

Research Assessment Exercise 2020 Impact Overview Statement

University: [The Education University of Hong Kong |

Unit of Assessment (UoA): [38 Visual arts, design, creative media, other creative arts and creative writing |

Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: [9 |

(1) Context

i. The main non-academic user groups, beneficiaries and audiences for the unit's research include: General public, creative industries, cultural organisations, curators, arts commentators, artists, education professionals and visual arts educational policy bodies.

ii. The main types of impact include: a) impacts on culture, creativity and society through provision of content, and public presentation of curated exhibitions at significant international and local visual arts venues; enrichment of audience experience; contribution to cultural discourse and community engagement; b) impacts on understanding, learning and participation by transfer of new educational knowledge into policy and curriculum development, educational leadership, teacher development and enhancement of learning; c) economic impact through provision of content in civic cultural assets and contribution to the knowledge and creative economies; d) impact on creative practitioners, through the creation of high-profile exhibition opportunities for local and international artists.

iii. These relate to the range of research activity in the Unit in the following ways: **Research activity in the unit** embraces both traditional and non-traditional (practice-based) approaches to research delivering theoretical and practical outputs and impacts. **Staff in the Unit** span the creative and cultural arts sectors, and the field of visual arts education. This has enabled the Unit to deliver impact on a number of fronts in a distinctive way, in terms of theoretical and practice-based research, related knowledge transfer and professional practice. **Dr Tam and Dr Lau (CY)**'s General Research Fund projects impact on Hong Kong's schools and engage directly with Hong Kong primary and senior high school students, teachers, and museum educators, investigating current and future visual arts educational models for promoting creativity and critical thinking skills, group dialogue and questioning strategies. **Dr McMaster and Dr Lau (LK)**'s research impacts on our understanding and conservation of the vanishing villages, the cultural and architectural heritage of Hong Kong and the rapidly changing conditions of global urbanisation. **Dr Lam**'s research impacts on our understanding of religious ideologies and Han society through museum related study of material culture and artefacts. **Prof Wood, Dr Poposki and Dr Hung** create new artworks and deliver international public exhibitions whilst **Dr Song**'s funded Early Career Scheme project will impact on the development of the maker culture in Hong Kong in a post-digital context. |

(2) Approach to impact

[Our approach to generating impact has five major elements:

1. We *encourage* and support an individual and collective commitment to high quality academic research, knowledge transfer and community engagement beyond the University.

2. We *maximised* the potential for impact by pioneering an Assessment Mechanism for Non-Traditional Research, incorporating rigorous external peer review. This recognised, verified and enabled practice-based research to grow, with equal status, alongside traditional academic research. The resultant broader reach of the Unit's outputs, and related knowledge transfer activities, has increased interaction with and impact upon non-academic users, beneficiaries and external audiences, such as Wood's research and knowledge transfer grant funded mural painting project with the Museum of Contemporary Art and Planning in Shenzhen.

3. We *seek and sustain* strong non-academic relationships with external cultural and creative arts organisations such as Hong Kong’s Osage Foundation and Videotage Gallery. We engage with educational policy makers, leaders and teachers through participation in policy advisory groups and projects, or as consultants, for example with the Hong Kong Society for Education in Art. We present and host conferences such as the INSEA/WCAE Symposium 2018, a major international event for educational and cultural sector practitioners. Staff research expertise has enabled the department to develop impactful Professional Development Programmes for serving Visual Arts teachers, approved by the Education Bureau of the HKSAR Government.

4. We *support* public engagement and dissemination of our research by promoting and funding staff participation in creating, curating, and participating in public exhibitions, by submitting work to open professional international competitions and by working with museums and galleries to develop museum education and the building of new audiences.

5. We *support* a coherent communications and media strategy across multiple platforms to engage with the potential beneficiaries of our research and knowledge transfer activities. Researchers have strong on-line presences through personal and project-related websites, social media profiles and media engagement. |

(3) Strategy and plans

In 2017 the Unit mapped the range and detail of staff research and discussed the findings at a departmental retreat. This enabled staff to compare individual strategies for developing their own research but also to consider areas of synergy for future collaboration or collective strategic development. One outcome was to make more of the nexus and potential fruitful symbiosis between the practice-based outputs being developed and the Unit’s theoretical research work. Dr Poposki has pursued conference presentations of theoretical work emerging from his practice-based research. The Unit will continue to externalise its research to the widest possible audience internationally, promoting the interface between knowledge transfer and research, between traditional and non-traditional approaches, and by building on the advice and critiques obtained annually from its innovative external peer review mechanism. |

(4) Relationship to case studies

Wood and Poposki’s collaborative research activity has grown from and through the interfaces described above. Their “Translations” project exemplifies the Unit’s approach to impact. It has been international in its focus, rooted in a strategy to collaborate with prestigious non-academic institutions, and has steadily built a reputation with organisations such as The Museum of Contemporary Art and Planning in Shenzhen, China; Videotage in Hong Kong; and the Art Stays Festivals in Slovenia. The project encompasses both traditional and non-traditional outputs including the curation of international exhibitions of international artists, and the creation of new original artworks. The participation in Shenzhen International Design Week (SDW) 2018 was partly funded by both Research and Knowledge Transfer grants and “in kind” through collaborative partnerships negotiated with a museum and a commercial design company. The project’s impact included an invitation to Wood to participate in SDW 2019, and in Shenzhen’s 2019 Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture. The themes of urbanism and innovative digital interactions within this Biennale will provide an exciting platform for a range of the Unit’s staff to engage with. This directly supports the Unit’s agreed collective strategy. Dr Poposki’s new theoretical paper, “Translating New Territories, Approaches to Video Art and Translation” which emerged from a practice-based project will be presented at the European Society for Translation Studies (EST) 2019 congress in South Africa extending the Unit’s international impact into new directions in intersemiotic translation. |