

<p>Institution: University of Sunderland</p> <p>Unit of Assessment: Art & Design unit 34</p> <p>a. Context - Impact is at the centre of the University of Sunderland's mission <i>'to be recognised as one of a new generation of great civic universities - innovative, accessible, inspirational and outward looking; with international reach; and with remarkable local impact'</i>.</p> <p>Art & design operates through eight research groups, which form the main part of the Creative and Cultural Practices Research Beacon (C&CP), the largest of the four Beacons of Research across the University. C&CP states in its vision that <i>'Real world impact and enrichment of our dynamic, attractive curriculum are central to this Beacon Research Area, which is focused on the creative and cultural industries.</i></p> <p>Throughout the eight research groups in art & design, impact from research, reaching beyond the academy and outward facing, has been the practice for many years. A significant aspect of research undertaken is practice-led. High quality professional practice informed and underpinned by a research process, resulting in new insights in the subject, which are disseminated both within and beyond the academy, having impact at a regional as well as national and international level. Strong collaborative relationships have developed with individuals and organisations operating across the cultural sector, exemplars of which are evidenced in the impact case studies.</p> <p>Sunderland is a city engaged in post-industrial redevelopment and the university and art & design specifically are partners in that process. For example, the National Glass Centre's (NGC) integration with the university evidences our commitment to public engagement and knowledge transfer. Arts Council England (ACE) awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status to NGC in 2012, recognising both its value and impact as a national cultural venue. Another example is the 2013 successful (£2m) ACE Creative People, Creative Places award, led by C&CP (in partnership with the Customs House Trust and Sunderland Music, Arts and Culture Trust) to roll out a programme of arts <i>'Creative people and places targets areas of England where people's engagement in the arts is significantly lower than the national average, and aims to increase their engagement by supporting communities and grass roots organisations to play a leading role in inspiring others to get involved in the arts'</i>. ACE website.</p> <p>The main user groups which the research impacts upon, and types of impact include:</p> <p>Policy makers - including politicians, for example, the 2010 exhibition of glass works at the Houses of Parliament, London, to highlight the range and quality of glass research being carried out at Sunderland. Including works by researchers from <i>Institute for International Research in Glass</i> (IIRG), Colin Rennie, Dr Jeffrey Sarmiento, Cate Watkinson, and Prof. Kevin Petrie. Nick Brown MP, when opening the show said <i>'This is an excellent exhibition with brilliant pieces of work on display'</i>.</p> <p>In October 2010, Sunderland Council launched the economic masterplan for the city and held a reception and exhibition to celebrate Sunderland's creative sector at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) London, including works by Dr Tim Brennan and Prof Brian Thompson. The City announced plans <i>'to further support the (creative) sector by working closely with the University of Sunderland and by putting the infrastructures in place to encourage entrepreneurship in the fields of art, design, crafts, music, publishing, technology and production'</i>. Leader of the Council.</p> <p>Research also has had impact on institutional policy makers, for example, Dr Mike Collier and Prof Brian Thompson, researchers in the <i>Walking, Art, Landskip, and Knowledge</i> (WALK), research group were commissioned by the Wordsworth Trust (WT), to develop visual responses to the collection as part of WT's investigation, (supported by ACE) into connecting visitors to the manuscripts. In WT's report 'Beyond Words: Understanding and Sharing the Meanings of Manuscripts' 2012, it states <i>'Evaluation showed that the art works did encourage some visitors to have direct contact with the associated manuscripts...the work encouraged 50% of visitors surveyed and tracked to visit the original journal after viewing the art work.'</i></p> <p>The twin cities, Sunderland and Washington DC, jointly supported an exhibition 'Glass and Clay' (2013) as part of a 'cross-city dialogue', bringing together selected artists from both cities, which included James Maskrey and Prof. Brian Thompson – The exhibition took place in Edison Place Gallery, USA and Sunderland Museum, UK.</p> <p>Each of these examples of research impact are concerned with economic prosperity and the development of stimuli to tourism.</p>

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Professional practitioners, including artists and curators. For example the research group *Curatorial Resource for Upstart Media Bliss* (CRUMB) works in collaboration with different arts organisations, including, Pixel Palace, (Tyneside cinema) Contemporary Arts Society, Eyebeam (New York, USA), Harris Museum and Art Gallery (Preston) to run workshops for artists, curators and practitioners, specifically to open up discussion and share practice concerned with curating and collecting new media art. **Prof Beryl Graham's** book, *Rethinking Curating* (MIT Press, 2010) is a key text for curators internationally about the creation and consumption of new media artworks. *The Northern Centre of Photography* (NCP) established the North East Photography Network (NEPN) in 2009, supported by ACE, to build a network 'to promote and develop photography in the North East of England and beyond. Working with photographers, artists, curators and a wide range of cultural partners, we aim to create a lively and informed context for photographic activity and to encourage new audiences for photography.' In 2013, NEPN organised the Month of Photography, (Oct-Nov) a region-wide festival commissioning works for traditional gallery and museum spaces and non-traditional public spaces for exhibition, working with businesses and planners to re-visualise the city. Both of these examples show research impacting on the personal and professional development of artists and curators.

A further example is in the work of artist Cerith Wyn Evans who, through collaboration with researchers from IIRG, was able to develop a large piece of work in mirrored glass 'Permit Yourself..' which was then exhibited at the Venice Biennale 2010.

Audiences, and audience development – for example the NGC, since its re-launch in June 2013, has had 100,000 visitors (June – Oct '13). The launch exhibition, a major retrospective of works of the pioneer studio glassmaker Erwin Eisch. This was developed from the research undertaken by **Prof Kevin Petrie** in the book about the artist, published by Hirmer.

The NEPN Month of Photography (called the Social: Encountering Photography), through placing photographic works on the Metro, in the main shopping centre and on billboards, encouraged new audiences to engage with photographic artworks, and through organised walks around the sites, has invited different levels of engagement with the works. In 2010, interested in how practice-led research in photography can engage with audiences beyond the gallery, NCP researchers, **Prof Arabella Plouviez, Prof. John Kippin and Marjolaine Ryley**, in collaboration with colleagues from Folkwang University of the Arts, Essen, developed a series of works for billboards, sited across Essen as part of European Capital of Culture. These examples illustrate research having impact through audience development and developing tourism.

Dr Jeffrey Sarmiento and Inge Panneels' glass sculpture, the Liverpool Map commissioned by the Liverpool Museum (2010), brings together printed, fused and water-jet cut glass research into a permanent piece of public sculpture offering new models of working with the public in the creation of work and interprets cartographic information and data in an innovative way.

For many of our researchers there is a clear alliance with professional practice, and our research is often driven by the need to advance high quality professional practice and its' understanding. An artist researcher must have systematic and robust means of measuring and evaluating their practice, with a clear research question and methodology. An example of this would be the Design4Science exhibition 'Virus: Bad News Wrapped in Protein' curated by **Shirley Wheeler**, and bringing together work by 12 artists and designers who have approached the scientific understanding of viruses and developed work that visual explores this theme – *Setting aside fear and sensationalism, the artists in this exhibition gently explore ideas ranging from the mathematical beauty of viral structures and their function, to the way people try to set themselves apart from the impact of viruses. The exhibition's multidisciplinary approach gives a breadth of perspectives that reach beyond materials and conventional creative boundaries.*

Exhibition information St. John's College Oxford.

The impact of the research undertaken across art & design in terms of the user groups and types of impact, relate directly to the eight research groups in art & design. These research groups have a dual purpose, to provide the research environment for specific areas of investigation, enabling high quality research to be undertaken and shared within the academy, whilst also supporting researchers to collaborate beyond the academy, having impact regionally, nationally and internationally.

b. Approach to impact - The approach to impact within the art & design research groups has included both planned and unplanned impact. The NGC policy of using the research undertaken by IIRG and *Ceramic Arts Research Centre at the University of Sunderland* (CARCuos), to inform parts of the exhibition programme, and to have a dedicated area for practice-led research to form a

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constant element within the visitor attraction, is an example of planned impact, through collaboration. This followed the success of Kith & Kin (I & II), exhibitions at the NGC in 2011 -12, curated to show new works in ceramics and glass, by researchers from IIRG and CARCuos, and invited artists.

The strategic development of two gallery spaces on university premises -, Priestman Gallery and the Design Centre Gallery, provide opportunities for researchers to test their own work and also to show high quality research from elsewhere. Both galleries run programmes of exhibitions open to the public.

The development, in 2003, of Art Editions North (AEN) publications working with Cornerhouse distribution, to publish books with artists working in northern England, is another example of planned impact, with 22 titles published since 2008.

Since 2010, **Rob Winter** has been working with Fairtrade to support potters working in India, Peru and Vietnam to develop new products and increase sales in the west, whilst valuing the traditions and approaches in the country of origin.

The *Design4Science* (D4S) research group is concerned with how artists and designers can visually communicate complex scientific concepts. **Shirley Wheeler** (reader) took part in the Royal Society's Festival of Science and Arts at Southbank Centre, London in 2010, with Laboratory of Molecular Biology Cambridge (LMB), to talk with the public about 'the giant lens' a new microscope, based on her research working with LMB.

There are also examples of unplanned impact, for example **Dr Andrew Livingstone**, whose work is included in Emmanuel Cooper's 'Contemporary Ceramics' Thames and Hudson 2009, 'A comprehensive worldwide survey... of the most distinctive, intensely creative and innovative recent work, ranging from functional objects to the boundaries and possibilities of clay as a medium.' Sculptural work by **Prof. Eric Bainbridge** was included in the Royal Academy exhibition and accompanying book 'Modern British Sculpture' (2011) 'the first exhibition for 30 years to examine British sculpture of the twentieth century'. In each of these cases, practice-led research has been recognised at a high level, as having impact, beyond the academy.

A number of approaches to the follow-through, to identify the impact of research, have been used across the unit. The establishing of active networks, in NCP, WALK and CRUMB, particularly through website and social media have been successful and on-line surveys and questionnaires have been valuable feedback tools. IIRG and CARCuos have worked with NGC to enable visitor numbers and questionnaires to include specific references to the research, to enable follow through analysis. Collaboration with organisations such as Wordsworth Trust has allowed for sharing of impact information, for instance the data underpinning 'Beyond Words: Understanding and Sharing the Meanings of Manuscripts' report. The NCP has collected extensive data from the Month of Photography events to evaluate impact and audience engagement.

Supporting staff to achieve impact from their research has been actively addressed through the beacon. All staff are required to consider how they may achieve impact when bidding for research support, and are encouraged to use facilities such as the two galleries (Priestman and Design Centre). The inclusion of space for practice-led research at NGC supports impact for IIRG and CARCuos researchers.

c. Strategy and plans– Impact has been a strategic aim for research in this area since the development of the Cultural and Creative Practices research beacon, as evidenced in the vision statement. This means that when researchers apply for support for their research, they are required to articulate the potential impact of the research - within, across and beyond the academy and provide evidence of the processes used to measure impact. The established valuing of impact within across and beyond the academy means that there is a good understanding by researchers of its importance, however, more systematic and robust ways of measuring impact are required to assure consistency across the research activity within this area, informed by research in this area by ACE, Matarasso and others.

d. Relationship to case studies– There are three submitted case studies, which have been drawn from across the unit of assessment, from curating new media and research in glass. These clearly articulate and indeed exemplify the unit's approach to research impact, operating as they do with a clear regional focus, but also impacting nationally and internationally. Each of these studies reflects the long-term, mature engagement with excellent research within the area, and come from subjects that have a long track-record of research excellence evidenced in the preceding RAEs.