

Institution: Buckinghamshire New University

Unit of Assessment: 34 - Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory

a. Context

Primary beneficiaries from the research submitted fall into two sectors: private businesses and public and government organisations. For the former, consultancy has been undertaken based on research outcomes, e.g. Moss's communication insights; through KTP activities (Ioras, Springer) and through design innovation subsequently going to market (Clerkin, Fabian). Companies and industry sectors also benefit from research such as the electronic Furniture Archive and through new or improved products and information (Ioras, Kaner, Clerkin, Fabian, Moss). Engagement may be through formal partnerships (KTP), shared conferences (Kaner), workshops for clients (Moss), specialist publications (Kaner, Moss, Ioras) or commissioned work (Springer, Moss).

Physical engagement with products is brought to the attention of commercial sectors and interested public consumers through trade fairs and product promotion, for example 100% Design, London Design Week, International Design Biennale (Clerkin, Fabian) and through web sites and sales (Clerkin).

In the public arena beneficiaries are audiences reached through Museums, cultural and heritage sectors, and through programmes on TV and through YouTube (Brownsword). Exhibition visitors benefit from curation of artefacts resulting in new insights into culture and history of the discipline (Brownsword, Fabian, Crawley, Chance, Simpson); new products brought to the attention of publics (Clerkin, Crafts Council, Wood, Fabian *100% Design*) and new approaches to the history of the subject have influenced exhibition design and commentary (Simpson, Crawley). An extension of this outreach is the High Wycombe Electronic Furniture Archive (HWeFA), making research materials available to the public with more than 5M hits (Kaner). The purchase of artefacts for museum collections reaches a UK and international audience including Europe, Scandinavia, USA and China (Brownsword).

Publication through books and exhibition catalogues (Moss, Springer, Chance, Crawley, Kaner, Simpson) makes research outputs available for interested publics over a longer time period.

Articles written for popular specialist magazines (e.g. Crafts, Blueprint, Designer Magazine, Dwell – Clerkin, Fabian) reach more general engagement with publics through reportage or profiling of research outcomes.

Government agencies in S.E. Asia have been informed by research into furniture and wood products' performance, implications for employment policy and investment in the furniture sector (Ioras, Kaner) and information on communications policy for teachers and learners (Moss).

Internationally impact has been achieved by the development of education provision through research of emergent communications industries in the Middle East (Springer). Publication in international education journals enables outreach from art and design to HE in other geopolitical contexts (Shreeve), whilst international funding agencies have been engaged in furniture research projects by Ioras and Kaner and in specialist subject communities in Norway and Denmark by Brownsword.

b. Approach to impact

Forms of engagement have tended to originate with individuals or small groups in the 3 Applied Research Groups (ARGs), but are assisted by Faculty level initiatives. Conferences and workshops with non-academic audiences enable networks to develop locally (Kaner) and internationally (Ioras, Springer). These have led to EU/local government funded projects (Urbact – ARG Furniture) and commissions by social policy makers and commentators (ARG Adcoms). Specific companies have engaged keynote speakers and workshops to benefit from research (Moss, Springer) and use archive material (Kaner, HWeFA). Companies have been involved in generating research data in Malaysia and in the creation of the research archive in the UK (Ioras, Kaner). Research outcomes are of benefit to wider sectors of the design and manufacturing industry through technological research in timber and furniture within the ARG Furniture.

In the museum sector projects have tended to be either advisory and curatorial e.g. Shrewsbury Museum and the V&A (Brownsword), leading to practical engagement of the public with new insights into material history, or through academic expertise where exhibition design and commentary has evolved to provide new insights (Simpson, Chance, Crawley) informing both

Impact template (REF3a)

curator and audience. Ongoing participation involves Kaner in policy making and implementation for the local authority museum trust plans for redevelopment, whilst Brownsword works in close collaboration with local authorities in Stoke on Trent through the British Ceramic Biennial. KTPs within the ARGs enable product innovation and dissemination in partnership with industry (loras and ARG- Furniture) leading to longer term engagement (e.g. Corian Ltd). Product innovation involved Fabian with museum and cultural sectors and collaboration with professionals in '1 part chef and 4 parts designer' events; evolving into dining performance. Disciplinary boundary crossing with organisations (British Theatre Designers, dance and performance) in exhibition and cultural events in UK and Europe (Crawley) reach wider public audiences. These international dimensions are also achieved through academic and professional partnerships (Brownsword, loras, Springer, Shreeve).

Two Faculty centres, The Clare Business School (CBS) and National School of Furniture (NSF) provide vehicles to channel engagement with industry where research application is made visible and conversations with new partners emerge (Moss, Kaner). Faculty organisation assisted Biennial Conferences held in 2009, 2011, 2013; (Kaner, loras ARG - Furniture). New products based on research which come to market impact the companies involved (KTP) and also trade and commerce through display (*100% Design, Maison et Objets, Collect* - Fabian). New approaches to design research through collective practice (Clerkin) generating exhibitions (*Wood* - Crafts Council 2009, *100% Design*, 2006-10) and leading to creation of web-based sales and communication engage publics with commercial products (CC2) developing new ways to engage a wider audience and consumers.

The digital as a source of research in Adcoms has directly resulted in political and social engagement through companies, PR, campaign involvement and commissioning further work resulting in products (educational institutions - Springer), development of staff (Moss), evaluation of communications strategies (Moss, Springer) and social projects benefiting communities (EU Como Regius, Moss).

Support for Staff

The faculty supports staff to become research active through the structure of the Applied Research Groups, by funding Doctoral study (Fabian, Crawley, Chance) and Early Career Researchers (Chance) enabling time to achieve outputs and to disseminate these, beginning with school, faculty and university wide events. Support and development needs are identified through our annual line management cycle of Professional Development Review. Faculty Conference Funding enables dissemination nationally and internationally resulting in networks for collaborative authorship (Simpson, Crawley), curating (Simpson, Crawley, Brownsword) and artistic outputs (Brownsword). Support for engagement in subject related organisations e.g. Design Research Society, Group for Learning in Art and Design (Shreeve) and the Society for British Theatre Designers (Crawley), enables further outreach, whilst the Clare Business School and National School of Furniture at Bucks link academics and industry providing opportunities for research and impact/dissemination activities. The University has a Personal Development Fund where academics can claim a percentage of profits made through research generated activities which helps to incentivise and reward outcomes (loras). Flexible approaches to work allow attendance at conferences (all staff), participation in inter/national residencies and workshops (Brownsword, Fabian) and staging of exhibitions, curation, trade fairs and international speaking (all staff). CREST allows research experiences to be developed and shared across smaller institutions (Springer, Kaner, Simpson plus their research students). Flexible approaches to work patterns have enabled application of research (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Springer; Denmark, Norway, China, Brownsword).

c. Strategy and plans

Describe clearly stated goals and plans for maximising the potential for impact from current and future research.

Goals

- Develop plans for conferences to reach a wider audience in Furniture (International venues) and in Adcoms enabling greater impact and facilitating future partnerships for research funding bids;
- Projects with the Higher Education Academy to develop further research in teaching and learning in art and design and to generate new scholarship, contributing to a university wide ARG in applied pedagogy for professional practice;

Impact template (REF3a)

- Continue collaboration with local and national museum sectors to further impact ongoing research (High Wycombe, Shrewsbury, V&A) and develop new links;
- Engage EU and international partners to disseminate outcomes and develop international networks further;
- Ensure expertise is available for consultancy in industry, heritage and cultural sectors and clearly promoted;
- Ensure research groups structure is active and fosters collaborative and beneficial opportunities to develop new and emerging researchers including Internal dissemination of research outcomes;
- Open up new links to Health UoA to develop product, KTP and research bids in area of assisted living and health care (Centre for Excellence for Telehealth and Assisted Living) and partners in NHS.

d. Relationship to case studies

Brownsword: The Faculty has funded and supported Brownsword's research trajectory from his appointment as Senior Lecturer in 1995, registration for a research degree (PhD 2006) and appointment as Reader 2013. He has been funded for post-doctoral research (2008) and sabbatical leave granted for a series of residencies (2009-13). Faculty funding has been awarded for conference participation and involvement with other research centres and bodies such as the British Ceramics Biennial, with collaborators in the *Marl Hole* event and with NEVAC, Bristol, 2006-8, to contribute to their video collections of the crafts. Flexible working patterns have enabled collaborative research, Norway and Denmark (2011-13) and curation of ceramic collections for Shrewsbury Museum (from 2007) and contributions to the Ceramics Biennial (2011, 2013) which have required prolonged periods away from the university. The particular nature of Brownsword's research is an exemplar for other practice-based researchers in the faculty and his appointment as Reader (2013) recognises his achievements. Sharing his contacts and creating opportunities for colleagues (Fabian) is one outcome of the Applied Research Group structure, where collaboration and opportunities for dissemination are shared. Internal dissemination has been achieved through school based presentations, through the *Talking Ideas* sessions and through faculty level events (e.g. Scholarship in Action).

Adcoms Applied Research Group: consists of 9 members, in various stages of research activity and development. The group is supported by the Research Office to enable meetings and facilitate research activities and through the Enterprise Team to assist with associated KTP work (Pure H2O participation). The two lead researchers returned in this REF are Springer (Senior Lecturer 2001-2005; Principal Lecturer 2005-2009; Professor 2009-present) and Moss (Senior Lecturer 2006-2008; Reader 2008) achieving the title of Professor in 2013 for her research leadership. Springer has taken two periods of paternity leave and has been seconded 50% of his time to work on research and subsequent consultancy to inform and set up the first Saudi College of Advertising (from 2010/11). Travel and conference fees for all Adcoms members enable development of networks, links and testing of emergent research. Agreed by the Faculty Management Team, sums may be awarded for development or for presentation of research, to participate in subject centres, to join or instigate research collaborations and to develop strategic opportunities. Individual networking and connections have been developed by the lead researchers through examination of digital communications and the assumptions in its design and impact over the last ten years. These are supported by press opportunities obtained through the university marketing teams (Moss – broadcasts and CBS events) and through personal networks in communications originating from previous research and publications (Springer, *Ads to Icons*). All forms of networking are fed back into the university community through the Applied Research Group structures and opportunities for sharing research internally and with subject communities nationally and internationally (e.g. D&AD and the European Association of Commercial Agencies).