# CCN+ Newsletter, Sept-Oct 2015

The Digital Economy 'Communities and Culture' Network+ engages with digital transformations, bringing them together with a wider public through direct engagements, innovative methods and digital resources.

Upcoming Events

The A Moeda Workshop: Storytelling with an Itinerant Data Object
9 - 13 November (Berlin) or 25 - 29 November at FACT /

Learn about the Internet of Things, new approaches to storytelling, and create a work of digital art in this five day intensive workshop. CADA, Broken Dimanche Press and FACT are seeking artists, writers, architects, and practitioners from other fields to participate, contributing to 'city-centric' releases of ground-breaking digital artwork using a smart phone app.

Deadline for applications: 18 November. **Read more**
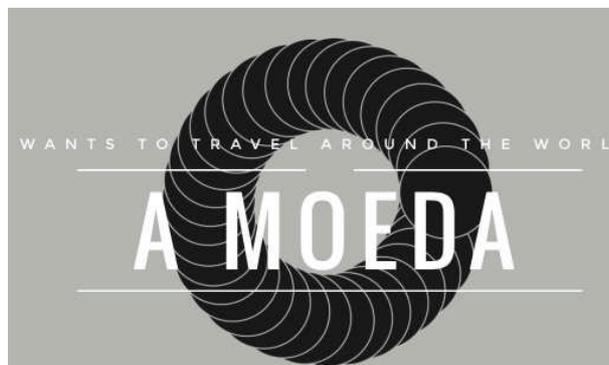
Re-writing the Hack - 21st to 22nd November, The Core, Newcastle, UK

Rewriting the Hack is a Female Only Hackathon exploring the theme of 'Industrial and Post Industrial North East'. The two day event will examine the Hackathon format as a site for producing collaborative, interdisciplinary art strategies and exploring issues surrounding diversity through an increasingly popular model of creative production. Participants will gather to access and create with archival materials relating to the North East region's industrial heritage, and also with current, open data sets, which represent our post industrial present. The event will challenge perceptions that Hackathon events, as well as histories of our industrial past and our scientific and technological present, are male dominated.

Further information about the CCN+ *Inhabiting the Hack* programme can be found at http://inhabitingthehack.github.io/.

Threats to Openness in the Digital World (ITaaU Network+) - 24th-25th Nov 2015, Northumbria University

This conference will consider and debate the issues surrounding the growing threats to citizens' rights to access public archives in the digital world, a world which has made access to and review of records a more complex and challenging issue. The conference will provide a unique opportunity to listen to and actively engage in a critical discussion with leading UK and international figures experienced in dealing with access issues at the most senior levels in government, academia and the records management and archives profession. **Read more....**

Research

Digital Culture & its Dis/Contents

Over the last two weeks (2-19th Oct 2015) Dr. Helen Thornham has been leading a team of scholars in Mexico on a collaborative project entitled 'Digital Culture and its Dis/Contents'. The visit to Mexico marks the first stage of a year-long collaboration between scholars in the UK and Mexico, co-funded by the British Academy and the EPSRC Communities and Culture Network+, which aims to explore the utility of 'digital culture' as a global concept and to investigate alternatives. The collaboration focuses on specific issues around digital cultures in both the UK and Mexico, in order to ask, through a reciprocal exchange that is underpinned by digital activities, what an investigation into the lived realities of digital culture reveals for the values inherent in digital connectivity as well as what interventions are possible for the future.

Some of the key themes discussed were participation and digital technologies, the politics of technologies and methods, the epistemology of digital culture and the im/possibility of action. The collaboration draws out the global connections through the sharing of expertise, knowledge and methodologies, to develop a shared but distinct critical approach. Alongside the academic meetings and events, UK scholars participated in a number of media appearances, for radio, University TV and local newspapers.

The project is enabled through collaboration between Dr. Helen Thornham (University of Leeds), Dr. Edgar Gómez Cruz (RMIT, Australia) and Dr. Raul Trejo Delarbo (National Autonomous University of Mexico). It comprises two events in Mexico (at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico City, 2-9 Oct 2015, and at ITESO, Guadalajara, 12-15th Oct 2015) and a reciprocal visit from Mexican scholars, in July 2016, to the University of Leeds.

New Radicals

CCN+ funded research by academics at Robert Gordon University was recently published on the *Democratic Audit – Scotland* website at bit.ly/1OZVIE8. Here, Graeme Baxter, Elizabeth Tait, Peter McLaverty, and Iain MacLeod show that young people can be mobilized politically, given the right circumstances, but that questions as to the longevity of the engagement achieved are as yet to be answered.

The final report for this pilot study is published in Vol.6 of the *Working Papers of the Communities & Culture Network+* (Oct 2015), along with a host of other reports from the network's most recent funded projects, and is available to read on the CCN+ website.

Research…

Inhabiting the Hack: Digital Media Labs 2015

Digital Media Labs 2015, co-funded by the CCN+ as part of our *Inhabiting the Hack* series, is the third in an ongoing series of research and development labs for artists working with technology to apply their processes to new contexts, to hothouse ideas and create new collaborations within a specially nominated peer group.

This year's six-day residential lab took the notion of the 'digital outside' as its starting point, looking at diverse ways of working in public sites. Previous labs (focusing on touch screen technology, light and sound) have led to a wide range of outcomes including publicly sited work, exhibitions, residencies and touring work. See the artists journey from their blog posts over the week.

Partner organisation Octopus hosted the lab in their Barrow-in-Furness studio, situated in a widely used Victorian park on the industrial fringe of the Lake District, that functioned as a testbed for ideas and prototypes. A publication charting the week's activity is currently in progress. **Read more**

Latest Findings

The latest findings from our most recent funded projects can be found in Volume 6 of the *Working Papers of the Communities & Culture Network+*.

The seed project 'Rural Crafting Communities in a Digital Age' funded jointly by the CCN+ and dot.rural Digital Economy Partnership Fund, looked at how, working with a community of rurally-based craftspeople, researchers might co-produce new methodologies for online engagement. Prinicipal Investigator Leanne Townsend's short film and blog post provides a summary of the project's findings.

Above: Using digital tools at Make Aberdeen.