



CETLD Project Evaluation Summary

Project co-ordinators: Cynthia Cousens and Avril Wilson

Project name: See What Happens! – the value of creative experimentation through materials

Intended completion date: November 2008

Actual completion date: September 2009

Introduction

It is important for CETLD to capture relevant data about your project as well as your experiences and evaluation of it. We need to know:

- how many people were involved and what kinds of activities were generated by your project
- what happened, both during and as a result of your project
- what you learned by doing this research, and any wider lessons for teaching and learning in design

Statistical information, together with your evaluation report, will help us tell our funding bodies about the overall results of their grants, and the effectiveness of CETLD as a service. This means that supporting evidence relating to the impact of your project is very important. Besides the summary data listed below, your evaluation report should contain other evidence about how the project went and its results. This might include views on the quality of your work by other people, such as audiences, an external evaluator, students taking part, other participants, report readers, critics or other designers, artists, craftspeople, architects etc. It might be through samples of students' work or other ways of capturing the process, for example through a film, exhibition, website or blog.



We are interested both in what went well and what went less well. You do not need to prove that you were successful, but to show what lessons have been learnt.

I. Please summarise how you think your project went, based on your evaluation report.

We are particularly interested in lessons learnt, teaching and learning enhancements, and key research outcomes. You may find it useful to refer back to your original application and discuss how your project went compared with your expectations.

Please give us your main points below (use additional sheets as required).

Lessons learnt

- One of the main successes of the project has been the depth and breadth of the findings providing thorough and primary base-line research into why and how artist-makers experiment through materials as part of the creative process and how this can be supported in HE.
- The format of our Design Scholarship Seminar was more successful than anticipated in focussing and developing the research. This was achieved through presentation of the data in four short papers, the inclusion of professional artist-makers in the panel, which contributed positively to the quality, breadth and depth of debate with the audience. This event was recorded and transcribed and will be available on the faculty website.
- Extended research into social science methodology, which was a condition of the award, was a valuable experience, both benefiting the research project and helping to develop our abilities as researchers. It served to emphasise the importance and need to build sufficient time for developing thorough methodology in future proposals.
- A full presentation was made to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, which subsequently helped in the development of the templates and guidelines of good practice for other researchers through the CETLD Centre.
- Our proposed timetable slipped due to the unexpected time spent researching into methodology and the richness and complexity of the data. As a result we opted to focus on generating thorough and substantial documentation and analysis of the data in the form of the report, in order to have a sound basis on which to build dissemination. As a next step, we now propose to use research time from our substantive posts in the following years and any remaining monies from the CETLD project budget to extend dissemination of this project.
- Despite best efforts we were not successful in collaborating with the i-guide project at the V&A. This was in part due to delayed collection of our data and a change in emphasis on the V&A ipod project itself.

Teaching and learning enhancements

The research establishes definitions, methods, purposes and value of creative experimentation through materials and makes recommendations for teaching in Higher Education:

- the individualistic responses voiced in the data indicates that teaching creative experimentation through materials should sit within an interpretative rather than prescriptive teaching and learning framework
- that strategies are adopted that build student confidence and provide security against risk eg economic risk lessened by recycling or reworking materials; that students feel supported and personally confident and familiar within a student group; experimental work through materials is a recognised and valued learning outcome both within course documentation and teaching sessions
- consideration of placement and space in the curriculum with supportive learning outcomes
- construction of appropriate assessment criteria, emphasising process and intention but allowing creative outcomes concerning product to emerge
- the process of experimentation can be further broken down into activities that can be focused on and specifically supported, such as: working in multiples, evaluation of variation through comparison, management of multi-strands, development and application of methods of recording thought, pattern and process, and lateral thinking

Research outcomes

The research documented and established the following in the report:

- a broad typology of definitions of creative material experimentation which related to: the physical activity and relationship of making and thinking; new knowledge of materials and processes; employment of certain attitudes and approaches, such as playfulness and freedom; link to uncertainty and risk taking and pushing both material and personal limits; and recognised it as a process which opens up possibilities and questions
- outlines methods and strategies used in experimentation: the different stages of an experimental process; working in multiples and sequences and the methods used to link them and document them; attitudes and risk-taking; the reflective process, and the use of both intuitive and rational approaches
- key factors, both supportive and restrictive, which affect the ability to experiment: different risks and how these may be addressed; the effect of existing knowledge or naivety; and the working environment
- purposes for experimentation including: finding new knowledge, testing or generating new ideas; developing originality; the key drivers of enjoyment and excitement in the work; and developing a legacy or basis on which to build in the future
- recommendations to support teaching experimentation for Higher Education are summarised above under the section heading teaching and learning enhancements

Lessons learned about using ICT in teaching and learning

This project was based on research into the practice of experimentation - a workshop based activity involving materials and making - ICT was not appropriate to this project.



2. What have been the activities and outputs from this project?

Please list the number and range of teaching and learning sessions that occurred during the duration of your project. Please add any comments about how project funding enabled you to enhance these sessions (for example, to invite in expert speakers, to support online peer group learning, etc.)

Please also tell us about any teaching and learning outputs from the project (for example, a teaching video, or web-based resource.)

	Number
Lecture	
Seminar/small group - CETLD design scholarship	1
Studio	
Workshop/lab - projects in 3D	2
Online	
Visit/tour	
Other activity (please state)	
Outputs (please state)	

Please add explanatory comments below

The two workshops held with undergraduate students were primarily data collecting activities for the research but also provided learning experiences for two groups of level 1 students in 3D Materials Practices/Design at the University of Brighton. Twenty-two students had the opportunity of taking part in the one-day experiment project and benefited from teaching given by a visiting lecturer funded by the project.

The Design Scholarship Seminar formed an output from the project, a substantial audience of approximately 30 included students, educationalists, practitioners, administrators and researchers.

The full report and transcript of the seminar will be disseminated on the website for use by students and staff.



3. How many people have been involved in the project?

List the numbers of teachers and students involved, in total, during the whole project. Please add a commentary on which courses (or other locations) and academic level they come from, and any particular characteristics of the cohort – for example, mature, or PT.

	Number
Teachers	6
Students	27
Others taking part (please state)	31

Please add explanatory comments below.

4. W

Teachers include the 4 main project researchers and the visiting lecturer and researcher brought in to work on the student project. However 4 of the 5 participants at the workshop forum were also teachers, and teachers were present in the audience at the CETLD Design Scholarship Seminar. Institutions represented at the seminar included: teaching staff and researchers from Bucks New University, London Metropolitan University, Royal College of Art, City College Brighton, Northbrook College, University of Hertfordshire, University of Portsmouth and Middlesex University; staff from Arts Council SE and Hove Museum; and one of the participants in the workshop forum presents TV educational programmes at the BBC.

Students include undergraduates from M/Des and BA 3D Materials Practice and 3D Design, University of Brighton and postgraduates from Goldsmithing, Silversmithing, Metalwork and Jewellery, RCA. All were full time students, groups were mixed gender and represented a wide range of ages, including the 19 – 22 year to the 65 + groupings.

Others taking part in the project include educationalists, administrators, and artist-makers in the audience at the CETLD Design Scholarship Seminar; and 3 professional artist-makers, a social scientist and a material scientist who made up the participants at the workshop forum; and a researcher employed by the research team.



5. Which ICT devices or applications do you use for teaching and learning?

No ICT devices or applications were used in teaching and learning sessions in this project. Video camcorder, camera and audio recorders were used in data collection.

Tick the ones you use with students:

Mobile phones	<input type="checkbox"/>
PDA's	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video camcorders	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smartboard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital cameras	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile phones	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audio recorders	<input type="checkbox"/>
CETLD blog	<input type="checkbox"/>
YouTube	<input type="checkbox"/>
FLICKR	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other blog	<input type="checkbox"/>
Own web pages	<input type="checkbox"/>
Own Wiki	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – please describe	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Projected future benefits

Please tell us how you intend to take this project forward in your teaching and learning. List the numbers of teachers and students you intend to involve in re-using or expanding the resources or activities developed over the next academic year. Provide an assessment of the likelihood of aspects of your project being embedded in educational processes and evidence that the future benefits you hope to achieve will be accomplished.

within our programme:

Teachers

Number

13

Students

150 per annum

Others taking part (please state) - technical

9

Please add explanatory comments below.

We will be embedding the knowledge learnt in this project into the programme and teaching of the 3D programme and aim to inform and influence future course development in the School of Architecture and Design at the University of Brighton.

We are initiating on-going discussions to share and integrate findings into teaching practice within our programme. We anticipate that this will involve the team of 13 academic staff and 9 technical demonstrators to a programme of approx 150 students across 4 levels in the 3D Programme at the University of Brighton.

Findings from the project have been included in lectures at other universities: University of Portsmouth Jan 2009 and Institute of Colchester April 2009 to MA Sculptural Practices/Book-works students.

As a result of impending wider dissemination, for example through writing an article for the new *Craft Research* academic journal and links through the new Crafts Council research hub we also anticipate that it will be further embedded in teaching and learning at other educational institutions and be used to help form school education policy.

6. Dissemination

Please tell us how you have disseminated your project to a wider audience. This might be through seminar talks, conference presentations, research papers, exhibitions etc. Please list total number of dissemination outputs, then give more details of each output and the different audiences you have reached. Please also note any intended dissemination plans for the future.

		Number
Events	- CETLD Design Scholarship	1
Publications		
Other (please state)	- Abstracts /Citations (see	4

Please add explanatory comments below.



**Next steps
for
dissemina
tion
include:**

The dissemination of this project has been delayed but is beginning to take place now that the findings have been drawn together. We anticipate that the richness of the findings will provide reference for dissemination for several years to come. (see above)

Dissemination so far includes:

- abstract, *See What Happens! – sustaining creative practice through experimentation in materials*, was sent to the *Making Futures* conference Plymouth College of Art, unfortunately it was mislaid and despite enquiries disappointingly it did not enter the peer review process
- Citations were made in the paper: *Sustaining craft practice by teaching and learning through live demonstration* presented at the *Making Futures* Conference September 2009 (Boyes & Cousens 2009) and to be published on the conference website
- citation was made in *Artists' profiles 2, Cynthia Cousens*, (Stoddart 2008), web published by a-n The Artists Information Company
- abstract for a paper *Natural Sources for Resource* - JMGA conference Australia 2010
- CETLD website updates

Next steps for dissemination include:

- *Craft Research* peer reviewed academic journal dedicated to developing and advancing contemporary craft practice and theory
- placing the abstract on the university repository and research profiles on the faculty website
- sending information for the Crafts Council research hub website
- making links with Martin Partlington of NEVAC archive of audio visual interviews of craftspeople (2001) on V&A website and other archives for potential dissemination of interviews
- developing a presentation for the Crafts Council conference summer 2010 if the theme of the conference is appropriate
- planning further funding proposals for an exhibition / publication

7. Project management

Please evaluate how successfully you managed the project. Again this is about learning lessons for future projects from what went wrong as much as from what went right. Give yourself a mark out of 10 in the categories listed and add comments in support of self-evaluation below.

Number

Organisation

8



Financial management

7

Evaluation

7

Please add explanatory comments below.

We rescheduled the timetable effectively after the initial unexpected time spent on methodology and acted swiftly in order to collect data within the academic year when students were available to work on projects. The richness and quantity of data led us to make the choice to develop the depth and thoroughness of our research for the report rather than focus on disseminating our findings prematurely. We opted to put extra, unpaid time into writing the report and will now focus on dissemination as our next step using remaining monies from the budget.

Local management of events such as the workshop forum and seminar, and the experimental project with students were very successful and ran very smoothly despite their complexity, providing us with rich data.

Financial management was problematic due to the complex university financial system which makes it difficult to access up to date information on current budget situations particularly through the recharge of salaries and logging of recent spending. Some inaccuracies were apparent, tracing and rectifying these was a time consuming business. A more straightforward and easily accessible system would be welcome.

8. CETLD Project support

Thinking about the project, how did CETLD:

a. manage your application?

☐ very well

☒ well

☐ neither well nor badly

☐ badly



☐ very badly

b. support you during the process?

☐ very well

☒ well

☐ neither well nor badly

☐ badly

☐ very badly

Are there any other comments you would like to make? Please comment on how CETLD could improve its support.

- Primarily the CETLD funding enabled us to establish ourselves as theoretical researchers.

It provided an appropriate and substantial level of funding which is generally very difficult to access within our 0.4 posts. The data collected and analysis within the report now has potential for considerable future research and dissemination.

- We valued the regular support from the CETLD team and specific support from Allan Davies as an advisor. His most recent session that focused on turning research into articles for publication was particularly useful and informative.

- Administration of finances through the University system caused ongoing complications in tracking of accounts and should be made simpler and more transparent.

- We welcomed and made good use of the CETLD room, which was a very suitable for the seminar, flexible and well resourced.



I confirm that, as far as I know, the information in this evaluation summary is true and correct, and that I have complied with the conditions attached to the grant.

Project organiser signature

Name (Use CAPITAL LETTERS)

CYNTHIA COUSENS

Second project organiser signature (if applicable)

Name (Use CAPITAL LETTERS)

AVRIL WILSON

	<i>Day</i>	<i>/</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>/</i>	<i>Year</i>
Date	1	/	12	/	2009

Received by CETLD office:

Name (Use CAPITAL LETTERS)

	<i>Day</i>	<i>/</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>/</i>	<i>Year</i>
Date		/		/	

NB: This evaluation summary has been adapted from the activity report form provided by the Arts Council to evaluate its recipients of its grants. The original can be found at http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/gfta2006_offered.php (accessed 20/08/07)