

Research capability  
delivering value



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# Design and Creative Practice

Enabling Capability Platform

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Contact us to partner for a better future

[research.capability@rmit.edu.au](mailto:research.capability@rmit.edu.au)

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## Designing the world of tomorrow

In a world geared towards automation, datafication and artificial intelligence, how can our future public spaces, workplaces, homes and transport systems be designed to embrace new technologies while also supporting social connection and sustainability?

How can we design the health and aged care services of the future to meet the needs of an unprecedented number of older citizens? And how can the creative arts assist in developing innovative and design-centred responses to complex, real-world problems?

RMIT's **Design and Creative Practice Enabling Capability Platform (ECP)** is committed to ensuring that the world of tomorrow is designed to support sustainability, health and wellbeing as well as technological innovation and economic prosperity. It draws together the University's long-standing strengths in design, architecture, digital media, communication, the performing arts, visual arts and crafts, fashion, engineering and business to examine major design innovation questions facing today's society.

This ECP's internal research affiliates include national and international thought leaders in design and creative practice. This capability platform also looks at ways of introducing the arts into STEM areas (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) to generate STEAM approaches to achieving alternative, creative solutions to societal issues.



## The Impact Observatory

The Impact Observatory was established to ensure that design and creative practice research is captured as it is emerging, and to support it through relevant translational pathways, through collaboration with industry partners. It provides evidence of activities and approaches to research that are outstanding in their engagement with external organisations/industry partners and end-users.



## Our vision

Larissa Hjorth, Director, RMIT Design and Creative Practice ECP



**We will apply an inventive, explorative and rigorous approach to addressing real-world problems that lie at the intersection of digital design, health, sustainable practice and material innovation.**

**We are committed to advancing social, health and digital innovation and developing alternative pathways for producing knowledge and achieving impact through collaboration.**



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## Creating stronger partnerships

This ECP harnesses RMIT's cross-disciplinary design and creative practice expertise to strengthen our research collaborations with industry, government, and the social and cultural sectors.

Our creative research partnerships are becoming more agile, playful and experimental. We apply critical, design-centred approaches to co-creating practical and inventive solutions with our partners.

The Design and Creative Practice ECP also works across our other seven Enabling Capability Platforms, supporting their research projects and drawing on their expertise for its creative investigations.

A Sector Expert Research Advisory Group of design and creative practice industry leaders and stakeholders will help shape the future direction and priorities of this capability platform.



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## Examples of Design and Creative Practice ECP collaborative research projects

### Elements in the cloud: a brain injury rehabilitation system for clinical and home use

This project aims to translate a digital application for brain injury (BI) rehabilitation, called Elements into an integrated system of hardware and software for clinic and home use – this includes the design and testing a cloud-based delivery system that customises cognitive and motor tasks for the individual. Responding to significant social and economic costs of BI, this project may enhance the provision of rehabilitation services by engaging clients in more sustained and intense forms of therapy to augment and accelerate recovery. Expected outcomes include tailored programs made commercially available for therapists that may be scaled to benefit around 300,000 Australian patients living with disability, and exported internationally.

This project is being funded by RMIT's ECP Opportunity Fund.

### Design for Wellbeing Network

This network is an international and interdisciplinary group of researchers who work across architecture, design, health technologies and social science. Focusing specifically on hospitals and other formal healthcare settings, the network aims to improve the understanding of how people experience these services and environments, and to work towards improving these experiences through rigorous qualitative and practice-based research. Supported through the Design and Creative Practice ECP, the network was formed following a one-day symposium during which international and local speakers discussed their projects within the design for wellbeing space. The network plans to expand its activities during 2018, with other events, meet-ups and discussions.

This project is funded under RMIT's ECP Capability Development Fund.



## Key capabilities

Hundreds of expert research affiliates in disciplines ranging from media and communication, design, architecture and the visual arts, to global, urban and social studies, engineering, fashion, textiles and business.

### Internationally recognised areas of research excellence:

- > design and practice management
- > architecture
- > film, television and digital media
- > performing arts and creative writing
- > visual arts and crafts
- > digital innovation and ethnography

### Additional strengths in:

- > working models and methods for innovative, interdisciplinary social practice
- > designing for wellbeing and improved health care
- > alternative methods of translating research outcomes into real world applications
- > emergent technologies and youth cultures

### Research facilities and centres include:

- > The RMIT Design Hub, including the Design Archives, Virtual Reality Centre, exhibition and display zones
- > RMIT Gallery
- > The Centre for Design Practice Research (d\_Lab)
- > The Digital Ethnography Research Centre (DERC)
- > Centre for Arts and Social Transformation (CAST)
- > The DCP Impact Observatory – a digital portal and online archive of our research impacts

### Close relationships with:

- > federal, state and local governments
- > leading arts and cultural institutions
- > design, architecture and visual arts practices
- > industries, research institutions and networks in Australia, Asia and Europe

## Research and innovation priorities

### Resilience, health and care

Exploring how design and creative practice can be deployed to:

- > promote health, resilience and wellbeing
- > reimagine care services, facilities, infrastructure and behaviours
- > develop creative solutions to social problems and
- > keep social connection at the heart of human interactions

### Playful and material encounters

Investigating how play and the notion of ‘the playful’ can be used as a mechanism for:

- > generating creative and inventive solutions to real-world problems
- > harnessing technological innovations creatively to reinterpret our material world for the better and
- > transforming how geographic places are experienced and defined

### The social and sustainable

How we envisage a world:

- > that has equality, biodiversity and sustainability at its core and
- > where social connection continues to be pivotal to human existence

### Design and creative practice industries

Identifying and evaluating how design and creative practice:

- > add value to industry and
- > enable creative solutions for improving health care and aged care, urban living and our ability to live in social and environmentally sustainable ways

## Key application areas



### RMIT'S ENABLING CAPABILITY PLATFORMS (ECPs)

- > Advanced Materials
- > Biomedical and Health Innovation
- > Advanced Manufacturing and Fabrication
- > Design and Creative Practice
- > Global Business Innovation
- > Information and Systems (Engineering)
- > Social Change
- > Urban Futures