Institution: Middlesex University

Unit of Assessment: 34 (Art & Design)

a. Context

The School of Art & Design (A&D)'s thematic and disciplinary focus addresses a number of global cultural challenges and opportunities. We recognise that impact is often implicit in art and design research practice, which is iterative and can produce immediate, longer term, and deferred impacts, both anticipated and serendipitous. This is well charted, particularly by practitioner and industry organisations like art, craft, and design councils. We have achieved impact through innovation, influence, intervention, and evidence. We have enabled innovation in cultural, technological and creative industries, new materials, processes, product development, and entrepreneurship amongst practitioners to further our disciplines. We have influenced museums, galleries and cultural bodies by providing research-led perspectives that influence decision-making about exhibitions and events, and increase public understanding of art, design, built environment and urban culture. We have contributed artist-led interventions in communities and design as a means of empowering and engaging people, including in flood risk areas, isolated older people, and transnational and diasporic communities. Our research also enhances public understanding of cultural life, assists in building cultural capital and engages with social issues and challenges.

Our researchers engage with and respond to key themes: sustainable development (climate change, connected communities), diversity and diaspora (globalisation, conflict resolution), and economic change (creative industries, innovation, digital media and application). Design-thinking is now acknowledged as a driver of social innovation, and this is one methodology we use for creating impact. Another, emerging from our distinctive areas of strength (REF5), is our support of the academic and artist/designer as public intellectual and creator of impact through committed engagement with non-academic communities. Prime non-academic sectors that have benefited include:

1. Public Policy evaluation and development through artists' interventions in and critique of conflict resolution, governance, and allocation of resources. Policy makers and end-users benefit from guidance and case studies of good practice (e.g. Council of Europe, design of intercultural public space), and toolkits (e.g. DCMS CASE/Culture Evidence programme). Other beneficiaries include local councils like Enfield and Barnet (Arts and Innovation strategy; product design); London Museums Group (policy development, MoDA REF5), NESTA/TSB (creative industry policy) and Environment Agency (estuary defence, Read REF3b).

2. Public engagement beneficiaries include audience, participants and interpreters of exhibitions or events (Bird REF3b); media consumers and archive users (e.g. MoDA's 580,000 visitors since 2012, and exhibition tours inter alia Alexandra Palace, Chepstow Museum, Royal Albert Museum Exeter, Mitsubishi Ichigokan Museum Tokyo: REF5); art and design audiences and collaborators in museums, galleries, cultural centres, publishing, and moving image platforms; digital audiences/users (e.g. Digital Shoreditch Festival 2013, Evans); visual and online representation of radical movements or political victims (e.g. Occupy: Mirzoeff; PhD student/A&D lecturer Charnley; Guantanamo hunger strikers: Hodgson).

3. Communities, including place-specific, socially/culturally vulnerable groups and individuals; transnational diasporic communities; and communities of interest in place-making, regeneration and environmentally sensitive areas. Examples include the impact of Lok's work with the Anglo Chinese Community (funded by Wellcome and IOC); Leeson's work with inner city elders (funded by Transformers/Olympic Lottery); and Read (REF3b).

4. Industry through collaborative working and innovation/knowledge transfer. This occurs through new materials and processes, product development, e.g. metallurgy, craft practice, fashion, design guidance. Advice and support affects creative SMEs and social enterprises. Sectors include fashion/jewellery, product design, architecture and urban design, events (e.g. Olympics; arts festivals), media & ICT, engineering (e.g. water; power) and digital industries. Research-led impact collaborations in cultural, technological and creative industries include companies large and small e.g. Mary Evans Picture Library, Active Ingredient, Paul Smith Ltd, Argentium International Ltd (REF3b), and museums and galleries like Tate (REF5), ICA (REF5), London Museum and Reina Sofia Madrid (REF3b).

b. Approach to impact

Impact template (REF3a)

We are committed to making change through the rigour and relevance of our research to policy, practice, social space, cultural and political interaction, public discourse, and economic prosperity. This is achieved through <u>professional networks</u>, proximity to <u>user-groups</u>, and <u>engagement with communities</u>. As artists and designers, we are inextricably linked to the cultural industries. Knowledge exchange takes place both formally and through the routine workings of art and design research, especially that related to practice based areas, including curating. This provides a solid foundation for the uptake and impact of our research. We have impact capacity in distinctive areas (REF5). Newer appointments and existing staff collectively have close working relationships with identified user groups, sectors, and their intermediaries, and engage collaboratively with their stakeholders to ensure the impact of their work. The Unit thus celebrates and encourages the galvanizing effect of innovative research on cultural policy, social practice and community development, and sustains dynamic interchange with communities, industries, and government. Examples include the uptake of research by galleries and cultural institutions through exhibitions and events, inter alia: *BLK art group* (Tate 2011; Piper); *Leon Golub* (Reina Sofia, Madrid 2011; Bird REF3b); *Independent Group* (ICA 2013; Massey); London Architecture Biennales 2006-10 (Bendon - UoA36); *Active Energy* (Mattress Factory Pittsburgh 2012; Leeson; curated by Robinson; see also http://www.active-energy-london.org).

The School supports practice staff in building careers (REF5). This has enabled collaborations to bridge gaps between art research, commerce and science, and also facilitated inter-departmental collaborations that have led to impact - for example, Read's work with the Flood Hazard Research Centre (UoA 17) and Argentium and MoDA/redloop/product design collaborations with Science & Technology (Computer Science/Infomatics, UoA 11). Staff influence on advisory boards and knowledge exchange networks includes the AHRC Science and Heritage Programme Advisory Group (Arnold); RCUK Digital Economy Sustainable Society Network; Creative Exchange AHRC hub and NESTA Innovation & Creative Clusters (Evans) - all providing direct access and means of impact through research influencing policy, funding, investment and dissemination.

Our approach to impact values investment in the next generation of researchers through innovative pedagogy, research training and collaboration. We have funded studentships for our pioneering ArtsD award, which is aimed at practitioners (REF5); we have won sponsorship for doctoral research carried out in collaboration with Soane Museum and ICA (Arnold, Massey), and a collaborative CDA award with the National Maritime Museum (Massey). These PhDs have direct impact on practice, public discourse and service, and cultural life.

Staff are supported to maximise impact through provision of time allowances, funding, training and access to networks. MU's Research and Knowledge Transfer Office (RKTO) provides <u>specialist support in knowledge exchange</u>; it implements operational and training aspects of the University's research strategy and develops capacity through its Research and Enterprise Development Programme. Since 2007, the Art & Design Research Institute (ADRI), alongside the RKTO, has provided research training and support for knowledge exchange, including an Impact Fund to support impact beyond academia. As well as seminars with practitioners whose work engages non-academic communities and institutions, <u>ADRI workshops</u> address the impact and research-enterprise processes and evaluation, the evolving discourse in academia on impacts arising from art and design research, and how these affect research development, methods and end-user or public engagement. This includes the exchange of good practice (including detailed case studies) and shared experience between staff (including ECRs, RAs, PGRS), external researchers and practitioners. <u>Access to research</u> is further enabled through open access to publications and digital outputs via MU research repository, ADRI website and our Staff's six journals covering topics across its areas of expertise. Thus we have a variety of formal and informal approaches, some longstanding and others relatively new, to ensure that our research has impact on cultural industries, society and economy, in and outside the UK.

c. Strategy and plans

Our strategy consists of two key components, outlined below.

1. Building on strengths to enhance impact

Art and Design at Middlesex has a strong reputation for its impact outside academia. Since RAE 2008, we have invested in world-leading staff at all levels to work alongside existing staff, to develop and enhance our research profile and its impact beyond academia, whilst retaining a vibrant practice base and collaboration with cognate industries. This includes Professorial and

other academic appointments of notable practitioners from the creative industries (Cleaver, a leading graphic designer http://www.etal-design.com/index.php ; Billingham, a leading fine art practitioner and a 2001 Turner Prize nominee http://www.saatchigallery.com/artists/richard_billingham.htm ; Brown, an experienced curator http://www.camillaebrown.co.uk/#). The foci of this targeted development and sustained impact include: professional practice in visual arts (including making; analysis; curating; radical community practice) leading to impact in public advocacy and cultural diplomacy (e.g. Boyce, Cavusoglu, Haywood, Hunter, Piper); historical and theoretical research in interior design, architecture and cultural heritage to have impact upon public discourse, policy and cultural life (e.g. Arnold, Brooker, Massey); shifting understanding of visual culture and the capacity of innovative art historical research to change current canons and conceptions of art history and curating, influencing public understanding of the representation of political, cultural and social events (e.g. Bird, Deepwell, Fisher, Mac an Breithiún, Mirzoeff, Robinson); and environmental and urban culture focused impact on policy makers and sectors such as sustainable development and industry (e.g. Evans, Leeson, Read).

2. Strengthen links with industry, policy and professional practice

Links with creative industries are crucial to all aspects of our provision. We have strengthened these through consolidating existing practices (co-working, appointment of practitioners, including Professors of Creative Industries) and their integration in our School management structure, through appointments to the following formal roles: Directors of Knowledge Transfer (Haywood), Research Development (Evans) and Practice Development (Boyce). We have established an Industry Advisory Panel (IAP), to support the Dean and senior School management. Its members are drawn from creative industries, government and/policy agencies (e.g. Hasan Bakhshi, Director of Creative Industries, NESTA) and practitioners (including alumni). It will meet twice yearly, chaired by Graham Hitchen (CEO Directional Thinking; former director Creative London and ACE Policy), and will support our work in teaching, research and knowledge exchange.

The strategy for impact has evolved over recent years and goes hand in hand with the research strategy. In the coming years, we will consolidate our strategy and approach, to build on our strong tradition of art and design research, having impacts both in and outside academia.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case studies presented in REF3b have been carefully selected to demonstrate the breadth of both research (craft/metallurgy; new genre public art; visual culture) and its impact (high street retail; environmentally precarious local communities; global art audiences).

Argentium. Craft practice and design innovation forms a traditional foundation to our impact in Art and Design, with a long-standing research focus on creative technologies in partnership with colleagues in science and technology and industry collaborators. This project evolved from long-term materials research in jewellery and silversmithing design. Innovation and business support was provided by the RKTO in the form of expertise in IP, company formation, and project management and compliance. Here, conventional routes to impact such as patent application and company spin-out worked hand in hand with iterative artistic research and craft practice.

Articulating Tidal Protection. This exemplifies our approach to professional practice and the function of the artist as public advocate. It connects interested communities to public and private sector projects in unique, politically and environmentally contested situations. This approach required the artist (Read) as researcher to step beyond exhibitions with one-way public engagement; develop practice as part of public advocacy, and to articulate and visualise complex data for public information and use. Working with private and public sector partners and community groups, he was able to advocate for different cultural communities interpolated by global mega-events based on the outcomes of art practice. This model has led to the recent formation of a research cluster that prioritises impact and community engagement (Leeson, Evans, Lok).

Visual Culture: Curating Leon Golub. Curatorial practice, art history and visual culture research that challenges traditional art historical methods and embraces critical theory remains a central strand of work in our Visual Culture cluster (REF5), leading to impact beyond academia. A prime example is Bird's major critical, cataloguing and curatorial project on the paintings of Leon Golub and their focus on dictatorships, mercenaries, and torture. This case study demonstrates evidence of public, critical and media impact throughout the Spanish-speaking world.