

UNIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE AWARDS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

APPLICATION FORM 2021-2022

Reference Number (for CQSD use): 05/2022

Please refer to the [scheme criteria and guidance](#) when completing your application and ensure that you complete all sections of the form.

Please save as a PDF file and submit your application to Martin Wise: m.wise@reading.ac.uk

Nominator's details

Name:	Teresa Murjas and Sarah Bartley
Role:	Module Convenors
School / Service:	SACD
Department / Unit:	FTT
Email:	t.s.murjas@reading.ac.uk s.e.bartley@reading.ac.uk

Team Leader's details (This may be the same person as the Nominator)

Name:	Sarah Bartley and Teresa Murjas
Role:	Module Convenors
School / Service:	SACD
Department / Unit:	FTT
Email:	s.e.bartley@reading.ac.uk t.s.murjas@reading.ac.uk

School Director of Teaching and Learning/Head of Service of Team Leader

Name:	Lisa Woynarski (FTT DTL)
I confirm that I am supportive of this application	(Insert signature here) Please note that Lisa is currently on annual leave. We have received her formal support for application submission, and she is copied in on this email.

Team Name / Project Title

Community and Collaborative Practice

Team Members

(Include all members of the group applying for the award, including the team leader and any student members. Indicate the percentage of the award that each group member should receive. This should total (and must not exceed) 100%.)

Name	Employee Number	School/Function	Role in Team	% of Award per team member
Sarah Bartley	923087	FTT	Module Convenor	Equal share to all contributors
Teresa Murjas	773557	FTT	Module Convenor	
Lisa Woynarski		FTT	Project Supervisor/DDTL	
Ollie Douglas		The MERL	Project Partner	
Phillippa Heath		The MERL	Project Partner Lead	
Isabel Hughes		The MERL	Project Partner	
Rhi Smith		The MERL	Project Partner	
Jasmine Martinez		FTT	Administrative Support	
Student details removed		FTT	Student Artist	
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		FTT	Student Artist	
		FTT	Student Artist	

Previous Funding

Has anyone in your team previously been awarded in these or any other TLDF-funded awards at the University?	Yes
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If yes, please give details of date and type of award:

Rhi Smith (2019) University Teaching and Learning Enhancement Projects: Mini Award Winner (Collaborative co-design of collections-based learning).

Case for Award (1000 words maximum)

Please outline your case for an award, referring to the scheme criteria as appropriate.

Introduction

In 2021, aligning with the strategic principles of 'Community' and 'An Engaged University', FTT launched Community and Collaborative Practice, a new core Theatre module (FT2CCP). This emphasises relationship-building and creative engagement with multiple Reading-based communities.

Aims, Objectives, and Rationale

FT2CCP aims to enrich students' performance-making through professionalisation opportunities. These build sustained collaborations with established partners within and beyond the university, and with the diverse audiences and communities these organisations serve. Accordingly, the dialogue and decision-making instigated and developed by FTT students within the module framework have been instrumental in shaping the content, nature, and creative outcomes of these close collaborations, and in determining their community impacts.

Working Collaboratively and Centring Students

Sarah, Lisa, and Teresa (FTT) worked in partnership to devise the module superstructure and collaborative networks. Across Summer 2021, they liaised with numerous potential partner organisations, opting to forge closer ties with three: The MERL (led by Rhi, Phillippa, Isabel), Reading Rep Theatre (led by Christie O'Carroll) and Rosetta Life (led by Jennie Sweeney). Each partner committed to collaborating with FT2CCP students across the 2021/22 academic year: sharing their organisation's methodologies; facilitating students' underpinning research; enabling them to stage their devised performances/workshops to some key audience/stakeholder groups (Spring 2022).

During Autumn Term, in seminars, students engaged with key module principles and readings. They undertook independent research and devising, attended training sessions with FTT technicians, and hosted workshops from all three project partners. Gradually, they democratically formed three distinct performance companies: The Penguin People (student details removed), Just-a-Theatre (student details removed) and WilsonField (student details removed). These companies then allied with their selected project partners, deepening their understanding of effective practice within each organisation's brief, remit, and resources.

WilsonField (supervisor: Sarah) collaborated with Reading-based Stroke Ambassadors from Rosetta Life to co-create a performance. Rosetta Life are a group of artists who work with those living with life-limiting illness to shape and share stories that matter, through movement, song, image, film, and writing. They aim to transform the stigma of illness and change the perception of disability. In dialogue with the company and specifically, the Stroke Ambassadors, WilsonField engaged in a process of active listening, research, and related practical experimentation, to understand a series of already well-established company practices. They then drew from these experiences and their learning on the

module to define a distinctive methodology and devised 'Reading Tales', a performance for an invited audience created with and for the group.

The Penguin People (supervisor: Lisa) collaborated with Reading Rep Theatre as part of its community outreach programme, ENGAGE, which provides access to arts for Reading's most vulnerable communities. Allied to the theatre's current professional production, *Albee the Penguin Saves the World*, The Penguin People devised and delivered a series of performance workshops to pupils at Reading's New Town Primary School. In its mission statement, the school emphasises "values of respect, love, tolerance and honesty which are at the heart of our diverse, vibrant community here in East Reading." Accordingly, The Penguin People focused their workshops on topics of climate crisis, global heating and environmental sustainability, empowering pupils to think creatively about achievable everyday choices to instigate change.

Just-a-Theatre (supervisor: Teresa) collaborated with colleagues at The MERL (Phillippa, Rhi, Isabel) within a strand of work focused on de-colonising collections. Drawing on the Suttons Seeds archive, they devised a performance workshop for Key Stage Three students in History and Drama at Little Heath Secondary School. This centres on the Reading-based firms' global relationships, a hitherto under-represented topic both in The MERL's displays and in related outreach activities. Importantly, Just-a-Theatre's specific interest in Suttons connections with India was informed by their research interview (facilitated by Ollie) with Surajit Sarkar (Centre for Community Knowledge, Delhi). Just-a-Theatre worked in dialogue both with collections specialists and with teachers at Little Heath School. They researched partners' pedagogical objectives and curricular work already undertaken by pupils, including projects responsive to the Black Lives Matter movement and its implications for understanding Reading's histories.

Capturing the Impact of Collaborative Work and Enhancing Student Learning Experiences

In addition to working together in their performance companies, students have regular meetings with their supervisors, project partners and their associated collaborators. They gather for a joint weekly session with their module convenor to share work in progress and reflect on their project development in relation to the module's themes: socially and ethically engaged practice, inclusivity, power, participation, communities, collaboration, transformation.

Students produce Development Blog entries reflecting on their process and deliver presentations to peers and partnering groups. These blogs evidence the impact of this collaborative process on students' learning and their emerging artistic practices.

To assess the students' achievements, their supervisors/convenors have garnered feedback from project partners about how the students' engagement has impacted on them and on their audiences/stakeholders.

Disseminating Outcomes and Impact

The three creative projects have been shared with Reading primary school children, secondary school pupils, their respective teachers, adults navigating life limiting conditions, arts practitioners, and an invited audience. Beyond this, students have more widely disseminated their work. Just-a-Theatre's workshop is videographically documented by The MERL for outreach purposes and the company also pitched their project to Berkshire teachers during The MERL's Teachers Forum meeting. WilsonField hope to tour their performance to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. All three companies will be sharing presentations about their collaborative projects and their impacts at the public-facing Film, Theatre & Television Festival in Week 6, Summer Term.

Conclusion

Importantly, the module has provided a clear and effective framework within which FTT students, partners and community groups can work collaboratively to deliver projects that arise from mutually articulated needs, desires, and challenges. It has offered opportunities for reciprocal impacts and engagements, that embed an ethos of inclusivity and that can transform creative relationships within Reading in a sustainable way. Each student group contributing to the module is manifestly and quantifiably part of a process of university, community, social, and civic engagement and as the module develops, their pioneering work on relationship building and networking will discernibly form 'creative gateways' for subsequent year groups.

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