would you like future events to cover?

Not sure really - Sorry.

What types of activities would you like to see in future events?

All day event? Lunch!
I think a bigger intro to topics/themes
could be good.