REF2021

Institution: Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)		
Unit of Assessment: UOA32		
Title of case study: Academia in Residence: A new model of university-cultural partnerships and the impact on strategic direction, curation and social engagement		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	**Role(s) (e.g. job title):**	**Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:**
Prof Joasia Krysa	Professor of Exhibition Research/Head of Research (Liverpool Biennial)	2015-2021
Dr Mark Wright	Senior Lecturer/Director of FACTLab	2014-2021
Dr Michael Birchall	Senior Lecturer/Curator of Public Practice (Tate Liverpool)	2016-2020
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		

1. Summary of the impact

Liverpool School of Art and Design (LSAD) pioneered an innovative approach to university-cultural partnerships with three Liverpool-based internationally leading arts institutions. Founded in 2012, the model consists of academic posts embedded at Tate Liverpool (TL), FACT and Liverpool Biennial (LB), designed to effect change in the institution's strategic direction and the cultural ecology of the city through the establishment of a joint research platform leading to an enhanced research culture.

Impact far in excess of that possible from conventional curation/collaboration was achieved using research-based curatorial approaches and public programming to increase social engagement capacity with new academic and non-academic publics. The collective contribution to Liverpool culture has increased the city's standing on an international stage, as demonstrated by the increase in international audiences (4: FACT-TL-LB collaborative online gaming platform), key international collaborations (4: Whitney Museum of American Art; 5.5: Universities of Aarhus, Venice, Arts Helsinki), 19 international artist residencies (5.8), symposia held at internationally significant art festivals (5.5: 57th Venice Biennial; Transmediale Festival for Digital Art and Culture Berlin) and the global interaction with and influence on HEI-arts partnerships (3.2; 5.9).

2. Underpinning research

A world-wide movement is underway; art institutions are evolving from a traditional 'white cube' model, of exhibiting art to a narrow passive audience, towards acting as a hub for enactive engagement with a broad ecosystem of stakeholders (e.g. communities; artists; creative sector; academia; government). Art institutions are shifting from prescriptive models of curation and engagement to ones that include co-design, participation and in-vivo exploration (3.1). LSAD has become a recognized leader in this area of participatory culture (5.1) through the embedded post research in Tate Liverpool (TL), The Foundation for Art & Technology (FACT) and Liverpool Biennial (LB).

Prior to the introduction of these posts (2012), the cultural partners did not have a local research culture. Initially the posts cooperated as part of the Artists' City project (2013-15), but following the end of this project, the posts developed individual strategies within the arts institutions, leading to the creation of 2 research labs; one based in FACT (FACTLab) and the other, Exhibition Research Lab (ERL), based in LSAD.

In this research period, all the embedded researchers focused on new forms of curation/ participation arising from this model of 'academia in residence', leading to additional research questions relating to the collaboration itself, in terms of the changing culture within the institution, methods of in vivo participation and co-design and the impact on the local ecosystem (3.1; 3.3; 3.5). With the arts institution acting as a catalyst for academic enquiry to tap the tacit knowledge

of stakeholders, researchers interrogated how the arts organisation was transformed through the empowerment and agency of communities.

In FACTLab (Wright 2014-20), this model was implemented through digital knowledge exchange (F1, 2015, 3.1). FACTLab utilised gaming, virtual reality and a mobile FACTLab to reach communities that do not usually engage with FACT (e.g. schools, military veterans, low socioeconomic regions). This research was widened to CoDICE survey in Indonesia (F2, 2018) and further developed into ACE project 2019 (F3, 2019) where Wright surveyed similar UK/EU Art-HEI partnerships to inform the sector on research innovation (3.2).

In Tate Liverpool (Birchall 2016-20), this model was implemented as immersive environments (e.g. OK - The Musical) that placed TL in unprecedented dialogue with audiences as co-creators resulting in a new method of discursive practice (art-knowledge-programme) and art production (3.3). An extensive public programme of research-based activities, exhibitions, and artistic residencies was curated (3.4), as well as steering the socially engaged season at Tate Liverpool from 2016, with a particular focus on LGBTQI+ communities.

In Liverpool Biennial (Krysa 2015-20), research into exhibitionary practices examined transnational biennial formats and sought to reflect on the structures of temporalisation in the light of globalisation and planetary scale computation through curation of the biennial (F4; F5; 3.5). This non-human and algorithmic curation research influenced LB2016's episodic approach (as opposed to linear narration) to test experimental, multi-site, multi-narrative, large scale exhibition formats and LB2016 was structured as six episodes sited in multiple venues in Liverpool alongside an online gaming platform, Minecraft (with FACTLab). Additional interrogation of these curatorial practices at the intersection of academic research and public display demonstrated the future of artistic research (F5; 3.6).

3. References to the research

All research outputs have been through a rigorous external peer-review process prior to publication in academic journals and books.

1. Wright, M., Stubbs, M. (2017) "Recalibrating the white cube as a hub for social action", article in *Digital Creativity*, Vol 27 No 3, Special issue on Health and Wellbeing, Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1080/14626268.2016.1241807

2. Wright, M., Hayton, S., Lynch, D., and Manthorp, S., (2019) "Creative Labs in the North of England, Scotland and Mainland Europe", October 2019, commissioned research and a report for Arts Council England.

3. Birchall, M. (2017) Situating Participatory Art Between Process and Practice, ARKEN Bulletin, vol. 7: The Art of Taking Part: Participation at the Museum. ISSN 1602-9402

4. Birchall, M. (2020), "Discursive Practice: The Role of Public Practice in the Museum", chapter in *Praxis – New Curatorial Directions for Collaborative Research*, Balaskas B, Rito C. (eds.), Sternberg Press, ISBN 978-3-95679-506-0.

5. Krysa, J. (2016), 'Episodic in Computational Worlds', chapter in *The Two Sided Lake: Scenarios, storyboards and sets from Liverpool Biennial 2016*, (eds. Cooper, R., Parmar, S., Willsdon, D.), Liverpool University Press. ISBN 9781781383407.⌗SEP Also see: "The Biennial Condition", (ed.) *Stages*, vol 6/2017, Liverpool Biennial, ISSN 2399-9675. https://www.biennial.com/journal/issue-6.

6. Krysa, J., (2020) 'Exhibitionary practices at the intersection of academic research and public display', chapter in *Institution as Praxis – New Curatorial Directions for Collaborative Research*, Balaskas B, Rito C. (eds.), Sternberg Press, ISBN 978-3-95679-506-0 (second expanded iteration). First iteration published in J. Kaila, A. Seppä, & H. Slager (Eds.), *Futures of Artistic Research: At the Intersection of Utopia, Academia and Power*. Helsinki: The

Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki, ISBN 9789527131428.

Funding:

4. Details of the impact

The University Alliance and Arts Council England 2016 white paper (5.1) cites the LJMU-Tate Liverpool partnership as an example of good practice, stating; *"the joint academic post enables senior academics to contribute and advise on the research strategies of both the University and the Tate, including generating collaborative research income and enhancing the educational provision across both institutions"* and noting that collaborations between universities and arts organisations not only bring numerous benefits to the organisations involved, but also contribute to improvements within the local and national cultural landscape. The 'academia in residence' model exemplifies influential and effective collaboration, and provides cultural enrichment through:

(1) Structural and cultural change in the arts organisation as demonstrated by:

- FACTLab (led by Wright) was devised in August 2015 as a 3-month pilot sponsored by the Culture Programme of the European Union and 'Connecting Cities'. FACTLab was described by FACT as *"an experiment in research co-design, a lateral shift in curation for FACT and a bold, galvanizing new approach to enriching and impacting communities through art, technology and knowledge"* (F1; 5,2). Following this, FACT invested two international artist residencies and FACTLab became wholly integrated as an engagement, learning and production facility, so much so, that it was included in the FACT formal business plan to Arts Council England in Feb 2018 as part of their successful National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) bid. The FACTLab Impact Report 2018 documents this cultural shift in the FACT strategy based on FACTLab research activity (5.2). Mike Stubbs, FACT Artistic Director, commented: *"By having a public, practice-based, creative space, FACT can further act as a catalyst for creative communities and empower visitors who want to get more involved with processes of making, in addition to looking and reflecting."*

- ERL (led by Krysa) delivered a research-led programme of exhibitions /events /residencies. Krysa became commissioning editor of the LB publication *Stages* and changed it from an art festival catalogue to a research-led, open access peer reviewed journal (5.3) including content presented in annual LB academic conferences hosted at ERL (F4 and F5; 5.4) and the research-led LB public programme - encouraging a research approach to an area which would not traditionally put research at the forefront and thus attracting new contributors and readership beyond the traditional readership (gaining 9,000 page views and 2,970 unique visits for Volumes 6-8). In addition, ERL hosted new LB doctoral symposia in collaboration with leading art institutions (5.5). Prior to this LB had not offered any discursive academic content/outputs, and as a result of Krysa's art-technology research, digital art commissioning is now part LB programming in partnership with The Whitney Museum of American Art.

- TL researcher (Birchall) organized novel research-led academic conferences stemming from Birchall's research on themes relating to the exhibition programme, including 2018 *Collaborative Conversations and 2019 Keith Haring: Art & Activism in 1980s New York* (5.4).Tate Exchange was a 2016 national Tate initiative set up in response to the global art movement towards co-design, community collaboration and audience involvement in gallery strategic planning. Birchall was also instrumental to the development of TE Liverpool conceptualizing the overall artistic direction, seeking external contributions, and curating 15 TE

programmes (5.6). Andrea Nixon, Executive Director for Tate Liverpool said in 2015; *"Tate Liverpool's partnership with LJMU marks a development in the way that we work with higher education institutes. Not only does our partnership help us develop new audiences to the gallery via jointly programmed public events but has also strengthened our research capacity through the collaborative post of Research Curator"* (5.6).

(2) Enhanced capacities for art organizations to engage new audiences, as demonstrated by:

- TL researcher (Birchall) developed public initiatives focused on new LGBTQI+ audiences and set up an LGBT+ Research Hub with Liverpool Pride and TL to organise a series of 'takeover' days lrelating to 'producing equality', including workshop activities, debate events, film and other visual content and a chance for visitors to take part in their own activism; [HIV (2019), *You are Here* (2017), *Homotopia* (2017), *The Tilting at Windmills* (2017)] attracted an additional audience of 6,820 (5.6). Joan Burnett (Trustee/Director, Liverpool Pride) stated that, *"being able to queer a space like TL has such an important effect - even being listed on the TL's powerful website, which is viewed worldwide, is a hugely visible piece of activism….TL gave us a chance to give these thoughts and actions a home and the recognition that they deserve"* (5.6). TE reaches approx. 5,000 visitors each week and increases the ability of TL to engage different audiences through the participation of local communities and students (5.6). Birchall curated 15 TE programmes (5.6) involving external communities, academia, and arts groups.

- LB online projects and public programme at ERL (including 3 international conferences) reached a regular and new audience (live, web, social media, streaming) of 67,812 visitors (5.7).

- The embedded posts collaborated to create a novel curatorial and technological approach to presenting LB2016 exhibition through the use of an online gaming platform Minecraft, creating new opportunities for experiencing biennial beyond its physical location in Liverpool; providing new educational opportunities for young audiences (e.g. series of Minecraft workshops at FACT), and attracting additional 4,876 engagement visits and 526 unique new visitors to experience Liverpool Biennial 2016 remotely (5.7). FACT and the Museum of Science & Industry (MOSI) won the 2016 Lever Prize for public engagement for the FACTLab 'Cloudmaker' project (5.2).

(3) Changes to the cultural landscape, as demonstrated by:

- Support of emerging talent by the involvement of internationally regarded creatives alongside Liverpool-based artists and curators, so that the partnerships are an essential component to the city's future (5.8).

- Inspiring people to engage with art by organizing/hosting events for public discussion of contemporary art (e.g. LB discursive talks at ERL) and participatory exhibitions/events (e.g. *OK - The Musical* at Tate; *Cloudmaker* by FACT) (5.6; 5.7).

- The adoption of this model by other leading academic institutions in the UK and internationally and participatory strategies being adopted in other areas of society (5.9: London South Bank University with The Photographers Gallery; Kassel University, Germany with Documenta Archive at Museum Fredericianum Aarhus University with Kunsthal Aarhus, Denmark). Professor Jacob Lund, Aarhus University stated: *"Our collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University has been of great benefit to Aarhus University. Especially the LJMU innovative model of embedded collaborative posts with art institutions, and in particular Liverpool Biennial, has been hugely inspiring and influential with Aarhus University adopting a similar approach in Denmark, and introducing partnerships with Kunsthal Aarhus and ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, among others, supported by grants from New Carlsberg Foundation (ongoing)."* (5.9)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1: The University Alliance and Arts Council England White Paper 2016: "A clearer picture: a guide for arts and cultural organisations engaging with universities"

5.2: FACTLab Impact (a) FACT formal business plan to Arts Council England in Feb 2018 as part of their successful National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) bid, (b) FACTLab Impact Report 1: Pilot Phase, 2: Post Pilot (with visitor figures and team leader testimonials in an appendix) <u>and</u> (c) FACT and the Museum of Science & Industry (MOSI) won the 2016 Lever Prize for public engagement for the FACTLab 'Cloudmaker' project.

5.3: 'Stages' vol 6/2017; vol 7/2018, vol 8 2019

5.4: Academic conferences (a) The Biennial Condition: On Contemporaneity and the Episodic 2016, (b) Design and Empire, 2017, (c) Beautiful world, where are you? 2018, (d) 2018 Collaborative Conversations, and, (e) 2019 Keith Haring: Art & Activism in 1980s New York, Tate and LJMU.

5.5: ERL doctoral symposia (a) 2017 Contemporary Research Intensive in partnership with Aarhus University, University of Venice and Uni Arts Helsinki, 57th Venice Biennial, and, (b) 2015 Excessive Research with Transmediale Festival for Digital Art and Culture Berlin and Aarhus University

5.6: Tate Liverpool Impact: (a) Tate-LJMU Partnership reports 2016-2020, (b) Tate Exchange programmes 2016-19, (c) Tate Public Practise Programme 2016-2020, (d) Letter of support from Liverpool Pride, and, (e) News articles

5.7: Liverpool Biennial BDO Evaluation and Arts Council Report 2016 and 2018

5.8: List of internationally regarded creatives working alongside Liverpool-based artists and curators:

- Sony Award-winning broadcaster, writer, art historian and Royal Academy's first Director of artistic programmes, Tim Marlow, worked with 15 shortlisted art writers as part of Artists' City project 2015 and provided a private masterclass (see Artists' City Final Report to ACE2015)
- Month-long LSAD residencies for the 5 winners of the John Moores Painting Prize China 2014, 2016 and 2018 (15 artists in total). The 2020 residency was postponed due to CoVid19. (a) 2014 - Zheng Haozhong; Lui Gang, Zhu Xiaocong; Zhong Yuexing; Jiu Shaojum and Zhang Aicum, (b) 2016 - Bian Shaozhi, Wang Wang, Zhang Yang, Lang Shuilong, Lei Shaowen, (c) 2018 – Zhong Xueqing; Xiaogang; Ho Xuxuan; Pan Lin; Wang I
- FACTLAb artists in residence - Thiago Hersan and Radames Anja from Brazil 2015-17 (FACTLab report 5.2)
- Bloomberg New Contemporaries Artist 2018 - Rosa Johan Uddoh, LSAD-Liverpool Biennial Fellowship and LSAD residency 2018/2019
- Jorge Menna Barreto, LSAD-Liverpool Biennial Fellowship 2019/2020
- Helen Kaplinsky, LSAD Visiting Scholarship 2019-20

5.9: New international HEI-Arts partnerships/embedded posts: (a) London South Bank University with The Photographers Gallery, 2016, (b) Aarhus University, Denmark with Kunsthal Aarhus, 2015, <u>and</u>, (c) Kassel University, Germany with Documenta Archive at Museum Fredericianum, 2017.