



## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION RESEARCH INITIATIVE (ESPRI) SEED FUNDING SCHEME COMPLETION SURVEY

**Project Title:** Identity, Community and Social Participation: What do these have to do with the Art and Science of Practicing Together? A study with Sci Curious Science Gallery Melbourne.

**Team members:**

**UoM:** Dr Kathryn Coleman, Dr Niels Wouters, Dr Jenny Martin, Dr Lea Campbell and Dr Sarah Healy

**Sci Curious co-research team:** Ana Ward-Davies, James Urlini, Emily Painter, Jack Chan, Brandon Iredale, Juetheng Soo, Jarrah Shubsmith, Catriona Nguyen-Robertson, Julia Both, Branislava Godic

**Co-research partner (UoM):** Social & Cultural Informatics Platform ([SCIP](#))

**Co-research partner (external):** Samuel Peck, [tet\[R\]ad: Draw and Play Here](#)

**Amount Awarded:** \$14,893.16

**What were the outcomes of the seed-funding project (e.g., ethics approval, data access, publications, conference presentations, opinion pieces, ongoing collaborations, internal/external grant applications, etc.)? Dot points are fine.**

**Outcome 1: Examine how a successful and sustainable professional learning community of young people such as Sci Curious Melbourne build creativity, curiosity and collaboration:**

- Ethics approved survey
- Data collection and first stage analysis with co-research team, using [Voyant](#).
- [Pursuit article](#), 13 January 2020.

**Outcome 2: Demonstrate the impact of art and science practice on learning, and better understand the relationship between PLCs-based learning and creative engagement in innovative actions such as SGM:**

- Project listed in [Registry of Australian social research on COVID-19](#)
- Book chapter accepted Creativity and Ethics: Research Methods in a Global Crisis. Editors: Dr Helen Kara, independent researcher, UK; Dr Su-ming Khoo, National University of Ireland
- Journal of Artistic and Creative Education, article submission: Post studio methods: being scicurious as a site for research.
- Sci Curious identity piece, co-designed prototyped and ready for publication on SGM Website.



**Outcome 3: To explore close-to-practice research (Lewis, Brooks, Parker & Thomas, 2018) using digital ethnographic methods and research creation to explore practice through the lens of the young creative practitioners. This involves practitioner researchers working in partnership with Sci Curious as practitioners:**

- Analog data: using zines as travelling vessels for making and *doing* data differently. Zines are typically low-fi, self-published creative works involving original or appropriated content. Each member of the zine project puts a zine into circulation. Once the zine is received and ‘being *scicurious*’ data generated, it is posted to its next *scicurious* destination as part of a collaborative effort to untangle questions around identity, curiosity and belonging.
- Co-research team established; ongoing collaborations include creative publication to further output 1 - SGM Swarm art/science proposal [The Swarm Zine Data Machine] submitted for the 2021 exhibition SWARM (Aug-Oct 2021).
- New co-researcher partnerships: Samuel Peck, tet[R]ad: Draw and Play Here (USA) and Greg D’Arcy and Amanda Belton as SCIP data science and informatics advisory.
- Submission for National Art Education Association (USA), short paper for SE on Art stories from the Pandemic.

**Outcome 4: To develop an international Sci Curious global research proposal to take into consideration different cultural perspectives across young people involved in Sci Curious programs within Science Gallery International (SGI):**

- Ongoing collaboration with Science Gallery Melbourne and Science Gallery International
- Commenced conversations with Science Gallery network partners in Detroit and Atlanta to continue Sci Curious research globally.



## How did you spend your funds? Please be as specific as possible.

1. **Research Assistance and project management (Post-doctoral role): Dr Sarah Healy.** Sarah has been an important conduit and network for the multiple moving parts in a post-doctoral role, particularly in research engagement. As well as ensuring that the project adhered to its complex human ethics protocol, Sarah played an important role in maintaining the project's momentum and linking the research into different avenues for dissemination. Her method and theoretical contributions have ensured that we are an innovative and impactful social co-research project that has created space for the project not to pause, but shift. Having a post-doctoral position in a team like this, has also benefited Sarah as she was mentored by the team, and in turn she mentored the co-research SciCurious members and provided new, insightful concepts to flourish building off her doctoral research. Having a paid role in the team for an ECR is an important aspect of ethical interdisciplinary work in HE.
2. **Research Assistance (Sci Curious member, participant observer): Ana Ward Davies.** Ana has been pivotal to the project's success as an insider and leader. Ensuring that we paid her as an artist and practitioner, and early career researcher (post-Masters) is integral to the ethics of care and practice, we hold as research team. Ana has led two parts of the project as a communication lead but also in the identity piece of the phase one research to codesign and co-develop the Sci Curious landing page in the Science Gallery Melbourne website. Working alongside Claire Farrugia, Education and Outreach Manager at Science Gallery Melbourne. Ana continues to build this page. Ana has documented the process of ideation with Sci Curious, prototype and pitch to Science Gallery Melbourne team, and now building of the Squarespace page to ensure that the identity of the Sci Curious steering committee are made public. This was an important part of the phase 1 identity piece and co-design; that Sci Curious as members of the Science Gallery Melbourne team had a public profile and an online presence. Ana has recently applied for the John and Eric Smyth Travelling Scholarship to further her own research in, identity and *being scicurious*.

## Did you spend all of your allocated funds? If not, can you briefly describe why.

Prior to the time of COVID-19, we had planned for the co-research team to encounter a series of practice-based provocations in the University arts studio (studioFive) that would create the conditions for us to explore, map and figure scicuriously together. This would be a 'wrap up' of this stage, a sharing of the project as well as marking a significant shift to the move beyond funding. However, as these provocative (and speculative) events became imminent, our worlds shifted and we have yet to expend all funds, instead rethinking how we can exhibit and disseminate our co-research online. As the project is responsive to the needs of our young people in this pandemic, we went from studio explorations of the possibilities of knowing to an un-sited (or digitally re-sited) project and this will need new documentation and curation for exhibiting data. We have \$690 remaining unspent, and hope to use this for a designer (from the co-research team) to support [SCIP](#) to create an online data gallery in OMEKA – *being scicurious in times of crisis*.

## What were some challenges you faced while conducting this project?

The predominant challenges have been Stage 3 lockdown 1 and 2 in Australia and Melbourne. The shift in our research has elongated the time, and the current products of research. However, these challenges have provided benefits to our co-research team that have been exhilarating, and full of wonderings, spatial and temporal experiences that shifted the project from a participation study toward a social research exploration. Working with young scicuriously people in a pandemic has shown us what research is for, and how social re-search affords power, agency and transformation through *being curious*. Zoom, co-writing and a collision between art and science has offered a way for us to rethink speculative codesign in times of crisis.

The biggest challenge is that we are not yet finished, and there is more still to come post-COVID.



## Did you gain any new insights from working in an interdisciplinary team? What did you enjoy most of this project?

Kate Coleman “My insights have come from being *within* an intergenerational interdisciplinary team. I have learned to shift away from theory and to uncover new ways of thinking and troubling method that afford the team to create new openings and opportunities for knowing outside of boarded and territorialised disciplinary spaces. It is important to listen, communicate, be open, and wonder and wander in the joys of new ideas that emerge.”

Niels Wouters “What I love is how we managed to transition so swiftly from a study initially conceived to happen in-person, to digital and in solitude and - through the zines - in a way back to analogue. Meandering across platforms and techniques we still managed to generate heaps of data, discussion and reflection.

Sarah Healy “My insights came from working in a blended digital-analogue space and experiencing the generative tensions of practising simultaneously in a nearly instantaneous digital time and a much slower analogue time. The analogue 'postal aspect' of the research forced the team to slow down while the digital aspect gave the project the agility and pace to respond to changing conditions and new ideas”.

Ana Ward-Davies “I really loved writing the hundreds that morning and seeing the breadth of responses coming through and how vast everybody's experience was. I'd love to have another write in.

## Do you have any suggestions or “lessons learned” for others who are interested in conducting interdisciplinary work?

Our project bio now reads as:

*We are a scicurious transdisciplinary research collaboration between academics at the University of Melbourne and members of SGM's SciCurious network. We are yet to be published as a collective, however our speculative scicurious as method project is currently in production as our stories, images, metaphors and ideas emerge from different cultures, materials and practices.*

*Across our collective, we have collaborators who identify as artists, designers, engineers, scientists, coders, biologists, researchers and interdisciplinarians who aren't defined by labels. What we are, is scicurious. This conceptual Collaboratory offers us a space to explore being scicurious, scicurious as method and scicurious as becoming.*

**We wanted this new collaboration to be a lesson for other interdisciplinary social and participation co-researchers. Our co-research team has learned that what comes from the co-creation of a pre-disciplinary team must not end with a full stop, as funding closes. Rather, to pause, pivot and think with a comma. A comma, enables the team to stop, breathe, and then continue to explore what has emerged in the speculative imaginary; to consider how creative practice-oriented collaborations, often last a lifetime.**